

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Wednesday Sermon

Date: September 01, 2021

Text: Romans 12:3-8

Scripture Reading: Romans 12:3-8

Subject: Many members, but not the same office

In verses 1 and 2 of this 12th chapter, we considered these things:

1. That the apostle besought the brethren by the mercies of God to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which was their reasonable service.
2. The brethren were admonished to be not conformed to this world; but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they might prove what was that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God,

Now, we come to chapter 12, verses 3 through 8.

Romans 12:3 (KJV) *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.*

For I say, -- The word "for" shows that the apostle is about to introduce some other points to consider which will enforce what he had just said. We think he will show how we, who have been transformed by the renewing of our minds through the word of God may demonstrate that change of mind that is not conformed to the world. In a word, we will show that change by the manner in which we conduct our lives as members of the body of Christ, the church.

through the grace given unto me, -- By the favor which the Lord bestowed on me, the least of all saints, not worthy to be called an

apostle, that I might perform the office of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

To every man – The word “man” comes from the Greek word *pas* which is found more than 1200 times in the New Testament. It is variously translated as: “all 748 times, all things 170 times, every 117 times, all men 41 times, whosoever 31 times, everyone 28 times, whole 12 times, all manner of 11 times, every man 11 times, every thing 7 times, plus other miscellaneous translations. I conclude this expression “to every man” means all without exception; every one.

that is among you, -- Every member of the church, whether placed in an office of the church or not. No matter what abilities or capacity, but having gifts, whether more or less. the manifestation of the Spirit being given to everyone to profit withal, for his own and the good of others. It is clear to this preacher that none are without some kind of gift from the Lord, which is to be used in the body, the church for the profit of all.

not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; -- not to ascribe to himself what does not belong to him, nor to detract from others, who may have equal, if not superior, abilities. God forbid that we should glory in what we have been given individually, as if we had not received it, and as if it was altogether owing to our own wisdom, diligence, and industry. Let us not search into things too high for us - things that are out of our reach, and beyond our capacity. This is not said to discourage us but rather to lead us to do that for which the LORD has apprehended us.

But to think soberly, -- This means that we are to think in such a way that we act soberly or wisely. Therefore, we think and consider ourselves in order to act, in our capacity, wisely, prudently,

modestly. Those who over-estimate themselves are proud, haughty, foolish in their deportment. Those who think of themselves as they ought, are modest, sober, prudent. To maintain a wise and proper conduct, nothing is so certain, as the forming of an humble and modest estimate of our own character and capabilities.

according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. -- As God has measured or given to each one, of us. You and I ought to consider that what gifts, abilities, light, and knowledge we have, we have those things, not of ourselves, but from God. People are prone to be proud of their own accomplishments, but knowing that our gifts of faith come from God serves to make us thankful and humble before God and one another. Let us consider that none of us have **all faith**, and **all knowledge**, and do not know the whole of the faith of the Gospel but only a measure of it – and that measure is dealt out, divided, and parted to every man, some having a greater degree of light and understanding than others. All have some, but none have all. Ah, beloved, this is why we are in a body – we have a part of that body, but certainly not the whole.

Romans 12:4 (KJV) *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:*

For as we have many members in one body, -- The apostle Paul illustrates what he said concerning God's dealing to every man the measure of faith, by comparing the church of Christ to an human body, which is but one, and has many members in union with it, and one another. Every member of the human body is placed in an exact symmetry and proportion, and in proper subserviency to every other member, and for the good of the whole body.

And all members have not the same office: -- We can readily see by use of the illustration of the human body that all members have not the same office. The English word "office" comes from the Greek word: "πρᾶξις praxis *prax'-is*" which is found six times in the New Testament. This word is translated as: "deed 4 times, work 1 time, and office 1 time." So we can see the meaning – every member does not have the same mode of their deeds or work. So is the church of Christ. Brethren, ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." (1Co. 12:27).

Romans 12:5 (KJV) *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, -- This is the application of the illustration going before. God's elect are many, yet not many according to the reprobates, for there be few which find that strait gate and narrow way. Still this great number of disciples yet make up a manifestation of His spiritual kingdom in all of the Lord's churches, which He has purchased and redeemed to Himself as a peculiar inheritance. Each church is one body "in Christ", united and knit together by joints and bands, under Jesus Christ their head, Lord, and King; in him, and not any earthly monarch, to distinguish this body from bodies politic, or any civil community among men. The church is His church.

And every one members one of another. – In the church, we are all in union with Christ our head, and in union with one another in love, walking in holy fellowship together, sympathizing with, and serving each other. That is, we are so fitted as to be mutually dependent; each one is of service to the other; and the existence and office of the one is necessary to the usefulness of the other. Thus the members of the body may be said to be members one of another; as the feet could not, for example, perform their functions, or be of use, if it were not for the eye; the ear, the hand, the teeth,

etc., would be useless if it were not for the other members, which go to make up the entire person. Thus in the church, every individual is not only necessary in his place as an individual, but is needful to the proper symmetry and action of the whole church.

Romans 12:6 (KJV) *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether ¹prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;*

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, -- We have already seen that not every person necessarily has the same gift, also it means that one person may have more than one of these gifts.

Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; -- Strictly speaking, prophecy is the fore-telling of events, but it is also shown to be the forth-telling of the word of God, that is, Preaching the word. The offices here, and hereafter mentioned, are not of an extraordinary, but ordinary kind, such as are lasting, and will continue in the church unto the end of time. I would have you consider that these abiding gifts are markedly different from the supernatural gifts which are listed and defined in the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians. By "prophesying" is meant, not foretelling things to come, though this gift of foretelling was bestowed upon some, as Agabus, and others in the early church. No man can "divide the word of truth" by the faith of another – he can do it only according to the gift of faith given him. Certainly pastors are exhorted to "Study to shew themselves approved unto God; workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2Ti. 2:15).

Romans 12:7 (KJV) *Or ²ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that ³teacheth, on teaching;*

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: -- Ministry properly means *service* of any kind, [Lu 10:40](#).

Luke 10:40 (KJV) *But Martha was cumbered about much serving [diakonia], and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.*

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It is used in the work of the church to describe the *service* which is rendered to Christ as the *Master*. It is applied to *all* classes of ministers in the New Testament, speaking of their being the *servants* of Christ. It is used particularly to denote *deacons*, i.e. those who had the care of the poor, who provided for the sick, and who watched over the *external* matters of the church. In other words, this speaks of those who give themselves to serve others in the church or the needs of the church as a whole. To wait on their ministry, is to focus on the office of serving.

Or he that teacheth, on teaching; -- This word teacheth speaks of those who *instruct*, or communicate knowledge. Like any gift, this takes prayer, preparation and work. Teachers ought to focus on teaching.

Romans 12:8 (KJV) *Or he that ⁴exhorteth, on exhortation: he that ⁵giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ⁶ruleth, with diligence; he that ⁷sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: -- This is the other branch of prophesying or preaching, and which is more practical, and lies in giving a word of exhortation to the saints, as their particular cases call for; for as prophets were teachers, [Ac 13:1](#); so also exhorters, [Ac 15:32](#); and one considerable branch of the ministry, and which is more principally the pastor's work, as well as to teach, is to exhort all sorts of persons, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, bond and free, under his care, with all longsuffering and doctrine. What does exhort

mean? It means this: “To incite by words or advice; to animate or urge by arguments to a good deed or to any laudable conduct or course of action.” It also means to “advise; to warn; to caution.” Here are some examples or commands of exhortation:

I exhort you to be of good cheer. Acts. 27.

Young men also exhort to be sober minded.

Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters. Tit.2.

Acts 2:40 (KJV) And with many other words did he (The Apostle Peter) testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; -- Let’s notice the verses which use this same Greek verb and consider the words into which they are translated:

Lu 3:11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart **<3330>** to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Ro 1:11 For I long to see you, that I may impart **<3330>** unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

Ro 12:8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth **<3330>**, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Eph 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give **<3330>** to him that needeth.

1Th 2:8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted **<3330>** unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

As we can see, this has the idea of imparting something to another. We could say this is the work of a deacon who takes what is needed to impart to another, or we can say that of all who are in the church body who impart what is theirs for the benefit of others – just as the churches of Asia and Corinth took offerings for the poor saints in Judaea.

Is it not true that many of us may have the gift of giving or imparting? Some may give more than others, but no matter the extent of the gift – it is blessedly true that is is “more blessed to given than to receive.”

He that ruleth, with diligence; -- Pastors most certainly rule as well as deacons in their realm in caring for the physical needs of the church. Elders (old men) definitely are looked up to as rulers in the church. No matter which is under consideration here, let those persons exercise this gift with diligence. Rulers ought to exercise constant effort to accomplish what is undertaken; exertion of body or mind without unnecessary delay or sloth. I think these are mentioned in this verse from 1st Corinthians 12:

1 Corinthians 12:28 (KJV) *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.*

He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. – John Gill thinks this to be a branch of the deacon's office, whose work, among other things, is to visit the sick and distressed, and communicate to them as their wants require; all which should be done, not in a morose

and frowning manner, but with a pleasant look and cheerful countenance, which makes the visit and the gift more welcome, acceptable, and useful. I think it may be much more widespread than the deacons – that is, among the whole body who are moved of the LORD to show mercy with cheerfulness. If moroseness, or impatience, or fretfulness is discovered in us, it will pain those whom we seek to benefit, embitter their feelings, and render our services of comparatively little value. The needy and infirm, the feeble and the aged, have enough to bear without the impatience and harshness of professed friends. It may be added, that the example of the Lord Jesus Christ is the brightest which the world has furnished of this temper. Though constantly encompassed by the infirm and the afflicted, yet he was always kind, and gentle, and mild, and has left before us *exactly* what the apostle meant when he said, "he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."

This is wonderful, exceeding wonderful. All this the LORD has given us in the body to be a blessing to everyone else. Let us do it with joy and cheerfulness in obedience to Him who loves us with an everlasting love.