
INTRODUCTION

- Review: Eph4:12; 1Cor12; today another key passage on the subject of spiritual gifts
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EXPOSITION

- connection to previous 2 verses; offering of self as living sacrifice; service to the Lord; this doesn't happen in vacuum, apart from the body of Christ

I. GIVE YOURSELF TO SOBER-SELF ASSESMENT – v.3s**A. The Source of This Call**

- I say through the grace given to me – this is not reference to saving grace (v.6), but exercising his apostleship
 - He speaks as with the gift of being an apostle, with that authority

B. The Scope of This Call

- to everyone who is among you – a call for all believers to do what follows

C. The Essence of This Call

- (*Gk. Phroneo* - to think about, have an opinion, understand properly) kata what is true- used 4x in this verse

1. Negatively – not to not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think

- (*Gk. Huperphroneo* - be conceited, think too highly of oneself)

2. Positively - but to think soberly

- (*Gk. Sophroneo* - be in one's right mind, think sensibly, be serious)

- where there are gifts, there are ambitions; the same essential exhortation as in 1 Corinthians

D. The Reason for This Call

- as God has dealt – (*Gk. meridzo* - divided, assigned, apportioned)
- to each one – every Christian, every saint
- a measure of faith – (*Gk. metron* - degree, quantity) the context is not measure of saving faith, but gift (result of faith)
- it is God who distributes the gifts to each as He wills, and there is nothing we have we haven't received from Him

- this call us to not have an over-esteem, but neither an under-esteem of our gifts

II. REMEMBER THE REALITY THE UNITY AND DIVERSITY OF GIFTS – v.4-5**A. The Physical Analogy**

- Many members/one body; function (*Gk. praxis* - function, part, or work) all body parts function differently

B. The Spiritual Reality

- so we, the many, are one body in Christ - spiritual union with Him; one great purpose, to glorify His mercy
 - because of this, we cannot have the same gifts and functions
- also individually members of one another; there is an inter-connectedness; this comes into play with the multitude of “one another” references in the NT (a later study)
- with this there is the right and sharing of gifts, because they are by design for one another (not self); to withhold our gifts is to rob the body from what is their due; these are not our own (husband/wife analogy)

III. A CALL TO PROPER EXERCISE – vv.6-8

- Having gifts (*Gk. charismata*) – we do believe in the charismatic gifts; distinct functions given by grace
 - address false Charismatic gifts and biblical standard; false miracle workers
- differing (*Gk diaphoros*) according to the grace that is given to us - God's sovereign disposal of the charismata
 - all the gifts aren't for all, and those gifts are not chosen by us
- let us use them: verb supplied
- the following are not strict categories, but emphasis particular strengths; there will be overlap and inter-connectedness

A. Word Gifts

- 1.) **prophecy** (*Gk. prophayteia*) - in proportion to (*Gk. analogia*, in accordance with, in agreement with) the faith
 - not one's subjective faith, but according to (1.) the rule of God's revelation and (2.) what God has revealed to you
- 2.) **the ministry** (*Gk. diakonia*) – definite article; likely referring to the ministry of the Word and prayer
- 3.) **teaches** (*Gk. didasko*) - instructing others in the truth of God; the gift is exercised by teaching; the ability to understand and propagate the truth of the Word; a desire for study and knowledge and wisdom
 - this is not just public ministry, but Bible class, discipleship, home Bible studies, women's study, work studies
- 4.) **exhorts** – (*Gk. parakaleo*) encourage, comfort; speak God's truth in such a way that relieves
 - one who is able to use words in a way that builds home and strengthens; this could be in conversation, on the phone, in cards, letters, or E-mails; not a busy body calling to find others' business, but desire to strengthen

B. Deed gifts

- 1.) **gives** (*Gk. metadidomi*) – financial, material, time - provision for practical needs
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- this is to be done with liberality, generously; also translated “single-minded”, with the purpose of doing good for the glory of God; not other purposes of self-exaltation, gaining power in the church, etc.
- 2.) **leads** (*Gk. proistaymi* stand before by way of leadership, manage, administrate, care for, give help, engage in, practice); those gifted at orchestrating deeds done to the body; Tit3:8; 3:14
- this is to be done with diligence (eagerness, zeal, effort)
- 3.) **mercy** (*Gk. eleeo – take pity, show mercy, be merciful*) - with cheerfulness; to be able to sympathize and be moved with compassion
- wonderful example in Acts9:36ff

APPLICATION

How do I discover my gift(s)?

1.) Ask yourself “What do you do well?” “What do you enjoy doing?”

- These gifts are discovered by doing; a plain examination of your strengths in other spheres
- this doesn’t mean that it isn’t hard work; even those with “gifts”, it comes through diligent exercise
- it is almost demeaning to tell such a person that it comes easy to them
- the difference between ordinary and extraordinary gifts is that one is exercised by supernatural “over-empowerment” the other with diligent labor and exercise – 1Tim4:14

2.) Have a proper understanding of what is “spiritual”

- so often we relegate this term with a certain idea of what it means; not just the mind, but also the body
- three things that make something “spiritual”
 - their source - they are given by the Holy Spirit
 - their recipients - they are given to sinners saved by grace
 - their purpose - they are given for the building up of the body of Christ
- whatever is done with these is a spiritual work

3.) Recognize that these include formal-official/informal-unofficial exercises

- in a sense the elders and deacons are examples in these two categories; but much takes place “informally”
- just because it isn’t part of an official program doesn’t negate the reality of their greatness

4.) Seek the advice of others

- One of the most helpful things to recognize is that each strength is a potential weakness, and another reason we work together as a body; also, that we should observe others and become stronger in the areas we are weak (example)

5.) Beware of “pigeon holing” yourself in a gifts and limiting them

- these can and should be mixed and balanced; they are interconnected; words without deeds/deeds without words
- we see in this the glory of Christ, because He had all the spiritual gifts perfectly balanced; it takes all of us together, and that imperfectly, to reflect Him
- while we have special gifts, we should be developing other areas as well, becoming more like Christ

6.) Recognize that to have and exercise a gift doesn’t mean you are “the best” at it

- there is a diversity and levels of development; look for role models, inquire in those areas
- this is where there is sober self-assessment; there will always be those who are better, but that doesn’t make our gift illegitimate

7.) Recognize that to have and exercise a gift doesn’t mean that we will influence multitudes

- some can only think “large scale”, and wonder what they are doing for the body “universally”; but the emphasis is the local body

8.) Recognize all of this assumes real and vital involvement in the body of Christ

- if you are a Sunday church goer, and aren’t having real interaction and dealing with people, you will never exercise your gift rightly - this is true even (and especially) of my own gifts as a pastor/teacher
- these gifts are all relational, and not professional