

Unity in the Body of Christ Part 3

Romans 12:3-8 (NKJV)

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.

The Holy Spirit takes up residence in every believer when they are born again and put their faith in Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit does many internal works in the believer the rest of their lives.

But one of the greatest things that the Spirit does is to give gifts to the believers so that they may benefit the body of Christ of which they are a part.

There are 19 gifts mention in the New Testament and they fall under three categories; sign gifts, speaking gifts, and serving gifts.

Sign Gifts

discerning of spirits, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

healings 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

tongues 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

interpretation of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

miracles, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

There are also speaking gifts.

evangelists, Ephesians 4:11

prophecy, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11

speaks, 1 Peter 4:11

pastors Ephesians 4:11

teachers, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11; Romans 12:6-8

word of knowledge 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

word of wisdom 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

apostles, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11

And lastly serving gifts.

administrations, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30;

leads, Romans 12:6-8

exhorts, Romans 12:6-8

faith, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

helps, 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

mercy, Romans 12:6-8

ministers, Romans 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:11;

gives, Romans 12:6-8

Some of these gifts might fall into two categories.

2 Corinthians 12:12 (NKJV)

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Hebrews 2:3-4 (NKJV)

3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Mark 16:20 (NKJV)

20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

First Corinthians was written about a.d. 54 and Romans some four years later. It is important to note that none of the sign gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:9-10—namely, the gifts of healing, miracles, speaking in tongues, and interpreting tongues—is found in Romans 12. The other two New Testament passages that mention spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:7, 11; 1 Pet. 4:10-11) were written several years after Romans and, like that epistle, make no mention of sign gifts. Peter specifically mentions the categories of speaking and serving gifts ("whoever speaks" and "whoever serves," v. 11) but neither the category nor an example of the sign gifts.

John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 168.

I. *Prophēteia* (prophecy)

- A. has the literal meaning of speaking forth, with no connotation of prediction or other supernatural or mystical significance. The gift of prophecy is simply the gift of preaching, of proclaiming the Word of God. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 170.*
- B. The Old Testament or New Testament prophet (or apostle) might speak direct revelation, but could and did also declare what had been revealed previously. In our day, it is active enablement to proclaim God's Word already written in Scripture. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 169.*
- C. There is the gift of prophecy. It is only rarely that prophecy in the New Testament has to do with foretelling the future; it usually has to do with forthtelling the word of God. The prophet is the man who can announce the Christian message with the authority of one who knows. To announce Christ to others a man must first know him himself. *William Barclay, Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Each for All and All for Each (Rom 12:3-8)".*
- D. The regulative principle prescribed for a prophet was that he exercise his gift "according to the **proportion of faith**". This has been interpreted, as a literal rendering might suggest, "according to the analogy of the faith", faith being taken in the objective sense as the truth revealed and believed. The prophet when he speaks God's word is not to go beyond that which God has given him to speak. *John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans – Volume II, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 123.*
- E. Scripture
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 14:3 (NKJV) 3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.
 - 2. 1 Peter 4:11 (NKJV) 11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

II. Service

- A. The second spiritual gift is that of service, a general term for ministry. Service translates *diakonia*, from which we also get deacon and deaconess—those who serve. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 172.*
- B. It is surely significant that practical service came to Paul's mind so high on the list. It may be that a man will never have the privilege of standing forth in public

and proclaiming Christ; but there is no man who cannot every day show the love of Christ in deeds of service to his fellow men. *William Barclay, Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Each for All and All for Each (Rom 12:3-8)".*

III. Teaching

- A. The third spiritual gift is that of teaching. Again, the meaning is simple and straightforward. *Didaskon* (teaches) refers to the act of teaching, and *didaskalia* (teaching) can refer to what is taught as well as to the act of teaching it. Both of those meanings are appropriate to this gift. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 172.*
- B. Exhortation and invitation without a background of teaching are empty things. *William Barclay, Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Each for All and All for Each (Rom 12:3-8)".*

IV. Exhortation

- A. The gift of exhortation, therefore, encompasses the ideas of advising, pleading, encouraging, warning, strengthening, and comforting. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 174.*
- B. Real exhortation aims not so much at dangling a man over the flames of hell as spurring him on to the joy of life in Christ. *William Barclay, Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Each for All and All for Each (Rom 12:3-8)".*
- C. Scripture
 1. Hebrews 10:24-25 (NKJV) 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.

V. Giving

- A. The fifth category of giftedness is that of giving. The usual Greek verb for giving is *didomi*, but the word here is the intensified *metadidomi*, which carries the additional meanings of sharing and imparting that which is one's own. The one who exercises this gift gives sacrificially of himself. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 175.*
- B. There is a giving which pries into the circumstances of another as it gives, which gives a moral lecture along with the gift, which gives not so much to relieve the need of the other as to pander to its own vanity and self-satisfaction, which gives

with a grim sense of duty instead of a radiant sense of joy, which gives always with some ulterior motive and never for the sheer joy of giving. *William Barclay, Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Each for All and All for Each (Rom 12:3-8)".*

C. Scripture

1. Ephesians 4:28 (NKJV) 28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.
2. 2 Corinthians 8:2-5 (NKJV) 2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. 3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.
3. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 (NKJV) 6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

VI. Leadership

- A. Leads is from *proistemi*, which has the basic meaning of "standing before" others and, hence, the idea of leadership. In the New Testament it is never used of governmental rulers but of headship in the family (1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12) and in the church (1 Tim. 5:17). In 1 Corinthians 12:28, Paul refers to the same gift by a different name, "administrations" (*kubernesis*), which means "to guide." In Acts 27:11 and Revelation 18:17, it is used of a pilot or helmsman, the person who steers, or leads, a ship. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 176.*

VII. Mercy

- A. The seventh and last spiritual category mentioned here is that of showing mercy. *Eleeō* (shows mercy) carries the joint idea of actively demonstrating sympathy for someone else and of having the necessary resources to successfully comfort and strengthen that person. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 177.*
- B. It is possible to forgive in such a way that the very forgiveness is an insult. It is possible to forgive and at the same time to demonstrate an attitude of criticism and contempt. If ever we have to forgive a sinner, we must remember that we are

fellow sinners. There is a way of forgiving a man which pushes him further into the gutter; and there is a way of forgiving him which lifts him out of the mire. Real forgiveness is always based on love and never on superiority. *William Barclay, Barclay's Daily Study Bible (NT), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Each for All and All for Each (Rom 12:3-8)".*

- C. Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
- D. 2 Thessalonians 3:13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.