

# Decisive Humility 2

*Romans 12:1-8*

*Lord's Day July 3, Anno Domini 2022*

*Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece*

**Scripture Reading - John**

**Acceptable Sacrifice of Praise - Psalm 143, 133**

## **TEXT - ROMANS 12:1-8**

**12 I beseech[exhort] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your [rational] reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

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- 1) The Second Great commandment - Love your neighbor in the same way that you would love yourself.
    - a) See what is your neighbor's good and your own good (the goal, the good),
      - i) and see what things would bring those about (The means),
      - ii) and work to seek both your own and your neighbor's good.
  - 2) WLC - 5th commandment - duties by relationship - Questions 123-133
  - 3) WLC - 9th commandment - honesty, truth telling, forum, decorum - Questions 143-145
  - 4) WLC - 10th commandment - mission focus, contentment, humility, compassion - Questions 146-148

**3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them:**

- 5) Through the grace given to me - this is said through the gift of prophecy

- 6) To everyone who is among you - the whole church, not just officers - we are talking about gifts, not offices
  - a) Abuse of this text in history to justify additional offices
  - b) Failure to cause people to think of their own gifts
  - c) Danger of disregarding office or order - check yourself - Office is a gift - do not think of yourself too highly
- 7) Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think - Humility
  - a) The danger of thinking of oneself too highly
    - i) Pride - unwillingness to serve in the ways that are needed, acknowledged, and/or appointed
    - ii) Anger - fighting, strife
    - iii) Lust - lust for power, grasping at offices - Judges 9:7-15 - The Parable of the Trees - Olive, Fig, Vine, Bramble
    - iv) Laziness - if people cannot rely upon you to do your work, then the division of labor breaks down, and it is worse than if you had never offered to help. You must offer to help if you want to avoid a useless, miserable, and boring life.
  - b) The danger of thinking of oneself too lowly (attention-getting pride - pity)
    - i) Denying gifts of God is taking the name of God in vain
    - ii) Denying gifts of God prevents service
    - iii) Denying gifts of God puts too much burden on too few
      - (1) Poland, Soviets, France, Dunkirk
      - (2) Battle of Britain
      - (3) Royal Air Force VS German Luftwaffe
      - (4) "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few" - Winston Churchill 08/20/1940 AD
    - iv) There is much to do, the time is short, and there is no greater adventure, no higher calling than to use your gifts in service to God according to His law.
  - c) Thinking of oneself rightly is necessary to be of service well
    - i) Initiative vs hanging back
    - ii) Careful observation of self and others
    - iii) Intentional body life
  - d) Evaluation of God - Where do you stack up? - Law and Gospel
    - i) Right view of God and His law helps you to see yourself rightly - in fact - you cannot know yourself apart from the knowledge of God.
  - e) Evaluation of self - Where do you stack up? - the Mirror of the law, Inward

and outward, help from others

- i) The Law is Spiritual - it is from the Divine mind of the Spirit and addresses the mind as well as the external
- ii) Knowledge - definitions, system thinking, use cases with expected results
- iii) Holiness - goal-oriented thinking about the gift
- iv) Righteousness - law defined choices
- v) Usefulness - do you see produce from the gift? What are the signs of the use of the gift?
- vi) The testimony of others
  - (1) Words
    - (a) General statements
    - (b) Thanks
    - (c) Specific statements
    - (d) Chains of questions - 5, 6, 7 questions
    - (e) Testimony to third parties
    - (f) Recommendations and referrals
  - (2) Actions
    - (a) Interest in your work - depth, breadth
    - (b) Attention - quickness of attention, questions, posture
    - (c) Time - time spent helping or talking
    - (d) Money for your work - the market
- f) Evaluation of others - Where do you stack up?
  - i) Only the external
  - ii) Criminal offenses vs. external sins unresolved vs. blamelessness
  - iii) Public offenses vs. being thoughtful as seriousness increases
  - iv) Stumbling blocks vs. limiting of self to avoid harm
  - v) Conflict Resolution - Civil Debate - Rebellion vs. order, decency, and honor
  - vi) Neglect of care vs. cultivation
  - vii) Idleness in failure to use vs. positive evidence of use
- 8) Think soberly as God has given to you a measure of faith - evaluate with prudence based upon the level of knowledge that you possess. Do you know someone who has more knowledge and good character, then seek to absorb that knowledge, follow their example, and become more useful - serve and bless in order to receive - The duties of inferiors WLC Questions 123-133
- 9) Many members, One body, different functions/works/practices

- a) Many members - coordination of the parts (members) - 5th commandment
  - b) One body
    - i) Intellectual unity - Some doctrinal unity, seeking greater doctrinal unity, purpose [one rule of faith - confession]
    - ii) Legal unity in Christ
    - iii) Leads to - Covenanted Uniformity - covenanted uniformity in worship, government, and life
    - iv) Allows for - Functional Unity - method, command [one rule of practice]
  - c) Different Roles - 5th commandment
    - i) Essential equality, legal differentiation of roles, differentiation of non-essential qualities and degrees
- 10) We are many, we are one body in Christ, we are each members of each other
- a) Many members can lead to chaos - 5th commandment
  - b) Unity with Christ provides unity of command - 5th commandment
    - i) Logical order of war fighting - Objective, Offensive, Operational Security, Obedience
    - ii) Functional order of war fighting - Obedience, Operational Security, Offensive, Objective
  - c) Being members of each other is a motive to obedience in bringing about lawful order - 10th commandment
- 11) In recognition of the gifting that differs according to the grace given, let us use the gifts
- a) Recognition of gifting and character - 9th commandment
  - b) Station according to gifting and character - 5th commandment
  - c) Contentment with gifting and station - 10th commandment

**if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.**

6b ειτε προφητειαν κατα την αναλογιαν της πιστεως 7 ειτε διακονιαν εν τη διακονια ειτε ο διδασκων εν τη διδασκαλια 8 ειτε ο παρακαλων εν τη παρακλησει ο μεταδιδους εν απλοτητι ο προισταμενος εν σπουδη ο ελεων εν ιλαροτητι<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William G. Pierpont and Maurice A. Robinson, The New Testament in the Original Greek: According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform (Roswell, GA: The Original Word Publishers, 1995),

- 12) WSC - Q 25-27 - Prophetic, Priestly, Kingly Service to the Body
- Prophetic
  - Priestly
  - Kingly
- 13) V.6b If prophecy, let us prophesy in accordance with the analogy (*αναλογιαν*) of the faith (in logical coherence with the prior revelation). - V.6b *ειτε προφητειαν κατα την αναλογιαν της πιστεως* - (Prophetic)
- Prophecy is the gift of being given words from God - inspired words, words breathed out by God, words from the very mouth of God.
  - The exhortation here is for prophets to be faithful in delivering the Word of God and not be false prophets by contradicting the revealed truth given thus far.
  - Greater to lesser - If this is true of the activities of the office and gifting with more authority, then true of the activities of the office and gifting with less authority. If true of prophets, then true of teachers giving uninspired teaching.
  - Greater to Lesser & Loving Neighbor as Self - If true of teaching others, then true of teaching self - Interpretation / Exposition / hermeneutics in a manner that is systematically coherent - not turning scripture against scripture.
- 14) V.7a - If ministry in the ministry - *ειτε διακονιαν εν τη διακονια* - Ministry (*διακονιαν*) - service in the broad sense - (Priestly Concern)
- Ministry is the general category of service - we are told that we are to use our ability to serve to actually serve.
  - Use your gift of service to serve others in the household and in the body before giving your service to others without just cause.
  - Not narrowly service in the sense of office or in the more narrow sense of diaconal work.
- 15) V.7b - If the doctrine in the teaching - *ειτε ο διδασκων εν τη διδασκαλια* - Teaching Doctrine relates to prophetic gifting. It is not Prophetic in the sense of being inspired, but it relates to the prophetic rather than the priestly or kingly office.
- Use your gift of didactic teaching to edify others in the body with didactic teaching (organization and systematization and pedagogy)

- 16) V.8a - If the Exhortation in the exhorting - *ειτε ο παρακαλων εν τη παρακλησει* - Exhortation - Strength (Kingly Speech)
- a) Speaking in such a manner as to give strength
  - b) Mission-oriented speech - Let's do this
  - c) Power-oriented speech - We can do this
  - d) Honor-oriented speech - praise, gratitude, satisfaction - shame, regret, displeasure
  - e) Reward-oriented speech - if .. then, focus on the horrors to be avoided, focus on the good thing to be gotten
  - f) Put off - Rebuke w/ Chastisement - identify w/ penalty, shame, weakness, mission undermine
  - g) Put on - Correction w/ Encouragement - identify w/ reward, honor, strength, mission help
  - h) Instruction in Righteousness - Discipline and training
- 17) V.8b - the giving one in sincere freeness (singleness of mind) - *ο μεταδιδους εν απλοτητι* - Liberality - willingness to give - Priestliness
- a) Proverbs 23:6-8 - 6 Do not eat the bread of a miser [one who has an evil eye], Nor desire his delicacies; 7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat and drink!" he says to you, But his heart is not with you. 8 The morsel you have eaten, you will vomit up, And waste your pleasant words.
    - i) Liberality with integrity, sincere freeness, generosity of spirit, nobility of attitude, magnanimity of mind
    - ii) Integrity in giving for the good of the other knowing that giving is for your good.
  - b) All trades are the giving of one thing for the sake of getting something that you think is better - working toward the goal - 4th Commandment
    - i) Trade continued possession of your property for fulfilling the need of another with the knowledge that it will have benefits that accord with reality as well as supernatural blessing from God.
      - (1) Give in the name of Christ
      - (2) Give in faith - do not give what you need for performing a duty - consider if the roles were reversed what you would think of the giving by the other person - would you think it wise?
      - (3) Argue against any double-mindedness in yourself
  - c) Liberality depends upon the doctrine of stewardship - 8th Commandment

- d) Holding onto things loosely and desiring to have resources deployed wisely
  - e) Self-sacrificial service - Time and property are valuable - Time cannot be retrieved, and property is generally a proxy for time.
- 18) V.8c - ο προισταμενος εν σπουδη - He who rules/leads, with Diligence/zeal - willingness to lead
- a) Ruling/leading - προισταμενος - rule, maintain, lead, be over
  - b) Zeal/diligence - σπουδη - zeal, earnestness, haste, care, effort
  - c) Ruling/leading with zeal/diligence - Adam, Sampson, Christ
  - d) Rule yourself with zeal
    - i) Titus 3:8: “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to **maintain** good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”
    - ii) Titus 3:14: “And let our people also learn to **maintain** good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.”
  - e) Rule your house with zeal
    - i) 1 Timothy 3:4-5: “one who **rules** his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to **rule** his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);”
    - ii) 1 Timothy 3:12: “Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, **ruling** their children and their own houses well.”
  - f) Rule in the church with zeal
    - i) Romans 12:8: “he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who **leads**, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”
    - ii) 1 Thessalonians 5:12: “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are **over** you in the Lord and admonish you,”
    - iii) 1 Timothy 5:17: “Let the elders who **rule** well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.”
  - g) Rule in the state with zeal

19) V.8d - ο ελεων εν ιλαροτητι - Acts of mercy with Cheerfulness - willingness to forgive and help

- a) Mercy - ελεων - Romans 9:16 - God chooses to show mercy
- b) Cheerfulness - ιλαροτητι - hilarotati - root of hilarious - propitious, prompt, willing, cheerful
  - i) The mercy seat is the “hilasterion” in greek
- c) Why do people need help? - Normally it is because they did things that were foolish and they are in a time of discipline from God.
- d) Sometimes it is because they just had a bunch of things happen as a test.
- e) Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
  - i) self righteousness or integrity?
  - ii) 1 year for good reputation - not a forever probation



## DOCTRINE

### WCF Chapter 26: Of the Communion of Saints

1. All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head, by his Spirit and by faith, have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory:[a] and being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces,[b] and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.[c]

a. John 1:16; Rom 6:5-6; Eph 2:5-6; 3:16-19; Phil 3:10; 2 Tim 2:12; 1 John 1:3. • b. 1 Cor 3:21-23; 12:7; Eph 4:15-16; Col 2:19. • c. Rom 1:11-12, 14; Gal 6:10; 1 Thes 5:11, 14; 1 John 3:16-18.

2. Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain - holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification;[a] as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.[b]

a. Isa 2:3; Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor 11:20; Heb 10:24-25. • b. Acts 2:44-45; 11:29-30; 2 Cor 8-9 throughout; 1 John 3:17.

3. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead, or to be equal with Christ in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous.[a] Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.[b]

a. Psa 45:7 with Heb 1:8-9; Isa 42:8; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:18-19; 1 Tim 6:15-16. • b. Exod 20:15; Acts 5:4; Eph 4:28.