

## **Pt 42 Romans 12:3-8, Gifts of Grace**

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### **Romans 12:3-8**

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 every one members one of another.

6 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.

We pick up where we left off this past Wednesday evening by looking at verses 3-8 of Romans chapter 12. Last time we talked in detail about being pleasing to God by being a “**living sacrifice**.” We saw that it is our “**reasonable service**” to the Lord. This is all part of our “**sanctification process**.”

Now, Paul begins speaking about gifts of grace given to us from the Lord for service in His Church.

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.

Paul in his humble way, explains that God appointed him unto the ministry of grace. He matter of factly explains that it was God that gave him this office. He didn't appoint himself nor did any other man, it was all of God's grace.

Let's not forger the definition of grace is the free unmerited love and favor of God.

With that in mind, Paul cautions us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. A lot of men would brag about the gift or position that God has graced them with. One thing you must be careful of is not to allow yourself to be overtaken by pride. Most people when they possess a gift that garners a lot of attention or have a position of power over others, will lift themselves up on a pedestal. We would do well to remember that God blessed us with gifts and calling by His grace.

I'm reminded of two different kings in the Bible: one in the Old Testament and the other in the New Testament.

In the Book of Daniel chapter 4, you may remember the story of **King Nebuchadnezzar** of Babylon, who was walking in his palace and began bragging that he built great Babylon by the might of his power and his glory. He no sooner than spoke those words then God forced him into the field to live like a wild beast and eat grass for 7-years.

Then, in the Book of Acts we read about **Herod Agrippa** who was the reigning King of the Jews at that time. Listen to what it says in **Acts 12:21-23**: *And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. 22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. 23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.*

Paul says we are not to think of ourselves **more highly than we ought to think**. Instead, we need to **think soberly**. You know what the opposite of that is don't you? It's thinking like a drunkard. Drunks will say and do anything because they are uninhibited. They just open their mouth and let whatever they think roll off their tongue. If we are sober minded, we will weigh our thoughts with caution and understand that anything we have was given to us by the grace of God.

according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

The last part of verse three is very important. This tells us that every believer has the measure of faith dealt unto them. The measure of faith is the correct portion of spiritual gifts given unto each individual believer in order for us to fulfill His purpose and our role in the body of Christ. These gifts are for us to use in the Church and in our daily lives as Christians.

That word “**measure**” means “**a portion**.” The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit gives out gifts in measure: **Ephesians 4:7** *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

The only one to ever be dealt faith without measure was the Lord Jesus Christ. We find that in **John 3:34-35** *For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. 35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.*

The rest of us are dealt it in “measure.” Some have been gifted a larger measure and some smaller, but no one has been left out.

Paul went into more detail about this in his first letter to the Church at Corinth:

### **1 Corinthians 12:1-11**

1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Also, the Apostle Peter says this in **1 Peter 4:10** *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

The fact is, if you are saved, God has imparted unto you the perfect portion of

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 every one members one of another.

Here Paul begins describing the body of the Church. He describes the Church as a body in Christ. This is a condensed version of what he wrote to the Church at Corinth. Again, we read in **1 Corinthians 12:12-31**

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where *were* the body?

20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

29 *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

If we think of the Church this way, it will prevent us from swelling up with pride because of the gift or calling God has graced us with. No office, position, or talent is greater than the other. It takes all of us to complete the body. And that is what Paul is saying in the rest of the verses in our text.

6 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.

Paul lists seven different grace gifts in these verses:

1. **Prophecy** – this means speaking forth. There are no prophets today in the same sense as there were in those days. God has completed his Word and all prophecy has been written down. Now days prophecy would be someone who preaches God's Word – in other words a Pastor, Preacher, or Evangelist.
2. **Ministry** – this would be the role of a deacon in the Church.
3. **Teaching** – someone who teaches and explains God's Word.
4. **Exhorting** – someone who encourages others and lifts them up.
5. **Giving** – someone who gives of his or her time or money to benefit the church and its members.
6. **Ruling** – someone who plays an administrative role or oversees the church property such as a trustee or clerk.
7. **Mercy** – someone who has compassion on people and helps care for those in need or suffering.

All these gifts are gifts of grace and are important and necessary in the Church, but they all work in conjunction with one another to fulfill God's purpose. We must be careful not to think one is more important than the other.

When I was a young man first getting into the ministry, I allowed pride to get the best of me. When people constantly shower you with compliments and adoration it can be overwhelming. I felt like I was very important in the Church. I pastored, led the singing, taught Sunday school, changed the sign, created the Church bulletins, ran the website and all social media pages – I did everything except take up the offering. Yep, I figured the Church couldn't do without me. The Lord humbled me from that way of thinking and now I'm just thankful that he can use me in some small way. I have no aspirations to be famous or pastor the largest church in Knox County. I just want to do my part. But my calling is not more important than what God has called you to do.

Let me say this too. If you are saved, God has a gift of grace for you. No one is left out. You are a vital part of the body. It is up to you whether you are going to accept God's gift and fulfill the purpose He has for you.

Every Church has needs. We have all kinds of needs here at the Church. We need someone to lead the singing, to play the piano, operate the video and sound equipment, direct missions, teach Sunday school. The list is endless. While the Lord has enabled me to be a jack of all trades, the Pastor should not fill every open position or role in the Church.

It's like expecting your head to do all the work of your whole body. How long do you think you would live if every part of your body shut-off except your head? A head without the rest of the body is a lifeless jack-o-lantern and could not survive. So, it takes every part of the body to function as a whole. That is what God expects from His Church.

We don't have time to get into it this morning, but the rest of this chapter goes on to describe the marks of a true Christian. How we are to behave and treat others. There's a lot of good stuff in there and Lord willing we will look at it next time.