

# Spiritual Gifts

(Romans 12:3-8)

Survey of Romans part 43

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## Introduction: Spiritual Gifts & Serving.

- Does 10% of the people carry the weight of 90% of the ministry in a church?  
Maybe...
- Could it be because rewards in church ministry are practically null, humanly speaking?
- It is very difficult to stay focused and motivated, expecting an unseen reward in faith.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen... 6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- **Expecting on God's reward is easier said and preached than lived! Comp Mt 6:1**
- There are no rewards or consequences about anything we do related to church.
- It is very hard to stay motivated in the flesh, in order to serve in the church.

Introduction: Spiritual Gifts & Serving.

# Is this something that could be fixed?

- Well, many churches are successful at it.
- There are some proven and “effective” steps.
- However, today I am here to talk about Paul’s approach to ministry in the church from Romans 12.

Recruit the right people for the right job

Share and Own the vision

Train & Mentor

Empower & Delegate

## Introduction: Spiritual Gifts & Serving.

Paul anchored his exhortation to serve, in the church, in the realities of the Gospel.

12:1 I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

This morning we will continue expanding on that subject on verses 3 to 8 from Romans 12.

<sup>3</sup> For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

<sup>4</sup> For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,

<sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

<sup>6</sup> And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith;

<sup>7</sup> if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching;

<sup>8</sup> or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

## OUTLINE

### **I - SERVING THE LORD WITH OUR GIFTS 3-6a**

(Four Exhortations)

- 1. A Sober Self-Evaluation vs 3**
- 2. Understanding of Diversity and Functionality vs 4**
- 3. Having Correct Priorities vs 5**
- 4. Grace-Driven, but Acting Humility vs 6a)**

### **II – THE LIST OF GIFTS IN ROMANS 12 6b-8**

- 1. Prophecy**
- 2. Service**
- 3. Teaching**
- 4. Exhorting**
- 5. Giving**
- 6. Leading**
- 7. Mercy**

## Introduction: Spiritual Gifts & Serving.

A Clarifying Point: if you have a NAS, the text reads “I say to every man among you”, but the ESV rendering is “to everyone among you”. 3  
Le,gw..... panti. tw/| o;nti evn u`mi/n

- The text reads: “to everyone [who is living] or [existing] among you.”
- The NAS took the masculine of the article and participle and translated it as “man”.
- The ESV rendering leaves it gender neutral as “to everyone”.
- The ESV translation is more in agreement with the literal words and with Biblical Doctrine which doesn't limit service and spiritual gifts to men only.

## I - SERVING THE LORD WITH OUR GIFTS

(Four Exhortations that are actually requirements to properly serve the Lord with our gifts)

### 1. A Sober Self-Evaluation (verse 3)

<sup>3</sup> For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

- In the original it is a tongue twister, “don’t over think, more than what you should think, but think with sober thinking”.
- We tend to think more about ourselves than what we really are. *100 selfies attempts!*
- The exhortation: **“take stock of what you have received from God”**
- Think soberly (reasonably, moderately and with self-control) in light of what you have.
- FALSE HUMILITY is veiled pride. Self-deprecation aims at pre-emptying judgment. If I tell you I’m an idiot, I will elicit your compassion and perhaps you will not bully me.

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Here's an example of true humility:



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Capt. Sully Sullenberger on LinkedIn: "10 years ago today the lives of everyone on #Flight1549 changed forever. On that...



## I - SERVING THE LORD WITH OUR GIFTS

### 2. Understanding of Diversity and Functionality (verse 4)

<sup>4</sup> For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function,

- Same illustration used in 1 Corinthians 14. The body having different members working in harmony.
- The famously used and abused “team-work” or “team-spirit”.
- Diversity and proportionality produce efficiency.
- Illustration: which is your favorite finger? 
- The challenge: the moral of Marcos Vidal song, “Payaso”. The clown of the circus was tired of hearing children laugh because he coveted the adults’ applause. One day he climbed the Trapeze, fell to the ground, became crippled and the circus closed because children didn’t come to it. He ended up playing clown for a few children from a wheel chair; he finally understood that God gifted him to make children laugh.
- **Learn what did God make of you to be, for His Glory!**

## I - SERVING THE LORD WITH OUR GIFTS

### 3. Having Correct Priorities (verse 5)

<sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

- **“Members of one another!”** That phrase says a lot. It flies in the face of our *individualistic, consumerist* and *contemplative* version of Christianity.
- Some people “come” to church (Roman Catholic mentality not driven away by the Reformation). Many pastors emphasize “attendance” because they need an “audience”. I know what I’m saying because “I’ve been there ... done that”
- Do we gather with the church to receive, contemplate and receive...
- **Or to give?**

## I - SERVING THE LORD WITH OUR GIFTS

### 4. Grace Driven, but acting humility (verse 6a)

*<sup>6</sup> And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly*

- The phrase “let us exercise them accordingly” has been added by translators to help the rendering, but it is not in the Original.
- Paul repeats himself to buttress his argument. “we have gifts that differ”.
- Emphasis on “we have” and “differ”. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.
- Of course, it is all “by the grace given to us”. Nothing to brag or boast about “gifts”.

## I - SERVING THE LORD WITH OUR GIFTS

### 4. Grace Driven, but Acting Humility (verse 6a)

<sup>6</sup> And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly

- The principle remains: you have received the gifts, act!  
Nike: “Just Do It” ...
- We are in a congregation and context that it is very easy to serve. Some churches are very strict in who do they let serve, but Cornerstone is a place that is very easy to serve.
- Do you think you can preach or teach? Open a Bible study. Nobody will hinder you.
- Do you believe you can serve? Go ahead, there’s plenty of areas in town where you can.
- This church even lends its building for free to those who believe they can use it for the Lord.



## II – THE LIST OF GIFTS IN ROMANS (not exhaustive)

- 1. Prophecy:** speaking the word of God, for God, to people.
- 2. Service:** “diakonia” -> going through the dust -> usually unnoticed and hidden.  
*=> How do you believe Cornerstone picks our deacons?*
- 3. Teaching:** instruction on the things of God, whether public or private.
  - It obviously requires two things: a) giftedness (ability) and b) knowledge.
  - Wishing to teach is not enough, you must be able to teach.
  - This comes as a combination of God-given “spiritual gift” and God-given “natural” talent.
- 4. Exhorting:** is the ability to communicate not just knowledge, but applied wisdom.
  - It may come in the form of a rebuke, challenge, encouragement, consolation, gracious reprimand or direction.
  - There are able teachers who are excellent in their instruction, but this is not the same.
  - There are those who speak the Word even privately, and our hearts burn, like the disciples of Emmaus hearing Jesus, that is a God-given gift.

## II – THE LIST OF GIFTS IN ROMANS (not exhaustive)

**4. Exhorting:** is the ability to communicate not just knowledge, but applied wisdom.

- It comes from the crucible of experience and suffering, which leads to insight.
- Certain gifts require “experience”, the Holy Spirit doesn’t need our experience, but this seems to be the ordinary way in which He works.
- Many times the gift of exhortation comes in the dynamic of seasoned saints.

**5. Giving with liberality:** it is what it is. Giving money, giving beyond the usual, but to give, you must have, and those who have this gift, give in abundance.

**6. Leading with diligence:** lit.: standing at the front with genuine commitment, devotion, care, good will and zeal. Leading as a gift of God, is to serve with eagerness.

- Farms have “work horses and show horses”. Those who lead are “work horses” in church.

## II – THE LIST OF GIFTS IN ROMANS (not exhaustive)

**7. Showing Mercy with cheerfulness:** it is God-enabled, it is to dispense care and help with compassion to people in dire need.

- Prison ministries, Homeless Ministry, Hospital Visits, Hospice Care, Care for the elderly and widows.
- All of us are called to be merciful, but those who have the gift, exert it in unusual measures and with great joy.

## SUMMARY:

- Spiritual gifts are “manifestations” of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus sent to be our comforter and companion, after the resurrection.
- The spiritual gifts of others are God’s reminders of His love in Jesus, for us.
- Our spiritual gifts, are God’s reminders to others, of Jesus’ Love and Compassion toward them.
- Can you imagine if we prayed every day this way for one another: Lord help me remind somebody of how much you love them! As I pray that for you, and you pray it for me, do you imagine the type of dynamics it will generate in our churches lives?
- May we be “Instruments in the hands of the Redeemer” – copying David Tripp book title –
- May we employ our gifts in such a way, that people in church may be reminded of the mercies of God, in Christ.



**END**