

Romans 12:3-8

The Beauty of the Body of Christ

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*: 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.

Intro: One thing that fascinates me - is the study of Human anatomy. It is amazing the way that we have been put together

A) I love statistics like these /in a 24 hr. period
Your heart beats 115,000 times or **42 million times per** year – {Take care of your heart

B) In One day Your blood travels 12,000 miles / or equivalent of **4 times across the USA** /
1) You breathe 23,040 times / You inhale 388 cubic feet of air

C) **The body is a masterpiece / Beautifully "engineered," it is governed by several hundred systems of control –**

1) Each interacting with and affecting the other.

D)**The brain has 100 billion nerve cells to record what a person sees and hears. /**

E)**Your skin has more than 2 million tiny sweat glands**

1) -- about 3000 per square inch -- all part of the intricate system which keeps his body at an even temperature

**I could go on & on in talking about the intricate way the human body has been designed !
Work of art / incredible wisdom !**

A)Creation definitely speaks of a Creator –
Genius of our Lord

B)Yes It is amazing how the Lord has designed our human bodies

C)But what is equally amazing is His design of the body of Christ

1)**The Church!**

The term Church Ekklesia = a called out people :

A)**The term was used in the 1st century to describe people called to something , from somewhere & by someone!**

B)The church of Jesus Christ has been called out of the world & to God Himself!

C)**The Church is not a building or an organization but a living organism!**

1)Not just a collection of parts- assembly line / but a body designed formed and fitted together by the Lord Himself!

D)**And w/ in this body is a Unity – V.4 Many members in one body - / Christ is the Head /**

1)**Diversity - all members have different Functions / giftings /**

In order for the body of Christ to function properly in Unity amidst our diversity/ several factors are key.

A)**#1 A right view of Jesus: It is His church – He purchased it with His Blood.**

B)**Precious to Him -**

C)**we are a part of his body**

D)**#1 We need a right view of Jesus – His Church – His Body - V. 5 We are one body in Christ**

#2 We need a right view of ourselves

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.

Don't think of yourself more highly than you ought –

A)Note it doesn't say to not think of yourself at all – need to know your place – role....

B)The exhortation is to THINK RIGHTLY – Soberly – not too highly!

1)Don't think You are God's gift to the church! PRIDE

C)God resist the proud but gives grace to the Humble! –

1)Which do I want – God resisting me or Giving me grace ?

D)Those who exalt themselves – they will be humbled

Former Miami Dolphin coach Don Shula, took his wife on vacation to a small seaside town in Maine. **He figured it was a place they could relax anonymously.**

It was raining when they arrived; they decided to take in a movie. As they entered the small theatre, the show had not started yet, the lights were still up. And to their surprise the scattered handful of people applauded when they entered.

After they were seated Don said, *"I guess there's nowhere I'm not known."* His wife smiled and said, *"And loved, dear."*

A man seated nearby reached over and shook Don's hand. And Shula said, *"I have to admit I'm kind of surprised that you know me here."* The man responded w/ a puzzled look on his face *"Should I know you?"*

We're just happy to see you folks because the manager had said he wasn't going to start the movie until at least two more people showed up."

A young seminary graduate came up to the pulpit **very self-confident and immaculately dressed.** He began to deliver his first sermon in his first church and the words simply would not come out.

Finally he burst into tears and ended up leaving the platform obviously humbled.

There were 2 older ladies sitting in the front row & one remarked to the other, *"If he'd come in like he went out, he would have gone out like he came in*

A)It is true that the Lord has a way of humbling those who think more highly of themselves than they ought to (Shrinking down to size)

B)Exalt yourself – be humbled – Humble yourself and you will be exalted!

C)So the first key to the body of Christ functioning properly is – A right view of JESUS

#2 A RIGHT VIEW OF SELF - to not think too highly of yourself – to think RIGHTLY –

#3 is To realize you have a role or function to play and every role is important!

⁴For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, *being many*, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

A)We do not have the same function – but we all have a function

¹⁴For in fact the body is not one member but many.

¹⁵If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁶And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? ¹⁷If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling? ¹⁸But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. ¹⁹And if they *were* all one member, where *would* the body *be*?

²⁰But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body. ²¹And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you. 1 Corinthians 12:14-21

B)Obviously not – The hand is different from the feet – but both have a purpose –

1)how hard would it be -IF feet get you to food – No hands to pick it up and eat.

C)So too – We are all members of Christ body we are all different but we all have our place and function and we Need to discover what that is

In order for the body of Christ to function properly in Unity amidst our diversity/ several factors are key

#1 Right view of Jesus

#2 Right view of ourselves

#3 Understanding we have a role and function

#4 Understanding what the roles and functions are

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.

Paul divides the functions into 2 groups –

- Those that EXPOUND the word
- And those that EXPAND the work!

A) Those that EXPOUND the Word!

B) Prophecy: Prophecy = to cause to shine forth

C) Prophecy means more than foretelling - although it can involve that –

1) In the Old testament - the Prophets predominantly - foretelling ministry-

D) Predicting events that were going to happen – Warning of coming Judgment

1) largely the prophecies concerning the Coming of Jesus

But Prophecy also means forth telling or speaking forth the word of God

A) This is predominantly how it is seen in the N.T. although there are a handful of times when it is seen in a forth telling predictive way - Agabus

B) Prophecy is the gift of declaring truth basically it is the gift of expounding Scripture, making Scripture come alive.

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

C) Obvious Pastors need this gift – but so do Sunday School teachers

1) Pastor Chuck – 4th grade – learn how to make complicated truths simple

D) Pastors need this gift – Sunday school teachers – those engaged in Discipleship –

E) So those with the gift of prophesy – Declare God's truth

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

A) Jesus showed us this over & over He would first teach & then He would 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 .

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

1) 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 & when she died the early church was deeply crushed?

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

C) Why was she so loved ? Because she was a minister in the truest sense of the word !

1) Loved God's people & served them by making garments & coats for people in the Church.

D) Now I have to believe that Dorcas wasn't the only seamstress in the Church - so it wasn't what she did - it was the way she did it!

1) Joy & Cheerfulness - loving & serving !

Those with this gift do an incredible job of depicting the truth of God's Word so that people see Jesus in action!

A) Prophecy declares truth
➤ Ministry depicts truth

B) The next gift that Paul mentions is Teaching: Teaching Defines truth

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

D) 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.

E) Took the word & brought definition to it!
Defined it & made it very applicable!

Teaching is the ability to impart knowledge and information, to instruct the mind/

A)Whereas prophesying instructs the heart and moves the will.

B)Prophecy – more Preaching – Teaching is more instruction.

1)Sundays here – 75% Prophesying – preaching
25% teaching – Emphasis – Prophetic word –

2)God saying to Calvary Vista

C)Wednesday night opposite – 75% Simple Instruction / 25% prophesy or preaching –

D) Wednesday might include Prophecy – but it might not more broad – bigger chunks – big picture – MORE GROUND

E)Sunday is more in-depth 24 studies in 6 chapters of Ephesians – 29 when all done

1)Wednesdays – 20 studies in 12 Chapters of Romans

TEACHING OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH

A) New Believers - home group - just impart the word - one on one - discipleship

B)So Prophecy – Declares truth – Ministry depicts truth – Teaching defines truth

C)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 !

1)Parakaleo in the Greek

C)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 H.S.

D)He is referred to as the Parakletos - or the one called along side to help!

1) So an exhorter's primary ministry is one of encouraging & coming along side to aid. Strongly urging one to pursue a course of conduct !

What is interesting to me about the definition of exhortation is this:

A) It doesn't say anything about - rebuking - but that is how it is so often used today.

B)I have the gift of the exhortation - they going around rebuking everyone -get in faces

C)Sorry but that is not what the gift of exhortation means !

D)Idea of coming under and lifting up!

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

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!

D)Who did the apostles send down there to encourage these brand new baby believers/
Barnabas

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

A)What do? He knows just the guy / he goes & gets Paul ;(who was really doing nothing at the time) /

B)Barnabas saw his potential- Gift of Exhortation – see potential – see to stir it up give opportunity

C)He brings Paul down not to assist him but to lead the work & Barnabas will become His assistant!

1) He wasn't caught up in thinking *"This is my ministry"*

Bernstein conductor Toughest instrument to find someone to play is 2nd fiddle!/
Not Barnabas

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

A) The next 3 are involved in expanding the work of God ! Next Paul says *V.8 he who gives, with liberality;- freely no restraints*

B) Giving expands the work.

1) Again Barnabas was a good example of this In Acts 4: 32-36 early Church was growing

C) It was Barnabas who sold a piece of land & gave the proceeds to the Church to benefit & to bless it –

1) Help expand the work - Help grow

D) Now Paul says that those w/ this gift need to give w/ Liberality/

1) Giving freely with no restraints/ This is your gift use it

E) Giving with liberality – no strings attached – not looking for pay backs – special plagues etc

The Bible says that God loves a Cheerful giver

A) Those with the gift of Giving – get great joy in being able to Expand the work in that way

B) YEARS ago students in a Christian school in India where approached at Christmas time by a Doctor

1) Asked – to Give some of their old toys to students in nearby village who had never heard of Jesus

C) The week after Christmas -when the Doctor arrived to pick up the gifts – shocked

1) The sight was unforgettable. **One by one the children filed by and handed the doctor their toys.**

D) To his great surprise, they all gave the new presents they had just received several days earlier.

When he asked why, a girl spoke up, "Think what God did by giving us his only Son. Could we give him less than our best?"

E) We should all understand that – but those with the gift of giving – Really get that!

1) We have been blessed to be a blessing!

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

A) Also called the gift of administrations / in 1 Cor. 12 – Steve / Yvonne –

B) That admin gift - Those w/ the gift of leading or administrations are those who have Practical oversight – 1) They're into details & specifics

C) Those with this gift help Vision become a reality!

1) **Someone cast vision – they see how it will come together**

D) People w/ the gift of leading are those people who have been gifted by the Lord w/ ingenuity

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 Those in the Body w/ the gift of leading are like Anthony Green.

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

B) They have a feeling for how things should happen.

1) Paul says do it w/ Diligence - meaning - go for it w/ all of your effort !

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

D) In that they will have a sensitivity to others through the H.S. /

1) **They sensitive to the Holy Spirit and know how to get others involved – others feel valued**

E) They don't bulldoze others – not demanding

1) See the gifts in others and they seek to encourage them in their gifts

The final gift mentioned in Romans 12 Gift of mercy

A) Getting into someone else's skin & feeling what they feel !

B) Caring for others being there to be a shoulder to cry on an ear to listen !

C) Person w/ this gift might not ever counsel or share

- 1) but they make a big impact by what they don't say
! Just there

D) Often times this gift is mixed w/ the gift of helps – 1) compassion - desire to help - to pick up some one fallen going through it.

E) Paul says - Do it cheerfully !

- 1) Not being a burden / not being heavy /
- 2) not complaining but being a blessing to those who are going through it !

Which gifts do you have? Where are you drawn ?

A) Josiah carrying a glass of water analogy - what would be your reaction ?

- 1) *What a klutz! Let someone else deal w/ that*
- 2) Prophecy *"Watch your step, pitfalls in life watch out*
- 3) Ministry *"Where is the broom?"*
- 4) Giving *"How much was that glass?
Write a check"*

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

- 6) Exhorter - *"Come on Amy you can do this go & get another glass / I'm pulling for you sweat heart*
- 7) Leads *"Who designed these steps that way*
- 8) Mercy *"Come here honey / I know just how you feel I Did the same thing in the 3rd grade."*

Each one responding as the Lord has gifted them

A) All important / all necessary / but there is diversity!