

**Serving God with our Whole Being While Serving Others
with the Spiritual Gifts We Have Been Given
Romans 12:1-8**

Prayer from Johnathan Gibson's *Be Thou My Vision*, written by Henry Thornton, a late 18th/early 19th century British economist and politician who fought for Evangelical values, including the abolition of slavery: We bless you for your preservation of us during the past night; and we desire to acknowledge again our dependence upon you, and our unfeigned obligations toward you. We thank you for having poured down upon us so many blessings of this life; we thank you for our health and strength, for our food and dress; and for all the comforts and conveniences which we enjoy. But, above all, we praise you for the inestimable privilege of being born in a land of religious light and knowledge. For these, and for your various great mercies, we would render unto you a grateful heart; and we would endeavor to show our gratitude, not with our lips only, but with our lives; by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you, in holiness and righteousness, all our days on earth. Amen.

Title of a Jonathan Edwards essay/tract An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God's people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on earth, pursuant to Scripture-promises and prophecies concerning the last time

Title of today's message (longer than usual): Serving God with our Whole Being While Serving Others with the Spiritual Gifts We Have Been Given

Douglas Moo Romans 12:3 affirms “the one common grace from which the many different gifts stem (v. 6). It is the faith which believers have in common . . . that Paul here highlights as the standard against which each of us is to estimate himself.”

Information and Application Points from the Sermon

1. The giving of spiritual gifts is a Trinitarian affair
 - The Holy Spirit gives the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, 14
 - Jesus gives the gifts in Ephesians 4
 - God the Father gives the gifts in Romans 12
2. While these gifts may align with our God-given talents, they are to be offered as supernatural acts of service (faith, grace, God's mercies), so do not think of them as ordinary

3. We cannot exercise our gifts by faith if we do not know what they are – pursue an understanding of how God has designed you to be a blessing to the church
4. Every gift and strength is accompanied by a personal weakness (see the last three gifts); return to humility to keep from misusing the gifts God has given you for his glory in service to the body

Spiritual Gifts in Romans 12

1. Prophecy – This is more expounding the Scripture than foretelling the future. It is the ability to apply the truth of Scripture to contemporary issues, thus, preaching and encouragement are major components of this gift.
2. Service – What would we do without the people in our body who are behind the scenes, looking for opportunities to serve the church family by setting up and taking down chairs, picking up trash, washing dishes and cleaning the kitchen after an event? What would we do without our deacons?
3. Teaching – There are four NT texts where spiritual gifts are listed, although 1 Corinthians 12 could be divided into two sections. Teaching is listed in all four. In addition to our staff and elders, God has given Grace Community Church an abundance of gifted teachers – let us not take that for granted.
4. Exhortation – the Greek word is parakelasai. Does that sound familiar? Paraklete? The Helper, which is the title/description for the Holy Spirit. In addition to exhort, other translations of this word are comfort, pray, desire, entreat, and console. It also carries the idea of advocating for others. We need encouragers!
5. Giving – We talked about this gift last Sunday. Those who have this gift are encouraged to be generous. The more you make, the more temptation there is to hang on to it or to put it all in investments, so the Lord warns against a reluctant spirit.
6. Leadership – This is more management oriented than vision focused. Those who administrate must do so diligently. The temptation might be to get things rolling and let them take care of themselves. We are called to be active and diligent. Last:
7. Acts of mercy – This one empathizes more than sympathizes, tending to the sick, preparing meals for those in need, caring for the aged.

Scripture Associated with the Message

Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Leviticus 11:44 For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, 15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”