

Open Sails – Your Gift, His Body!

Romans 12:1-8

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your 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.

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: 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.

Pray

Tools in the tool shed were all gathered for a special meeting!

A)The Hammer was appointed to preside over meeting – that is when Mr. Screwdriver objected, saying “**Brother Hammer, you’re too noisy to preside over this meeting. You’re always driving home your point, always nailing people.** I call for your resignation immediately.

Brother Hammer responded “Well, what about you, **Brother Screwdriver**? All you ever do is spin around in circles.”

“That may be true, said **Brother Screwdriver**, but at least I’m not like **Brother Plane**. His work is

so surface, so shallow. What right does he have to even be here?”

“If you’re going to kick me out, protested **Brother Plane**, what about **Brother Ruler**? He thinks he’s always right, measuring everyone else by his standards”

“Well, if you’re going to come down on me, argued **Brother Ruler**, what about **Brother Plier**? He needs to get a grip!”

“At least I don’t rub people the wrong way, said **Brother Plier**, who was staring at **Brother Sandpaper**.

Just then the Master Craftsman walked in.

A)And as He started using each tool as it was designed, He created an object of great beauty.

B)You know we can be a lot like those tools in the tool shed!

C)We start looking at each other **seeing the flaws** and **short comings** in each other and Judging each other

1)Rather than seeing each other as a part of the body of Christ!

This is what we must understand: When the Bible talks about the Church it never is talking about an Organization – or Corporation.

A)And yet that is so often how the Church is seen today – Which is necessary Budgets and leadership and accountability.

B)But in the truest form – when the Bible refers to the Church –**It usually refers to it as a Body**

C)Here in Rom. 12 Paul compares the Church to the Human body –made up of many members

1)**THERE IS DIVERSITY** – Many members –

D)**Different functions** - But there is unity – all connected to the HEAD WHO IS JESUS

In this discussion Paul introduces us to the subject of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit!

A) **Found in three places in the scriptures** - 1 Corinthians 12 & 14 the sign gifts – Tongues, words of knowledge – words of wisdom – etc

B) We are going to get to that list in a few weeks.

C) **Then Ephesians 4 gifts – Gifted men/ Offices – Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor/Teacher**

1) Jesus gives gifted people to the body – for this purpose: Equip the saints for the work of the ministry! {JASON NEXT WEEK

D) But then there is the list given here in Romans 12 - **Primary gifts** – everyone has at least one.

1) Practical gifts - that can be divided into two groups – Those that

Expound the word and those that Expand the work.

I want you to notice how Paul starts this section – what makes for the Backdrop of this teaching

I beseech {Beg you implore –strongly encourage} you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

A) A living sacrifice – This again is where we get the idea behind the name of this series – Open Sails

B) **Not you getting more of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit getting more of you! –**

1) Like a **sail open all the way to the wind**

Bb) **Same idea – Living sacrifice:** Lord I am alive – but I am laying my life on the altar of your plan – your purpose – Your Kingdom –

C) I exist for you – rather than – God existing for me!

D) Living sacrifice – An Open Sail

E) My life NOT being conformed to this world – but transformed by Your Spirit –

1) My **mind renewed** by your word.

That is the backdrop of this teaching on the gifts of the Spirit!

A) We are all members of one another – connected

B) V.3 We need to not think too highly of ourselves

1) Another way of saying that – to make a reasonable appraisal of who you are.

C) **Honest appraisal** – who you are – your place

1) Divisions happen in the body when we start thinking that we are more important / special
Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Colossians 3:16

¹⁶“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

A) The word and the Spirit are connected – the Word enlightens the mind/ **the Spirit – energizes the will!**

B) Starts Living sacrifice – Open sail – Lord here is my heart –

1) Results in right thinking – results in right behavior

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, (Another way of saying that is to make a reasonable appraisal of who you are) but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

A) See that is what happens when we are not looking at ourselves reasonably – Division – like the tools – I am more important – etc.

B) Think reasonably – **reasonable appraisal** of yourself and of others!

1) Not more not less – Just members of his body

C) We are all in this together – We all have a part to play – we all have a function.

1) Over in 1 Cor. – Don't compare – don't say – Hand not a foot not a part of the body – no each has a place!

D) Key is in learning your gift and how to function in the body of Christ!

Having then gifts let us uses them! – NO GOOD ON THE SHELF

A) Gift of a new Car – sits in the Garage -

Exercise machine never used - Necklace – never worn

B) Gifts are meant to be appreciated and used!

C) God says – Given you gifts – use them!

Paul divides the gifts into two groups here

❖ **Those that Expound the Word**

❖ **And those that Expand the work!**

A) As we begin to define these gifts, you might find yourself thinking - I have that gift!

B) For example: I am naturally a leader.

C) **My whole life - Before I was even saved – people were telling me you're a leader – Always picked to be captain – etc**

D) But here is the thing – my leading under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit can look really different from my leading in the flesh.

1) **In the flesh – I can lead – and be a jerk – people cry – serve with resentment**

Goal - Take our natural gifts and bring them under the leadership and direction of the Holy Spirit!

A) So Whether we are talking about leading at work – home or the context of the church we want to do it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit –

B) Walking in the Spirit – so that we are leading in love – not in control

C) So lets break down this list: Those that expound the word!

1) Now the first gift Paul mentions is prophesy - *if prophesy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;*

D) It derives from a Greek root which means "*to cause to shine,*" and is linked with the prefix "pro" which means "before."

1) So a person w/ the gift of prophesy is one who stands before and causes the word of God to shine.

Now in the OT the Prophets would stand before God's people and declare His Word -

A) They had both a **forth telling Ministry** - They would declare God's truth to the people of Israel

B) They also had a fore telling – meaning there was a predictive aspect to their ministry: They predicted future events – coming judgment

1) Coming of Messiah etc

C) In the NT the ministry of the Prophet is more **Forth telling than Fore telling** -

1) Handful of times when it is seen in a forth telling predictive way – **Agabus/ John the Revelator**

D) But most of time in the NT – it is more Forth telling – Declaring God's word to His people!

Prophecy is the gift of Declaring truth

A) Basically it is the gift of making Scripture come alive. **Preaching = Knowledge on Fire!**

B)The word burns w/ in the heart of those who have this gift & they must get it out !

C) 1 Corinthians 14:3 “...he who prophesies speaks edification / exhortation and comfort to men.”

1) In other words prophecy is that which is meant to encourage / build up / and comfort the body !

The ministry of prophesy can be evidenced in the Church when a Pastor is preaching the word .

❖ Word from the Lord!!!! -

A)And something that was said was so God.

B)Prophecy can be seen in a Wed. night meeting where we are just waiting on the Lord - or in an afterglow - retreat

1)Simply - someone sharing a word of Scripture !

C)It is exactly what the church or part of the body needed to hear- not given a Spirit of Fear

D) This can also be evidenced in daily conversations - where the Lord puts you in a place to share w/ someone a specific word of scripture

1) And it is the perfect thing for that person - God impresses deeply upon your heart this is what this person needs to hear.

E)Prophecy is the gift of Declaring truth

The next gift Paul mentions is ministry - Now Prophecy Declares truth - ministry Depicts truth.

A) Jesus showed us this over & over how He would first teach & then He touch !

B) Teach truth & touch people as an illustration of what He taught !

C)I believe that the gift of Ministry is the same as the gift of helps mentioned in 1 Cor. 12 - simply means serving .

1)Those who are Deacons fall into this category - word deacon - means servant !

D)Deacons will have the gift of helps or ministry

The person who has the gift of ministry of the gift of helps is one who depicts the truth of God's word by being a servant !

A)Their lives are a living testimony & illustration of the truths of the word

B) Dorcas in Acts 9 was a lady who seemed to minister in this way, Seamstress – made coats

C)When she died the early church was deeply crushed?

1) Called for Peter - Please come & pray that she would be raised

C)Now I have to believe that Dorcas wasn't the only seamstress in the Church

1)Why was she so loved ?

D)It wasn't what she did - it was the way she did it!

Her Name means Gazelle - one who is bounding and free - not burdened or weighed down –

A)Those w/ the gift of Helps - Live to Help others

B) Joy & Cheerfulness - loving & serving !

C)Some people are so burdened in their Serving

D)Hey how are you doing? “I am serving the Lord!” Grumpy grumpy

1)Wow I want to serve with you! (NOT REALLY)

E)People with the gift of ministry who enjoy serving and do it with Joy have a contagious affect on others

Prophet Declares truth / Ministry Depicts truth – The Next Paul mentions teacher !

❖ Teaching Defines truth

A)A teacher shares systematically - verse by verse - line by line - defining & explaining what the word says & means

B)A prophet might share the word sporadically - might start off in a text but moves around to a

point where - giving this word ! (One thing to focus on)

C)Teacher – shares systematically - line by line – Brings insight and understanding to the word- **illumination and application.**

C) Jesus illustrated this in Matt. 5:

27,28 27 *"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'*

28 *"But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

D) Took the word & brought definition to it !

E)Defined it & made it very applicable!

❖ **Adultery goes beyond the act.**

- 1)Looks – lust wants her, fantasizing about being with that person sexually
- 2)Committed - Adultery already in his/her heart

Teaching vs good communicating – Power to it

A)**Actor and the Pastor**

B)This guy doesn't just know what he is talking about – he knows who he is talking about.

C)We are a Calvary Chapel - Pastor Chucks model –

1)Huge emphasis on teaching and expounding the Scriptures – Bible study is really important here

D)TEACHING OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH -

- ❖ home group - just impart the word –
- ❖ one on one – discipleship

TEACHING OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH

A)Conversation over coffee – bringing insight to a text and application

B)Devos with your kids

C)Gift of teaching is exercised!

- ❖ **Prophecy is the gift of Declaring truth**
- ❖ **Ministry is the gift that Depicts truth**
- ❖ **Teaching Defines truth**

Next gift mentioned is gift of exhortation - The person who has the gift of exhortation is the one w/ the gift to Develop truth

- A) Person who comes along side of another & literally shows them how to walk - how to minister by doing it w/ them
- B) It is a very **hands on type of gifting** - / in fact the word itself is extremely enlightening ! Parakaleo in the Greek
- 1) Means one called along side to help or to aid - it is derived from the exact same word used to describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit
- C) **He is referred to as the Parakletos - or the one called along side to help!**

D)So an exhorter's primary ministry is one of encouraging & coming alongside to aid.

1)Strongly urging one to pursue a course of conduct

Seen in the Church in teaching & preaching / in counseling / in men's groups & women's groups / definitely in Discipleship

- A) **Seen outside the Church** in - coming along side people out of fellowship & helping them get in fellowship - pick up give a ride.
- B) **Ministry that pursues others to help them grow in the Lord - go on in Christ - go forward in ministry**
- 1) Ministry that Challenges to go higher - not settle for mediocrity in our lives - in our walks - or in our ministries !

A Good example of someone in the N.T. who exercised this gift was Barnabas - name = Son of encouragement

A)After Paul was saved - no one in Jerusalem wanted much to do w/ him - questioned the sincerity of his conversion (Aton Levy)

B) It was Barnabas who came & stood w/ Paul & took him to the apostles

C) Acts 11 Things are sprouting in Antioch / gospel has gone to the gentiles .

1) These new believers need a lot of help!

2) Who did the apostles send down there to encourage these brand new baby believers ?

Barnabas

D) Once down there the work is going great growing & there is so much to do Barnabas needs help . What do?

1) He knows just the guy / he goes & gets Paul ;(**who was really doing nothing at the time**) / Barnabas saw his potential

First 4 gifts expound the Word in Different ways - seeking to build up & edify the Body !

- ❖ **Prophecy is the gift of Declaring truth**
- ❖ **Ministry is the gift that Depicts truth**
- ❖ **Teaching Defines truth**
- ❖ **Exhortation Develops truth**

NOT SO OBSCURE

- **Prophecy**- I can share a verse!
- **Ministry** – I can illustrate truth in serving
- **Teaching** – Don't have that gift
- **Exhortation** – I can come along side others and show them how to walk with God – how to have a devotional life – how to serve!

So the first 4 help Expound the word - Next three gifts help Expand the work

A) The next 3 are involved in **expanding the work of God** ! Next Paul says *he who gives, with liberality*;

B) **Giving expands the work.** Giving w/

liberality means giving with no strings attached

1) It is giving to the Lord freely & Cheerfully not expecting - any pay backs / or recognition

C) **Giving expands the work.** Again Barnabas was a good example of this in Acts 4:32-36 early Church was growing

1) It was Barnabas who sold a piece of land & gave the proceeds to the Church to benefit & to bless it - **Help expand the work - Help grow**

Now all Christians are expected to give - told in **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: ² On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper.”

A) Been said that Giving is **not God's way of raising funds – raising kids** –

B) God is a giver – wants his kids to be givers –

C) Where your treasure is your heart will be there also –

Giving helps our treasure to be in God's Kingdom – His work – His plan redemption –

A) 3 principles 1 Cor 16

- ❖ **My giving is to be regular** - 1st day of the week.
- ❖ **My giving is to be systematic** - *let each one lay aside something*
- ❖ **My giving is to be proportionate** - *as he has prospered*

B) So God encourages **ALL** his kids to be givers { Cheerfully

C) But those w/ the gift of giving have been blessed w/ the ability to earn & give money for the advancement of God's work

D) Maybe God has blessed you with the gift of giving. 1) If so, exercise it with generosity! **Investing in Kingdom –**

E) Can't take it with you but you can send it ahead!

1) NO U-HAULS

Next Paul mentions the gift of leadership: *he who leads, with diligence*;

A) Those who have the gift of Leadership are problem solvers –

B) They see a problem and they know how to fix it.

C) Anyone can complain – Leaders see the need, the problem and are able to find a solution to the problem.

1) They are able to rally others to help out too!

C) **Innovative** - Anthony Green won first prize & \$5,000 because he used duct tape to patch the wing of the plane he flew from Guatemala to Honduras, in the 'The Best Use of Duct Tape' contest. **AMAZING**

D) There are people in the **Body like Anthony Green.**

They know how to patch things up. They know how to make things fly.

A) They have a feeling for how things should happen. Theirs is the gift of **LEADERSHIP** of doing all things decently and in order

B) Help keep things going & functioning in such a way that the Lord can move & work !

1) Person w/ **the gift of Leadership** / will be different from the person who has a natural talent for leadership

C) Not bulldoze – not intimidate – but inspire

D) Paul says – **If Leadership is your gift – do it with diligence!**

The final gift mentioned in Romans 12 is that of doing acts of mercy.

A) The gift of mercy involves being able to come alongside those who are hurting –

Aa) Be it physically, mentally, spiritually – Incredible grace & kindness

B) Some people have that gift of making others feel special – important !

1) Differs from the gift of helps – **primarily involves people!**

❖ **Gifts that expand the work -**

➤ Giving, Leadership Mercy

❖ **Gifts that Expound the word**

➤ Prophecy, Ministry, Teaching, Exhortation

Which gifts do you have? – Your response to a need could be an indication of the gift that you have.

A) Example – little girl comes in here – decided to bless pastor Rob with glass of water – trips – How some people respond?

B) *What a clutz! Who let her in here!* - NOT SAVED

C) **Prophecy:** Motivational moment " *Watch your step, pitfalls in life watch out*

❖ **Ministry** " *Where is the broom ?* "

❖ **Teaching** " *When carry glass wipe condensation / right amount of pressure w/ each hand!*

❖ **Exhorter** - " *Come on sweetie you can do this let's get another glass / I'm pulling for you sweat heart*

❖ **Giving** " *How much was that glass ? Write a check*"

❖ **Leader** " *Who designed these steps that way*

❖ **Mercy** " *Come here honey / I know just how you feel I Did the same thing in the 3rd grade.* "

Having then gifts – let us use them – Be praying

Here today: Not a believer – Had weird ideas about church – Organization

A)Body – family - God made a way for you to be a part of His family

B)Sent Jesus – Give your heart today - Surrender

C)Chance to be a part of something bigger than yourself –

1)Focus is not You – others

D)Acronym of JOY – Jesus, Others, You - Life begins