

Sermon #134 — Romans Series

Title: **YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS**

Text: Romans 12:1-21

Subject: *Living for God*

Date: Sunday Morning — November 5, 2017

Readings: *Romans 12:1-21*

“(1) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (3) For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

(4) For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: (5) So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another. (6) Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; (7) Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; (8) Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

(9) *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. (10) *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; (11) Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; (12) Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; (13) Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

(14) Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. (15) Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (16) *Be* of the

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. (17) Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. (18) If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

(19) Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (20) Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

INTRODUCTION

In the Book of Romans, God the Holy Spirit gives us the clearest possible revelation of all Gospel doctrine, teaching us how sinners are saved by the grace of God, showing us how poor, guilty sinners like you

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

and me obtain God's salvation by the work of God's almighty grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this great epistle, the divinely inspired apostle sets before us...

- The Gospel of God, Concerning His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and Its Saving Power (1:1-17).
- The Universal Depravity of Adam's fallen race (1:18-3:18).
- Free Justification by the Blood and Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ (3:19-5:21).
- The Blessedness of God's Salvation in Christ – Believer's Baptism – Sanctification – Freedom from the Law – The Warfare of Our Two Natures – Life in the Spirit (6:1-8:27).
- The Sovereign Purpose God in Providence and Grace (8:28-11:36).

Proposition: When we get to chapter 12, we are taught, as the children of God, as believers, as sinners

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

redeemed by blood and saved by grace, how to live for God in this present, evil world.

That is what I want to talk about in this message – Living for God. The title of my message is – **YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS**. Our text will be Romans 12:1-21.

Divisions: This chapter seems to fall into three divisions.

1. Romans 12:1-3 gives us instruction about our own consecration to God.
2. Romans 12:4-8 tells us how to use our gifts for the good of God's elect — Our Consecration to God's Church.
3. Romans 12:9-21 teaches us how we are to deal with other people, both believers and unbelievers.

Let's look at the message of this chapter in those three segments.

YOU

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

1st — **The Apostle of God addresses you and me as believers.** — Romans 12:1-3 gives us instruction about our own consecration to God.

(Romans 12:1) “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

As Paul begins to tell us how we are to live for God in this world, he begins with mercy. — “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God.*” Whatever we are called upon to do, say, be, or give is not by way of threats, fear, or even bargaining but because of the mercy of God given to us in Christ (Luke 6:35-36; Ephesians 4:32-5:1; 1 John 4:9-11).

(Luke 6:35-36) “But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

unthankful and *to* the evil. (36) Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

(Ephesians 4:32-5:1) “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. (5:1) Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.”

(1 John 4:9-11) “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (10) Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. (11) Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”

Our attitude and duties to God, to the church of God, and to all men may be summed up in one word – love! He loved us (1 John 4:16), and we love him because he first loved us (1 John 4:19), and we

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

love one another (1 John 4:20-21; Galatians 5:13-14).

(1 John 4:16-21) “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. (17) Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. (18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (19) We love him, because he first loved us. (20) If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (21) And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

(Galatians 5:13-14) “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. (14) For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

Believers are men and women who love God and love one another. Life in Christ, life in the Spirit, is living in the love of God, being motivated, ruled, and governed by the love of God in Christ.

“That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice.” — Paul is talking about just exactly what you think he is talking about – our human faculties.

- Let our tongues be employed in praising God.
- Let our feet take us to house of God.
- Let our arms be used to embrace and lift the needy.
- Let our hands be employed in the services of others.

The believer, as a priest, offers himself to God as a living sacrifice. – Those who have seen the glory of

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

God in Christ and have experienced his grace in salvation say with Christ and his prophet, “*Here am I; send me.*”

- Send me to preach to the lost!
- Send me to care for the sick!
- Send me to support the missionary!
- Send me to cheer the faint!
- Send me to comfort the weary!
- Send me to be a blessing!
- Send me, somehow use me to accomplish your purpose!

Is that not our reasonable service, since we are not our own, but been bought by his precious blood?

(Romans 12:2) “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Let us take great care not to allow ourselves to be conformed to this world.

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

- Its Nature
- Its Character
- Its Opinions
- Its Goals
- Its Attitude
- Its Behavior
- Its Ways

Worldlings love the world; believers love Christ. Worldlings seek the praise of men; believers seek the praise of God. The worldling thinks only of himself; the believer considers others. The worldling cares for the body; the believer cares for the soul. The worldling looks only upon that which is seen; the believer looks on that which is unseen. The worldling cares for what he shall eat, drink, and wear, and where he shall live; the believer seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

This spirituality, this attitude is accomplished by and is the result of the regenerating work of God the Holy Ghost. It is contrary to the nature of flesh,

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

but is the new nature created in every heaven-born soul (2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 2:12-13; Ephesians 5:9-10).

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

(Philippians 2:12-13) “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. (13) For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.”

This is pleasing and acceptable to God our Savior.

(Ephesians 5:9-10) “(For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) (10) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.”

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

Next, in verse three, the Apostle reminds us to walk with God in all humility. True humility, knowing who and what we are, knowing both our sin and God's grace, inspires the consecration Paul has been describing and continues to describe in the rest of this chapter.

(Romans 12:3) “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Peter 5:5). O Spirit of God, clothe me with humility!

- 1 Corinthians 4:7
- 1 Corinthians 15:10

YOUR GIFTS

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

2nd — **The Spirit of God tells us how we are to use the gifts he gives us for the good of God's elect** —

Romans 12:1-3 gives us instruction about our own consecration to God. Romans 12:4-8 tells us how to use our gifts for the good of God's elect, our consecration to God's people. — Consecration to God involves consecration to his people.

God's church is one. All who are saved by the grace of God are one in Christ and one with Christ. We are many members of one body. We ought to act like it.

(Romans 12:4-5) “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: (5) So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another.”

The human body is one, but it has many members. And each member is placed in the body in proportion to the others for the good of the whole body. The eye

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

sees, but it does not hear. The ear hears, but it does not breathe. So, we are one body in Christ and are in union together, having differing gifts and abilities serving the same purpose – the good of the body and the glory of Christ. Some of these gifts are set before us in verses 6-8.

(Romans 12:6-8) “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; (7) Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; (8) Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Prophecy – Prophecy here is the proper understanding of and preaching of the Scriptures. This is done according to God-given ability.

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

Ministry – This is service, such as deacons and others who minister to the needs and welfare of others. There is no need to restrict this to an official office, but it applies to all who are devoted to the needs of the body of Christ.

Teaching – Fitness to teach others the Word is the gift of God. Those who possess this gift are to exercise it diligently.

Exhortation – This is distinctly a gift given to every God called pastor (Isaiah 40:1-2). Yet, there are many men and women uniquely gifted to encourage and comfort. Let those who have this very special gift use it for the benefit of those who need encouragement and comfort. — “*Comfort them which are in trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God*” (2 Corinthians 1:4).

Giving – This does not mean that some are to give and others not, but some are blessed with the ability to give more. All giving is to be done liberally, with

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

simplicity (singleness of heart), without fanfare, as unto the Lord.

Ruling – It is the place and responsibility of every faithful pastor to rule the house of God by the Word of God, by the preaching of the Gospel. And every pastor is to give himself diligently to the work God has trusted to his hands.

Mercy – This is a gift all who are God's possess. It involves kindness, forgiveness, a good word, and understanding. We should never be reluctant to exercise mercy, but anxious to do it cheerfully!

OTHERS

3rd – **We are taught how we are to live in relation to others, both believers and unbelievers.** – In verses 1-3 we are taught to consecrate ourselves to God. In verse 4-8 we are taught to consecrate ourselves to one another. — Romans 12:9-21 teaches

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

us how we are to deal with others, both believers and unbelievers.

Romans 12:9 — “**Let love be without dissimulation.**” — Without pretense and hypocrisy. — Sincere and genuine. — Not in word, but in deed. — Heart devotion to God’s church and people, our brothers and sisters in Christ (Philippians 2:1-5).

(Philippians 2:1-5) “If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, (2) Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. (3) *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. (4) Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. (5) Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

“Abhor that which is evil.” — Abhor all evil doctrine and all evil behavior. Particularly, abhor the evil that is in you and done by you.

- Believers sin, but they do not love sin either in principle or deed.
- And they do not excuse or justify their own sin (Psalm 51:3-4).

“Cleave to that which is good.” — Be glued to and keep company with that which is good — Good Doctrine and Good Companions. Walk with God and with those who walk with God. Hold to the principles of godliness, associate yourself with God’s people, and go to those places which contribute to your spiritual growth and godliness. — Avoid, as much as possible, everything else.

Read verse 10-13. These four verse are one sentence. Everything here is talking about personal conduct and behavior that affects and influences others for good.

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

(Romans 12:10-13) “*Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; (11) Not slothful in business (**The Business of Godliness**); fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; (12) Rejoicing in hope (**1 John 3:1-3**); patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; (13) Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.”

Our homes ought to be hotels for God’s pilgrims. In making others happy, we find happiness. In giving, we receive. In promoting another’s welfare and honor, we are honored. A person’s character is not revealed in what others say about him, but in what he says about and the way he treats others.

(Romans 12:14-18) “Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. (15) Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (**Believers and Unbelievers**) (16) *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. (17) Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. (18) If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”

When brethren are of one heart, they are able to identify with one another in joy and sorrow. True love produces a strong interest in and concern for one another. If God the Holy Ghost gives us a deep sense of our own unworthiness and ignorance, we will find love for others more abundant in our hearts and learn to forgive offenses and to live in peace. — Until we do, we will always be in the midst of strife, strife of our own making, but always blaming others.

If we would serve the souls of eternity bound men and women, we must deal with them in kindness, speak to them with gentleness, and treat them graciously. That is the message of verses 19-21.

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

(Romans 12:19-21) “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (20) Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (21) Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

My anger will never win the heart of a foe, but kindness may reach his heart and conscience. We

must conquer the hearts of our enemies the same way Christ conquered our hateful hearts — by relentlessly heaping the coals of unmerited mercy, grace, and love upon their heads. The apostle Paul knew all about these coals of grace. He learned from the Book of Wisdom (Proverbs 25:21-22).

(Proverbs 25:21-22) “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: (22) For thou shalt heap

YOU, YOUR GIFTS, AND OTHERS

Romans 12:1-21

coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.”

Do not let evil dictate your course of action. Do not let hatred and hard feelings get the better of you. Do not let evil revenge displace the divine light of forgiveness.

- Romans 12:1-3 — Consecrate yourself to God your Savior.
- Romans 12:4-8 — Consecrate your life to the people of God, his elect, his redeemed, his church. Use the gifts God gives you for the good of God’s people.
- Romans 12:9-21 — Love your neighbor. Do good to those whose lives you touch, for Christ’s sake.

Illustration: *The Good Samaritan*

Amen.