

PREVIOUSLY IN CHAPTER 12

- Our Response to the Age of Grace | Romans 12:1-2

THE HUMILITY OF BEING PART OF A TEAM | ROMANS 12:3-5

- Verse 3 –
 - Paul says that his instruction to **think soberly**, rather than being high-minded, is delivered **through the grace given unto me**.
 - Why, for a statement that seems (on surface) to be general wisdom, would Paul make reference to this grace?
 - When you search the Scriptures to discover the **grace given** unto Paul, it becomes clear that it is the grace related to the dispensation of grace.
 - See Romans 1:5, Romans 15:15-16, Galatians 2:8-9, Ephesians 3:2, 4, 7-8, for example.
 - So, the instruction of sober thinking is *related to* **the grace given** unto Paul.
 - Therefore, a Roman is **not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think** because he is not one of the elect, but rather one who experienced salvation by the grace of God in this dispensation.
 - Those living in this dispensation (Jews and Gentiles) are able to come to salvation **according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith**.
 - This cannot be taken in a Calvinistic sense because the grammar does not say that God gives the elect **the measure of faith** and the non-elect do not receive faith.
 - Rather, the text says that **every man** has been given, by God, **the measure of faith**. This is why we say, "the ground at the foot of the cross is level ground."
- Verse 4 - Having emphasized a *sameness* in our measure of faith, Paul now proceeds to talk about the *individuality* of the **members in one body**, the body of Christ.
- Verse 5 - The fact that we **are one body** and **every one members one of another** is further clarification of verse 3, and our need to **think soberly**.

THE EXERCISE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS | ROMANS 12:6-8

- Verse 6 –
 - There is a contrast word that is hidden in the KJV, translated **then**. A literal translation could be *But having gifts....*
 - Having spoken of our *sameness*, Paul now speaks of the manner in which we have **gifts differing** from one another.
 - These gifts are **according to** the *different grace* given to each of us. Here, grace is not related to salvation, but to our role within the body.
 - The first gift given is **prophecy**, a gift that was in existence in Paul's day, but has now ceased with the full revelation of Scripture.
 - While the Bible is not explicit in declaring that prophecy has ceased, Paul spoke of the coming day in which prophecies would fail (1 Cor. 12:8), and speaks of the written scriptures as able to bring a person to perfection, **thoroughly furnished unto all good works** (2 Tim. 3:17), and John speaks of not adding to the **words of prophecy of this book** (Rev. 22:18), it would be difficult to speak of prophecy being a valid gift today.

- Verses 7-8 –
 - In verses 7-8 Paul gives a list of six additional gifts.
 - There is no indication that he means this to be an exclusive list (he gives a differing list in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10).
 - There is also no indication that he means that a combined list is an exhaustive list of spiritual gifts. Rather, Paul speaks of some of the common spiritual activities that people do in the body of Christ. The "Evangelical Industrial Complex" has made too much of spiritual gift inventories, assignments, etc.
 - Paul mentions:
 - **ministry** - the word *διακονία* [diakonia] (from which we get *deacon*). The KJV **let us wait on our ministering** is confusing to modern readers. The **wait** should be read in terms of *waiting tables*.
 - **teaching** is *διδασκω* [didasko] from which we get *didactic* comes from this word.
 - **exhortation** is *παράκλησις* [paraklasis], to come alongside and encourage.
 - **he that giveth** is to do so **with simplicity**, a word that could be better translated *with focus*. The word *ἀπλότης* [haplotes] is of the Greek root which many English words beginning with *hapl* are derived (haplography is the omission of repetitive letters, as in *misspell* instead of *misspell*.) While *simplicity of spelling* may not be good, *simplicity of giving* is! The simplicity is *gifts not encumbered, no strings attached*.
 - **he that ruleth** speaks to the gift of leadership, which should be done **with diligence** (the same Greek word is used in verse 11, translated **business**).
 - The gift of showing **mercy** should be done **with cheerfulness**, the same word that is used of generosity in 2 Corinthians 9:7.

INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN DEPORTMENT | ROMANS 12:9-13

- Verse 9 - Paul continues to discuss personal behavior and activity in the Body of Christ. The **love** shown in the body is to be *ἀνυπόκριτος* [anhypokritos], or *unhypocritical*. **Evil** is to be viewed as despicable while good is something to **cleave to**.
- Verse 10 - In summary: if you have opportunity to do good, focus your good labors on your brothers and sisters in Christ. Compare Galatians 6:10.
- Verses 11-13 –
 - As Paul continues, he gives a list of simple and quick instructions that are, for the most part, self-explanatory.
 - Rather than explanation, they need self-inventory.
 - Enumerating the list poses challenges; are **fervent in spirit** and **serving the Lord** part of **not slothful in business**, for example? Nonetheless, without making it more difficult than it needs to be, the list is *simple and to the point*.