

## **Unity in the Body of Christ Part 1**

### **Romans 12:3-8**

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.

After World War II, a group of German students volunteered to help rebuild an English cathedral that had been severely damaged by German bombs. As work progressed, they became concerned about a large statue of Jesus, whose arms were outstretched and beneath which was the inscription: "Come unto Me." They had particular difficulty trying to restore the hands, which had been completely destroyed. After much discussion, they decided to let the hands remain missing and changed the inscription to: "Christ has no hands but ours." *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 153.*

This fact is why it is so important that a church has a ministry.

The ministry reflects the heart of the church.

Jesus came to serve, not to be served. So should we do.

If we say that we are a living sacrifice and we are not conformed to the world but our minds have been transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit within us, then there will be ministry in the church.

But Paul recognizes that there are hindrances to ministry in the church.

One of them is pride and self centeredness.

#### **I. Not to Think of Himself More Highly than He Ought to Think**

A. Man has a basic problem.

1. They are concerned more about themselves than others.
2. It is our defining character flaw.
3. Examples
  - a. Most wars are the result of pride.

- b. World War II was a result of one race thinking that they were so superior to the others that they should rule the world.
  - c. James 4:1 (NKJV) 1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?
  - d. We often hear how abortion is a medical necessary procedure but in truth most of the time it is done for convenience sake.
- B. Galatians 6:3 (NKJV)
- 1. 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.
- C. Although Paul was a great missionary, he understood the failings of the human mind and heart.
- 1. He saw this is in his own life.
  - 2. 1 Timothy 1:12-16 (NKJV)
  - 3. 12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. 16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.
- D. So he writes to the self inflated Corinthians.
- 1. 1 Corinthians 4:6-7 (NKJV)
  - 2. 6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. 7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? **Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?**
- E. Peter also understood the problem that we all have with pride and arrogance.
- 1. 1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)
  - 2. 5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. **Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility,** for

"God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

- F. What does that look like?
  - 1. What does that not look like?
    - a. It is not seen when everyone has to have their own way.
    - b. It is not seen when people look down their noses at others.
    - c. It is not seen when people think they are too good for that:
      - (1) to talk to that person.
      - (2) to meet with that person.
      - (3) to work with that person.
      - (4) they only people Jesus did not mix well with were the religious leaders who thought they were somebody.
  - 2. It looks like what Jesus did when He are with tax collectors and prostitutes.
  - 3. Although Jesus was the Son of the Living God yet He stooped down to touch the leper, the blind, the demon possessed.
  - 4. Was there anyone so low that Jesus would minister to them.
  - 5. Look at Him while He washes the disciples feet.
  - 6. Look at Him while He is stripped and beaten for each one of us.
- G. Our problem is we can't get over ourselves.
- H. But if you are a sacrifice, all rights are gone, all fame, all glory is gone.

## II. **But to Think Soberly**

- A. To think of ourselves with sound judgment leads us to recognize that, in ourselves, we are nothing at all, but that, in Christ, we can be used to the glory of God through the gift of the Spirit bestowed on us. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 158.*
- B. Long before the advent of modern psychology, theologians confronted the devastating effects of self-love. In the early days of the church, Augustine wrote in his classic work *The City of God*, "Two cities have been formed by two loves; the earthly (city) by the love of self, even to the contempt of God, the heavenly (city) by the love of God even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord" *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 159.*

- C. God has saved us for a purpose, not just to keep us out of hell.
  - 1. Each of us needs to understand that no one is here by accident. Everyone is here by divine appointment. We all need one another. We must help and depend upon one another.
  - 2. 1 Corinthians 10:24 (NKJV)
  - 3. 24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.
  - 4. Hebrews 10:24-25 (NKJV)
  - 5. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.
- D. God has put us together here today for the purpose of worship and that we might serve one another.
  - 1. James 4:1 (NKJV) 1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?
  - 2. James 4:1 (MSG) 1 Where do you think all these appalling wars and quarrels come from? Do you think they just happen? Think again. They come about because you want your own way, and fight for it deep inside yourselves.

III. Next week

- A. What we want to see from this next week is that we all need one another.
- B. That God has made each of us in such a way that we cannot complete the work of Christ without one another.

1Co 4:7 ¶ For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

1Co 4:8 You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us — and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!

1Pe 5:5 ¶ Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

2Co 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

3Jo 1:9 ¶ I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.

Col 2:13 ¶ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

Ec 7:16 Do not be overly righteous, Nor be overly wise: Why should you destroy yourself?

Ga 6:3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Jas 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Jas 4:6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

Lu 14:10 “But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, go up higher.’ Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you.

Lu 22:26 “But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.

Lu 18:11 “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men — extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

Mic 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Mt 18:1 ¶ At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Mt 18:2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them,

Mt 18:3 and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Mt 18:4 “Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Php 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Php 2:4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Php 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Php 2:6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

Php 2:7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

Php 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Pr 16:18 ¶ Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.

Pr 16:19 ¶ Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Pr 25:27 ¶ It is not good to eat much honey; So to seek one's own glory is not glory.

Pr 26:12 ¶ Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.