

The Beauty of the Body of Christ Romans 12:3-8

³For 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. 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. ⁶Having 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; ⁷or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸he 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 Just an organization it is a living organism!

1)Not just a collection of parts- assembly line /

D)But a body designed formed and fitted together by the Lord Himself!

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.

Paul wants us to understand that the church is not a collection of bodies - ONE BODY

A)With many members

B)In order for the body to function the way God designed there has to be UNITY

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. Precious to Him

B) He is the Head of the church

C)We are a part of His body

1)UNIFIED IN HIM - connected to Him

So #1 We need a right view o Jesus – His Church – V. 5 We are one body in Christ

#2 We need a right view of ourselves

³For 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)Paul using this same analogy of the human body in 1 Corinthians 12 put it this way

¹⁸ But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. ¹⁹ How strange a body would be if it had only one part! ²⁰ Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. ²¹ The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." ²² In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary - 1 Corinthians 12:18-22

So none of us should act like we are God's gift to the church.

A)But at the same time, none of us should act like we don't matter - the church doesn't need me

B)Some of the people here at CV who do work that is behind the scenes - no one sees

C)So Vital - the church would be a mess literally if not for them.

So In order for the body of Christ to function properly in Unity amidst our diversity

**A)We need to have a right view of Jesus -
We need to have a right view of ourselves**

B)#3 We need to understand what the various roles and gifts are and how they are to function.

⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them:*

C)Now I want you to notice something that Paul says that is different here than what we saw in 1 Corinthians 12 list of gifts

In 1 Corinthians 12 we read this: ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Remember the word manifestation = the shining forth of the Holy Spirit

A)The idea here is this- the Holy Spirit is giving gifts to people - who he wants and when he wants

B)To fit the need of the moment

C)But here is Romans 12:6 He says having then gifts - having carries the idea of possessing

1)Why I say that these gifts are permanent -

D)They are giftings that you possess - that are connected to how God has made you. -

1)How he has wired you as a person

Notice the exhortation: Having then gifts let us USE THEM!

A)To put it another way- the gifts that God has given to you are not meant to lie dormant - closet

B)The Lord would say to us what Paul said to Timothy - Stir up the gifts given to you.

C)So lets consider the gifts mentioned here in Romans 12 -

1)and let's see if we can help you discover tonight what your gift or gifts might be

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 GIFTS into 2 groups –

➤ **Those that EXPOUND the word**

➤ **And those that EXPAND the work!**

A)Start with Those that EXPOUND the Word!

B)1st Prophecy: Prophecy = to cause to shine forth

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

1)In the Old testament - the Prophets predominantly - fore telling 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.

B)Prophecy is the gift of declaring truth!

C) Those with the Gift of Prophecy - have a specific word for the church - or an individual

1) Happens in Preaching - but also in daily conversations

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

A) Ministry is the word - Service - serving

Ray Stedman says that the gift of "service" is "the ability to see things that need to be done & do them"

B) So some people serve and others actually have the gift of service - comes natural to them

C) One of the 5 love languages is Acts of Service - for people who have this gift -

1) It is their love Language

They are depicting the truths of God's word - visibly by living out the gospel through service

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) The gift of ministry is also called the gift of helps in 1 Corinthians 12

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

A teacher shares systematically - verse by verse - line by line -

A) Defining & explaining what the word says & means

B) 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.*

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

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 WITH 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 alongside 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!

E) So an exhorter's primary ministry is one of encouraging & coming along side to aid .

1) 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) Barn. 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 Cheerfully giver

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

B) Those who have this gift - that is their love language

1) Giving gifts and blessings others with their resources

C) Now all of us Christians are exhorted to be givers – 1 Corinthians 16 Paul gave us 3 principles for giving

D) Our giving is to be regular - 1st day of the week

1. Our giving is to be systematic - each one lay aside something

2) Our giving is to be proportionate - as he has prospered

So we are all called to be givers - but those who have the gift of giving - Do so abundantly

A) They get great Joy out of giving to others and blessings others

B) They take great Joy in advancing the cause of the church through their giving

C) They love that no one knows what they are doing - 1) but there is great Joy in partnering with God in his work through the local church.

D) Often but not always - those with the gift of giving have been gifted to earn large sums of money

E) They realize - they have been blessed to be a blessings - they rejoice in the opportunity

1) Some people who are poorer - also can have this gift - they are content to live on less

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 & systems

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

1) Someone might cast vision - they help make that vision become a reality

D) People with 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 Holy Spirit /

1) They sensitive to the HS and know how to get others involved - make others feel valued

E) They don't bulldoze others - not demanding

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*

C) 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.

D) 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 analogy - what would be your reaction ?

1) *What a klutz! Let someone else deal w/ that*

B) **Prophecy** " Watch your step , pitfalls in life watch out

C) **Ministry** "Where is the broom ? "

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

Exhorter - "Come on Josiah you can do this go & get another glass / I'm pulling for you buddy

Leads "Who designed these steps that way - we need to fix this so that never happens again

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

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