

The Book of Romans - Part 39

On "It's a Good Life" today, we continue our study in the book of Romans, and we're going to pick up where we left off the last time in Romans 12. It's very important, I believe, that you have your Bible open and you read along with me as we study the Word of God. We left off with verse 3, and I'd like to recap that if I might. It says, *For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*

Paul the apostle says, when we get saved, we're all the same. No one is better than another person, and, of course, we understand that, speaking humanly, no one is better than another person. Paul says don't be puffed up. You need to be humble. You need to realize that you are no better than the next person. When we get that in our minds and our hearts, even as saved people, we need to have that so that we can present our bodies a living sacrifice to the Lord, so that we can be used of God and go out and tell other people how that they, too, can know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Well, notice with me now verses 4-5 of Romans 12. It says, *4For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

Just as our body has many members, Paul is saying here, they do not perform the same functions, so the body of Christ, the church, the believers are many members with different functions. There are many functions by many members, but there is only one body, and that is the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it's another reason verses 4-5 tie in with verse 3,

because it says we are not to think of ourselves more highly than another person because we're all members one of another in the body of Christ.

In verse 6 it talks about different gifts. In verse 6, it says, *having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.* Notice "gifts differing." This means all members, believers, have different, not the same, but gifts differing and different abilities which complement each other, and it's given to us according to a proportion of faith. This is an interesting expression from which we get the theological term "analogy." In other words, comparison of faith, sometimes referred to as analogy of Scripture.

Analogy of faith means that Scripture is to be interpreted in the light of Scripture and in accord with Scripture. The infallible rule of the interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself. Now, there's nothing wrong with reading and hearing good commentaries and listening to ministers explain the Word of God, but this is the reason I ask you to have your Bible open each time we study the Scriptures so that you can follow along and let the Scriptures speak to your heart. I can say a lot of things. This is what God speaks to my heart about, because I'm sharing with you that God speaks to your heart, as well. Read the Word of God. Study the Word of God and let the Scriptures interpret themselves for you and to you.

Notice with me if you would the first part of verse 6. The first gift mentioned here is prophecy. The Bible definition of a prophet is one who is a spokesman or a mouthpiece of God, and what he speaks as a prophet is inspired speech. It is the Word of God, the

Scriptures.

And we understand today that no one is able to give anything apart from the Word of God that is from God. There is no such thing as an open revelation of God today. God does not speak to us in an audible voice, but He speaks to us through His Word. God has given us His completed Word that we may be able to share that with the people of this world.

In verse 7 of Romans 12, it says, "Or ministry." In other words, of prophecy. He goes on to say that it could be the ministry. *Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching.* The second gift mentioned is ministry. This is the gift of serving. This is a humble service. We get the word "deacon" here from this word. All believers ought to serve in this way, but some are especially gifted in this respect as deacons. Deacons are biblically defined as humble servants, and may God give to each believer a servant's heart. And we find this as our Lord's example in Mark 10:45. It says, *For even the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* Not all people are called to be deacons, but there are deacons. There are those who are called specifically in a humble way. They are to be servants.

Now, the third gift mentioned here in this verse is teaching. This gift involves indoctrination. In other words, putting doctrine or God's truth into the hearts and minds of God's people by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and by the clear proclamation of the Scriptures. And this is what I'm doing right now. I am teaching. I am teaching not my thoughts, not my teaching, but the teachings of the Word of God.

And Romans 12:8 says, *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.* The

fourth gift mentioned is exhortation. Now, this is the gift of being able to comfort, to encourage, to help others. Maybe you have that gift. In Hebrews 3:13, it says, *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* We're to exhort each other, but to some people, this gift is given in a way that goes beyond just regular exhortation. They have this ability to comfort, this gift of comforting other believers.

Now the fifth gift mentioned in verse 8 is the gift of giving, and this gift means to give a part of or to impart, to contribute, to share, contribute to the needs of others in a material or financial way. That's a gift. It's a gift that's given to certain people to do more than the... I don't want to say the common ordinary Christian. That's not what I'm trying to get across here. We're all to give, but this person is given the gift of giving even more than we think of as the tithe and the offering. They give more. And we're to do this, it says... or they are to do this with simplicity, without exaggeration. Don't go around bragging about how much you give. We're all to be givers, but some believers are especially gifted at this gift, and that is the gift of giving.

Now the sixth gift mentioned is ruling. The gift of ruling means to stand before, to direct. It is speaking of leadership in the local assembly. And not all are gifted as leaders, and this word is also used of local church leadership in I Thessalonians 5:12, and these people who are given this gift are to rule with diligence. This means to rule with eagerness that involves giving it every effort to provide God-honoring leadership.

The seventh gift mentioned now is showing mercy. And this gift refers to compassion, forgiveness to ease someone's distress or pain, and showing mercy with cheerfulness. And we get our word "hilarious" here from the word "cheerfulness," and it is the same word we find

in II Corinthians 9:7 and Romans 12:8 and the last part of that verse talks about that... cheerfulness.

Now, we look on and we go into verse 9 of chapter 12, and it says, *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.* Love without dissimulation. This is love that seeks God's highest and best for the person loved without hypocrisy, a love that is genuine and sincere. Don't be putting on love. As someone comes up and says, "I love you in the Lord," they need to mean that. We need to mean that as we love each other in the Lord.

The Bible goes on in that verse there and says "to abhor that which is evil." This means to hate and detest any horror, all forms of wickedness. In horror, we are to detest this wickedness. Psalm 97:10 says, *Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.*

Proverbs 8:13 says, *The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.* This word "fear" found in Proverbs 8:13 is a reverential fear of God. It goes on to say cleave to that which is good, and we know what that means.

Romans 12:10 says, *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.* This means to love dearly, to be devoted to one another, to love tenderly. It refers to the love and affection that should be found in family relationships and we are in a family. We're in the family of God. We're in the body of Christ and we're to love one another dearly. First John 3:14, the first part of that verse, says, *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*

Romans 12:11 says, *Not slothful in business;*

fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. "Not slothful in business." Paul is saying don't be idle or lazy in personal responsibilities. We're to serve the Lord fervently, not in laziness. Fervent in the spirit serving the Lord. We are to show loving, passionate, enthusiasm when it comes to serving our Lord according to that verse.

Now, we'll start here next time with verse 12 of Romans chapter 12, and I pray that you are opening your Bible and you're reading along with me as we study these Scriptures. And certainly, we're not going to give you every answer as we go along, but we're hitting some highlights here of studying the Word of God.

You know, the Bible says that, if you're not saved, you really can't understand the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. You have to have the Spirit of God. And we get the Spirit of God not by simply saying that we're saved and then praying earnestly to get the Spirit. When we get saved, we receive the Spirit of God. The Bible says if you have not received the Spirit of God you're none of His. That means you're not saved if you don't have the Spirit. How do you do that? You ask Jesus to come into your heart. You realize you're a sinner and you acknowledge that to God.

"Lord, I know I'm a sinner. I can't save myself. I want You to come into my heart. I want Jesus. I want the blood of Christ to cleanse me from all sin." Now, if that's your attitude and your heart's desire, you need to ask Jesus to come into your heart and He'll save you. Realize you're lost, realize you can't save yourself, and then realize that Jesus is the only One who can save you and ask Him to save you. He'll do it, because the Bible says whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. God will save you if you'll let Him.

Look at our Website this week, www.LRWM.org. On the Website you'll see

more information on how you can be 100% sure you are on your way to heaven. You can also find downloads of this program on there. You can listen to it once again. You can find transcripts to read.

And also write to me. Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. If you write to me, share with me your prayer requests, and I'll be glad to share with the Lord your requests and we'll pray together that God will answer those requests.

Till the next time, may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.