

# **Romans – Let's Do This!**

## **59- “God Gave You Gifts, Part 1”**

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

*Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 6, 2016*

God doesn't expect you to impact the people around you in your own strength or with your own limited, human resources.

The minute God saves you He gives you supernatural spiritual gifts that will enable you in a special and unique way to truly impact the people around you as you seek to point them to Jesus Christ.

Read **Romans 12:1-8**.

Before diving into the specifics about spiritual gifts, there are two critical pillars of understanding you need to understand. Just like with anything powerful, the designer has some instruction and warnings that have to be understood clearly as to how to use and not misuse or abuse these powerful gifts.

#### **I. Never Lose Sight of Your Relative Unimportance in the Bigger Scheme of God's Kingdom even as You Discover How God Has Uniquely Gifted You to Impact Other People for Eternity**

**Romans 12:3** “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.”

##### **A. He Wants You to Stay Out of Two of the Biggest Ditches You Can Fall into that Shut Down God's Ability to Use You for His Glory**

- (1) ‘I am so great!’
- (2) ‘I am so terrible!’

Both are debilitating and self-consuming thoughts that will render you useless when it comes to making an impact on others, so Paul puts up some guard rails here to keep you out of both these ditches.

Both of these ditches are consumed with and focused on self. Which means they're not paying enough attention to the glories and delightfulness of Jesus Christ – in who He is and what He's done!

Here's what Paul wants them to understand before he ever drills down into spiritual gifts: A CORRECT understanding of the Gospel should keep you from feeling SUPERIOR and should keep you from feeling INFERIOR.

The Gospel brings you the worst news that you're a sinner-far worse than you ever thought you were- but in the same moment it says you're completely loved and accepted by God because of what Christ has done on your behalf. It can never be undone and you can't stop God from loving you now! That's what Romans 8:35-39 was talking about.

“We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.” – **Tim Keller**

- So what should you think about yourself?

Don't think about yourself at all. The kind of sober or accurate assessment of yourself that Paul is talking about in **v. 3** puts an end to you thinking about yourself at all!

Healthy Christian humility keeps you focused outside of yourself and onto God and others.

“It is a kind of self-forgetfulness produced by treasuring Christ... Thinking about ourselves will produce pride or despair. And both are forms of unbelief. The gospel alternative to pride is not mere self-condemnation, but Christ-exaltation.” John Piper Sermon, ‘Using Our Gifts in Proportion to Our Faith, part 2’

Start delighting and meditating on Christ! When you get caught up in that you won't have so much room for thinking about yourself.

## **II. Recognize that God Never Calls You to His Son without also Connecting You to His Other Children in a Local Church**

**Romans 12:4-6a** “For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them...”

Paul drops this whole box of spiritual gifts right down into the middle of a tangled web we call the local church.

These gifts were never designed to operate in isolation outside the local church. The local church as the hub of this whole thing!

It's as if Paul is saying each one of us are spiritually gifted, but our gifts are simply spokes on the hub of the local church. The sooner you get connected to that hub, the sooner you'll start to thrive in cultivating and using your spiritual gifts.

### **A. Don't Look for Ways to Discover Your Spiritual Gifts Apart from Your Local Church**

There's something far more important for us than discovering our specific gifts and it's for us to embrace the fact that when God called us to His Son, He called us to be connected to His other children- in a local church.

You may think you'll get so much more done if you move ahead on your own, but we all have to work together so we can move ahead in unity.

There will be differences, disagreements, and hurts. God knows that! All your gifts are clanging cymbals without love and it's in a local church where you learn to love.

God never shows us an 'EXIT' door on the local church. He always places our gifts in the context of a local church.

Plug into a local church, start loving her and serving her in whatever ways she needs because you'll start to uncover, discover and cultivate your spiritual gifts.

### **B. 'O.J.T.' is the Best Way to Discover Your Spiritual Gifts**

O.J.T refers to 'on the job training' where you learn as you go. And you discover as you serve.

If you don't know what your spiritual gifts are don't just sit and wait to serve until you find out. Start serving anywhere and your spiritual gifts will be much more likely to rise to surface in the context of serving!

A big bonus in doing this is you become more like your Savior, who was the biggest Servant!

Just start serving and giving your life away and before you know it you're gonna find yourself discovering your gifts as you choose to step into certain situations and doing something about it and see how it bears fruit in the lives of other people!