



Your Unique Ministry: Spiritual Gifts (Part 2)

March 3, 2025

Romans 12:3-8

(video 43:47)

Well, you want to turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 12. Certainly, no surprise there. You want to keep a finger, if you would, in 1 Corinthians 12 because we may be back and forth between that a little bit. But before you do, or as you do, I should say any of that. If you've got today's bulletin handy with you, Lia, thanks. I'd like those of you to have it to flip over and look on the back of your bulletin and you'll see a phrase on the bottom of that bulletin that has been there since we became a church. It's been there for years and what's it say? *Building bridges of grace strong enough to support the weight of God's truth.* What in the world does that mean, you ask? And someone did. And it fits perfectly into where we're going today in the next few weeks because that is exactly our vision and our purpose as believers in Christ as a local congregation. What do you mean? Almighty God has saved us by His grace. Paul's given us 11 chapters of the mercies that flow to us as believers by the grace of God. And so what's he say? Now present your bodies, a living sacrifice, whole and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service of worship and so forth. And what do we do? We are to be, as we said a few weeks ago, God's hands and feet, Christ's eyes and ears and heart and compassion and loving hands to believers and to a non-believing world outside the confines of the family of God. And so, what? You extend the grace that we've been given by extending that grace to those we meet and interact with within and without the family of God? Friendship, hospitality, and using our spiritual giftedness to minister to them. What happens? That creates a relationship with people. It creates community. It creates a bridge with another person. And that very bridge itself might be a way of sharing the gospel of Christ by, you know, the famous St. Francis of Assisi line, *Preach the gospel at all times, if necessary, use words.* In



other words, the love of Christ shining through you. But more often than not, and the way I meant it when I crafted it and took it, I should say, as our statement, is that because of that relationship, because of the Christ life in you and perhaps in another believer, you're able to, because of that relationship, that bridge, preach, pray, and pour the truth of God into that individual's life. And therefore, if they're a believer, they grow more in holiness, they're more conformed to Christ, and you're using your particular giftedness to enable them in that. If they live outside the family of God, they hopefully are attracted to Christ. They hear the gospel of Christ. They see the gospel of Christ. They see the gospel of Christ and the love of Christ lived out. And God may very well use that to draw them into the family of God. At the very least, on that great ultimate day, that judgment day, they'll have no excuse, for they will have heard and seen the gospel of Jesus Christ. So, we want to constantly build bridges based upon the grace of God, strong enough. In other words, we have a solid enough relationship that when the time is right and God's sovereign timing, we may speak a word about Christ. We might just get to throw our arms around and love them like Christ. We might get to do both. In my particular situation, I might actually get to preach God's word to them. But that's what we're talking about.

Now, you say, what in the world has that got to do with Romans 12:1-2? Well, we're to be wholly dedicated to Almighty God. That's our response after 11 chapters of hearing about the mercies of God. The command is, present your body a living sacrifice. We studied this ad nauseam the last three or four weeks. And presenting your body means your spirit, by implication, is already given over to God, or you couldn't do it. Your fleshly body, your feelings, your emotions, your personality characteristics, all given over to God. Your mind, the way you think, your thought processes given over to God. Your will, the ultimate decision making that is made based upon those thought processes, what you think, what you say, what



you do as directed by your will, all given over to Almighty God. And we studied all that. And that's where it all starts.

Now, in order to be useful though, having done that, he goes on and says in verses 3 through 8 of Romans chapter 12, and elsewhere, that this usefulness for God, if you will, depends upon the proper use of our gifts. Ultimately, if you look at Romans 12:2, ***And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*** Now, here's the transition. ***For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you,*** and he's going to start talking about your attitude and then he's going to talk about a proper relationship and proper service. But where he ultimately goes, he's going down to verses 6, 7, and 8. If you have the gift of prophecy, then prophesy. If you have the gift of service, serve. Verse 7, you're a teacher, teach. You have the gift of exhortation, exhort. You have the gift of giving, give with liberality. You're a leader, lead with diligence. You have the gift of mercy, do it with children. In other words, he's going to go from total dependence on God. He wants to take you from that point, which is the starting point, to service, to service. But in order to get you to service, he's going to explain everybody has been given a spiritual gift or gifts at salvation, specifically designed by God that have been given to you in order to do just that, to advance His kingdom by living a life that gives Him glory. But it all starts, he says, with the right attitude, the proper heart attitude.

You say, well, what is that proper heart attitude? In a word, humility, humility. And by the way, the only way you can have that Godly humility is to do exactly what he says in verses 1 and 2. Humble yourself or present your body a living sacrifice. Give your all to God. Now, how do you know humility is the right attitude? He introduces it in verse 3. Let's go to verse 3. ***For through the grace given to me,*** that's a great phrase. We're coming back to that. ***I say to***



every man among you, nobody's left out, every person, it's generic, every man, woman and child, every believer, every one of you, **not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.** Let's stop right there.

This is so unbelievably rich. I confess, I thought we'd sort of hit the highlights of it, and I was going to blow on to later on in the chapter farther down, 9, 10. I backed up on this. I want to explore this with you. The dedication, only the dedication in verses 1 and 2 can lead to this proper, humble attitude that he's talking about here. That's the outline, by the way, I gave you. Your usefulness to Almighty God after total commitment depends upon three things.

1. A proper heart attitude, verse 3,
2. having a proper relationship, verses 4 and 5, and
3. having a proper services, verses 6 through 8, and we're going to unpack that going forward.

So, he makes this transition here, and all Paul is trying to do, like I say, is work us up to this position of service.

Now, he says, **through the grace given to me.** You know, I love what one man said: *Humility, he says, flows out of a life that has been totally given over to God.* I still remember when my younger brother-in-law, Kimber, who was a pastor in Indianapolis at the time, made a comment to me. Something came up, and I said, "Man, I bet you you're really offended by that, Kim." And he said, "Oh no, Cozzie, you can't hurt a dead man." And what he's saying is, if you're dead to self, if you're living for the glory of God, if you've truly given everything away to God, you don't have anything left to be hurt. You're living for the glory of God, and it's so very, very true and very consistent.



Now he says, **For through the grace given to me.** Well, what grace is he talking about? He can't be talking about salvation grace. Every believer gets saving grace. We all come to Christ the same way. So, when he says in verse 3, **through the grace given to me,** what's he talking about? It's the grace that specifically called him to be an apostle. It's the grace that specifically ordained him to the ministry of the gospel. It's the grace that specifically called him to be this apostle to the Gentiles. He was an apostle by grace. Now why is that so important? He doesn't say, "I'm saying this to you as an apostle of Jesus Christ, and man, I got the authority, and let me tell you what you need to do. You need to humble yourself." No. How ironic and how bad would it be if he would pull rank and act prideful and arrogant when the whole point he's trying to get across is that we need to humble ourselves and act in humility? So how does he bring up his apostleship? How does he bring up the fact that he has the authority to tell them what they need to be doing? He says, I'm an apostle by the grace given to me. Later on in Timothy, what's he say? Hey, Timothy, you know, I found mercy and I found grace. I was a blasphemer. I was a persecutor of the church. I was an absolute sinner. He says, Christ Jesus came to save sinners of which I, Paul, am chief and foremost. The point is he's showing such tremendous humility, even in the way he shares his authoritative statement as an apostle of Jesus Christ. He says, it's the grace of God that ordained me to this position. It's authoritative, but it's by God's grace. So, Paul demonstrates the very attitude that he's telling them to have by the way in which he tells them, is what I guess I really wanted to say.

Now, in verse three, there's a word, *Phroneō* (G5426). I know it's going to drive you crazy, Lia. Here you go, Lia. P-H-R-O-N-E-O. *Phroneō*. That's the root word. That word, or two words based off of it, are used four times in this one verse. He starts out and he says this, **for through the grace given me I say to every man,** nobody's left out, we all need to do this, **not to think,** and it says, *hyperphroneō* (G5252), think **more highly of [himself]** oneself. Don't think more



highly of oneself than he ought to *phroneō*, **than he ought to think; but, phroneō think so as to have sōphroneō, sound judgment.** One commentator said this. This will bring out the four uses of the word, I think. *I say through the grace given unto me, every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober thinking, or not to be high minded above that which he ought to be minded, but to be so minded as to be sober minded. Or to say it another way, not to overestimate oneself beyond a true estimate, but to estimate oneself with a proper estimate.* I hope that's fairly clear.

But the thing that got me is when he says, don't think of yourself too highly. Think of yourself in the right way. Doesn't say don't think of yourself. He just says don't think of yourself too highly. But he says think of yourself in the right way. And so he says, so that you will have *sōphroneō*, sound judgment. The thing I love about that word, it actually means *so that you will be in your right mind.* Be in your right mind. Why do I think that is critical? Conceit is treated as insanity. The word of God says that if you are prideful, if you have conceit, if you think that you are really somebody in Christ, if you've got that heart attitude, you're actually out of your mind. You're insane. It's an ugly, ugly sin, the sin of self-pride. 1 Peter 5:5-6, be clothed with humility. Why? Because God resists the proud, but He gives a greater grace to the humble. And then he says, therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. Don't have a super exaggerated opinion of yourself. However, he also says, don't think unnecessarily lowly of yourself either. He says, think of yourself soberly. In other words, there's a balance here. And so, what he's talking about, remember, it's all in the guise of spiritual gifts. And there was a real problem. There was a real problem in the church that we can have today. There was a real problem in the church in Paul's day. He writes a letter called 1 Corinthians. And if you take the time to read chapters 12, 13 and 14 of 1 Corinthians sometime, all he's doing is talking to people who are not exercising their spiritual gifts, not



exercising their spiritual gifts properly, striving to have a gift they don't have, looking for the showoff gifts if you will. Let's go to 1 Corinthians 12. I said to mark it, flip over to 1 Corinthians 12 so that you can see what I'm talking about here. 1 Corinthians 12. He starts out in verse one. ***Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.*** And he goes on and he talks about various gifts and so on and so forth. And then he says, look at verse 4, ***Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good.*** That phrase, ***manifestation of the spirit***, is your spiritual gift. That's the ***manifestation of the spirit in you for the common good***. It's your spiritual gift. All right? ***For to one is given the word of wisdom***, etc., etc., etc. Now I want you to flip over, though, to verse 27. ***Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, administration, various kinds of tongues.*** Those are all very public displays of your spiritual giftedness. My particular spiritual gift is utilized in a manner that is very public. And he's talking about these very public spiritual gifts. Look what he says in verse 29. ***All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they?*** As a matter of fact, James even says, let not many of you be teachers, you come into a greater condemnation. ***All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.*** And then he goes into the famous love chapter. What's the point? He had a bunch of people in Corinth who were desirous, they wanted to be show-offs. They wanted to be seen. They wanted to be somebody. They were like Diotrefes. In 3 John, chapter 1, verse 9, it says,



Diotrephes who loves to seek preeminence. I always, in the margin of my Bible, I wrote Bob Uecker next to Diotrephes. Some of you know who I'm talking about. Bob Uecker was a baseball player, later became a baseball broadcaster. And he used to have these commercials. I forget what he was advertising. Shows you the power of that advertising. But I remember Bob Uecker. And he would always be somewhere, and he'd always be walking down and saying, "Hey, fans, I got tickets in the front row." And then before the commercial was over, the usher would tap him on the shoulder and say, "Mr. Uecker, your seats are way up there." And so, in every deal, he was, oh, I got in the front row. That's Diotrephes He wanted to be in the front row. He wanted to be seen. He wanted to be up front. And there are people, Paul says, who were making that mistake in Corinth, and people make that mistake in the church today. And it blunts the ministry of the Holy Spirit through your life. Where I'm going with all of this is that every believer in Christ has a gift package he was given at salvation. It is unique. It is special. Back up in Romans 12. Look at 1 Corinthians 12. Look at verse 18. **[But now] God has placed the members**, he's talking about in figurative language, the members of the body, each one of us, believers in Christ, **each one of them in the body, just as He desired**. Look back at 1 Corinthians 12, verse 11. **But one in the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually, just as He wills**. And I love that word *individually* there. The word in the Greek is *idios* (2398). We get the word *idiot* from it. It means to be so unbelievably different; you're an idiot. I mean, that's the way it's taken in English language. Now, if someone who's an idiot, it means they're totally unique. They're way off base. In this sense, here he's saying, you've been given a spiritual gift that is totally, totally different from every other believer on the planet. Talk about life having purpose. Talk about life having meaning. That is the nature of the spiritual giftedness which you and I have been invested.



And there's several attitudes, Paul tells us, that you can have that are wrong when it comes to spiritual gifts. The right attitude is this attitude of humility. One wrong attitude is boastfulness, being boastful about it, continually blowing your horn, wanting to be seen, like Diotrephes. Another wrong attitude is a false humility. I was thinking of you, Karen Roots. There can be a false, not that you have false humility, Karen and John were new to the church. They were here several weeks. And I remember when the conversation was right here. You may not remember the conversation. But she came up and she made a comment. And she said, "I just really want to thank you for your teaching." Now, several bells could go off there at that point in time. In my heart, I'm telling you. That's right, I'm the man. I'm the guy. Sinful pride. Now, there's another wrong attitude. I could say to Karen, "Oh, no, no, no, no, no, I'm a worm. I'm no good. I don't have a gift. It was an accident." That's a false humility, which is another form of pride. The Word of God wants us to treat our giftedness with a sober, sound judgment. Now, you may remember what I told you that day, but I've got a little trigger in my mind because it always puts the focus where it's supposed to be. And I don't know if Karen, do you remember this? We were standing right here. I said, well, Karen, and I've said this to some of you before, I take as much credit for my gift of teaching as I do having brown eyes. I had nothing to do with it. And I'm also very quick to say an Almighty God can take that gift away. I don't actually think He physically removes the gift. What He does is He totally blunts the usefulness of it. He said he can take it away any time He chooses. Now, that is the attitude that I think all of us are to have by whatever your giftedness is. It was a gift from God. It's all about God. It's to be used for God's glory. It's not about you and me. But he says, so I want you to have the right attitude to it. I don't want you to be boastful about it and brag and want to be seen by men for your glory. That's a wrong attitude. By the same token, I want you to know



you got the gift. And when you're affirmed properly in the use of it, you need to acknowledge that to the glory of God. And so that's the attitude you should have.

There's also a wrong attitude. There's counterfeiting, if you will. Some people just are not satisfied with whatever. And by the way, you will never be fulfilled in your Christian life until you are exercising the spiritual gift that God has placed you in the body of Christ and given you to utilize for the edification of the body for his glory. And until you're doing that, or to the degree that you can do that more and more and more, you will experience more and more and more of the fulfillment and the good pleasure of Almighty God on your life. And your effectiveness in using that gift will be directly proportional to the extent that you live out Romans 12:1-2 and continue to present your body, your mind, your soul, your will, your everything to Almighty God moment by moment as a part of your spiritual service of worship. People who don't have a public gift, so to speak, a gift to be used more publicly and yet want it because they want to be seen. Therefore, they counterfeit it and they try to be something that they're not. The classic example on this is John Walvoord when he was president of Dallas (a classic example for me), he was president of Dallas Seminary. I think I shared this with you five or six years ago, if I'm not mistaken. But they had a preaching practice in Dallas, had a four-year program for seminarians at the time. Maybe it still does. And by the time you get to the third year, they start making decisions as to whether or not that seminary is going to throw its mantle of approval on you as a man who will go out and be a preacher, teacher of the Word of God in terms of a pulpit ministry or whether or not you should be directed in some other type of pastoral ministry, but not preaching and teaching the Word of God. And they had one student who literally in every sermon he gave throughout the entire preaching practicum semester, every sermon that he was called upon and gave the opportunity to give in chapel month in and month out, year in and year out for the first three was absolutely a



disaster. And so finally, you know, he kept saying, but I got the gift of preaching teaching. I got the gift. I've got the gift of teaching. I've got the gift. So finally, John Walvoord, the time came to make the decision. And the president of the seminary always did this, especially on these decisions where it had to be a negative. And he sat the young man down and had to share it with him. This has gone on. This has gone on. "This is the feedback from your professors. This is the feedback from every one of your fellow students in your class. This is the feedback from the year and the two-year classes behind you that have sat in chapel when you've attempted to preach and so forth. And you are just not cut out and called to be a preaching minister of the gospel of Jesus." "But Pastor Walvoord, I've got the gift!" And Walvoord had a great line. He said, "Young man, you may indeed have the gift, but there isn't a man on this faculty or a person in this entire student body who has the gift of listening to you." And so, there's a real problem in doing that. People have a very quiet. My wife has a very quiet gift, the gift of mercy. Some of you have the gift of giving. Some of you have a gift of helps. Some of you have the gift of administration. Some of you have a gift of prayer. It's a gift of prayer, don't we? Aren't we all supposed to pray? Yeah. But there are some people who pray at a whole different level in a whole different way and have a gift in that regard. And for those individuals not to exercise the fabulous gift that God has given them, and to strive to be something they're not, is a wrong attitude when it comes to spiritual gifts.

But the worst attitude of all is not using your giftedness, not using it. One man talked about this definition of humility. Humility, again, is not thinking too high of yourself, not thinking too low of yourself. And as one man says, probably, he said, not thinking of yourself at all. I don't agree with that. It means to do exactly what Paul has told us to do right here in the third verse of Romans chapter 12. Think with sound judgment, a proper assessment. Humility, humility. It underscores everything we do in the Christian life. One guy said humility is the



one character quality that even if you're in a foreign land and you don't understand the language, you don't understand the culture, you can always spot a humble person. It stands out.

To me, since we're given examples, I know I shared this example years ago, but there's some examples that I will never, or illustrations, I'll never be able to repeat enough because this one happened in the church. It happened as a result of a man's giftedness, and it so perfectly points out Romans 12:3 and the attitude that you and I should have in terms of exercising our spiritual gifts. Now, we haven't even got to what the gifts are. We haven't got to how you're going to find out your spiritual gift and the steps you should take to do that. We haven't got to any of that yet. We're going to get to that as we come. This is all sort of introductory, if you will, to get to this. But the key thing is to think rightly towards your giftedness. And humility is the attitude that is the right attitude. The reason why I read the Philippians 2 passage was to show you the humility of Christ, who empties, bankrupts heaven and becomes a man and so forth. The illustration I'm thinking of, again, was given to me by my younger brother-in-law. True story. He was a pastor, been a pastor about nine or ten years at College Park Church in Indianapolis. And they had built a new worship facility and had given him a lovely pastoral office. And one of the amenities in his pastor's office was he had a private little restroom area. He had a commode and a sink and a shower area. A really nice, neat little private restroom, okay? And so on one Saturday, his home was about five miles away from the church. And this Saturday afternoon, he's working on his sermon and he realized, oh man, I wish I had that commentary, that book, whatever it was, that would help me with this. So he says, well, I'm only five miles away. He tells his wife, I'm going to run over to the church and grab a book. Gets in his car, drives the five miles to College Park Church. It happened to be a Saturday that they had declared an all-church workday. And people are trimming the, you know, the trees



and mowing the grass and touching up things with paint and cleaning and whatever. And so he's in a hurry. He races in to his pastor's office. He goes to his little library there in his office. He's looking around. He finds the commentary of the book, whatever it was he was looking for. Starts to go out the door and he hears this sound coming from his private little restroom there. And he says, what is somebody in there? And so he goes and he peeks around and he says, "Cozzie, there was this Chinese guy, Asian, he's on his hands and knees with a toothbrush and a bottle of bleach around the commode. And he was wiping this bleach and getting the grunge out of the grout around the commode. And I looked at him, you know, and I said, I recognize him as being new to the church. He was an Asian man. I knew who he was. I didn't know his name. I knew that he and his wife were new to the church. And I said, "Hi, I'm Kim." He says, "Oh, I know who you are, pastor," He says, "I'm King Yee." And he goes, "Well, I'm in a big hurry and I'm so sorry to run off. But man, this is so kind of thank you for what you're doing." And Kim just runs off. And he says, "Cozzie you won't believe it. Five days later, Thursday evening of the following week, I'm watching the news on television in Indianapolis. Larry Bird," Who at that time was the NBA basketball player, he was the coach of the Indiana Pacers. They had flown out to Denver for a game against the Denver Nuggets. And Bird had a heart issue. He had afib or whatever you call it. And either on the flight or the altitude in Denver or whatever it was, it erupted and he had an issue. The Pacers immediately flew their team cardiologist and doctor, who happened to be the number one heart surgeon in the whole state of Indiana at the time, by private jet. And this doctor came off the private jet. Kim says, "I'm looking at the news on TV as Larry Bird and the Pacers flew this heart doctor out to... And who walks off the plane and starts getting interviewed by the press? King Yee, the guy who was on his hands and knees with a toothbrush, scrubbing the grunge." He says, "This guy's hands used to do meticulous, tiny vessel heart surgery was on the floor of my restroom



on a Saturday, never knowing I was going to come in and look for a book, never knowing a human being was taking notice of it all. And he was using his delicate hands and giftedness and doing that work, what he could do for the glory of God." If you find a better real-life illustration of humility in the body of Christ, call me. I'll use that one. But trust me, that has stuck with me ever since. Our life is to be a stewardship, if you will. It tells me how important it is to give our life totally to Him. That guy in between hospital calls, surgeries, demands on his time, a wife, a family, a life and all the other problems and issues and things of life, took the window of time he had on a Saturday to use his gifted hands to do what he could do for the body of Christ, for the glory of God unseen by anyone. That is the essence of humility, the essence of humility.

1 Corinthians 12:11, He does what? He gives each one, ***distributing each one individually, just as He wills.*** And, again, there it means *idios*, one of a kind, uniquely. There's a tendency to say, well, you know, John's got the gift of teaching, and that guy's got the gift, and Bob Merwin and so on and somebody else got the gift of teaching. And so, there's 43 guys with the gift of teaching. No, they all may have the gift of teaching, but every one is different. You may have 64 people have the gift of mercy. Every one of them is unique and different. There's no two alike. They're ministered in different ways and they're given out in different ways. You can have MacArthur, he's not a Sproul. Sproul's not Donald Gray Barnhouse and Donald Gray Barnhouse is not James Montgomery Boyce and none of them are Irwin Lutzer and not one of them is Warren Wisbury and not one of them is Alistair Begg. Not one of them is David Jeremiah. Not one of them is G. Gordon, not one of them is Dr. Jack MacArthur and on and on it goes. Talk about humility. Mike Fink, I thought about an event that occurred in Reformed Living years ago. I can count on two fingers because it's only happened twice. It's only happened once really, when I mistakenly thought a Sunday school class had been canceled



and therefore I didn't show up to teach it. It was a Sunday night and about 20 people either I didn't give them the word or they didn't get the word or I didn't get the word but we were having class at SBC Reformed Living Sunday school class on a Sunday night in C building on the second floor up there and Mike and about 15-20 other people showed up. John didn't. Everybody's sitting around. But you know who was there? A guy named Dr. Jack MacArthur. 80 some year-old saint. Now that guy. Get this. He's the father of John MacArthur Jr. He's gone to glory now. First man ever on television preaching the scriptures. Voice of Calvary 1949 from Hollywood California. The author of book after book after book, on and on. Heard on radio stations... his radio show (this is before his son John even got into his ministry), his radio show *Voice of Calvary*, I don't know if it is anymore but up until about seven or eight years ago was on at least one radio station somewhere. It was the longest running radio program, secular or Christian, in the history of radio. It ran for 61 years. *The Voice of Calvary*. So what's that got to do with Mike Fink and a Sunday night and Reformed Living? Dr. Jack is sitting there. And what happened? Dr. Jack says, "Well John's not here. Let's open the word." He gets up. He could have easily said you know I'm tired. Let's go home. No. There was an opportunity to use his gift to minister to the glory of God. And he wasn't ever going to miss a chance even in his 80s. And what did he do? He stood up and he preached on Ephesians chapter one. All hail sovereign love. I wasn't there. I only know it because I made him give me the lesson next week. And Mike Fink to this day took notes and I think did you have a sign in your Bible? Yeah. Mike took notes and even had him sign his Bible. Such an impactful sermon. Such a blessed time. It's that kind of humility of those wonderful men and women of God that provide such a living life example for you and for me.

Now he's measured out he says these spiritual gifts. Verse 3. ***Through the grace given to me I say to every [man] one of you, this is a command, not to think more highly of yourself***



than you ought to think; but think so as to have sound judgment,... don't be out of your mind. Don't be insane. Proudful is total insanity from God's perspective. And how are you to do that? ***...as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.***

What faith is he talking about there? Well, I gave you a definition of faith long ago. Remember? *Faith is the God given ability to believe in the person and character of God as revealed in the scriptures. And faith is the God given ability to entrust your life to the principles, precepts, proscriptions and promises as set forth in the scriptures.* Well, is that that use of the word faith here? Yes, but it's broadened. Broaden the word faith there. He's saying you're given these gifts and each one of you is given a measure of faith. What he's saying is: you're given the faith, the kind and quantity of faith, it takes to operate your gift. That's what he's saying there. You're given the kind and quantity and quality of faith by God that you need to operate your gift. Me as a teacher, what's the faith that He gives me? He broadens my mind. He gives me spiritual insights. He gives me a spiritual sensitivity, a capacity to see deeper things or to make connections between this verse and that verse in the scripture. He gives me the ability to read MacArthur's sermon and read Spurgeon's sermon and go, oh wait, I see a tie in between those two and what A.W. Pink is saying. He gives that type of capacity to enable me, because I have the gift to administer this gift. Whatever your particular gift is, He gives believers that faith to do that to the extent and degree that they pray for it. And to the extent they are living out Romans 12:1-2 by constantly presenting themselves to Almighty God. I mentioned Teri again last week has the gift of mercy. I can sit and listen to Debbie pour her heart out to me for an hour and do my best to understand and comprehend and sympathize and so forth, and will. But if somebody with the gift of mercy like a Teri talks to her, it's a whole different dynamic because she will look beyond Debbie's words and she'll relate to Debbie's heart. She will put herself, it's just a gift, in Debbie's position. She'll feel what Debbie



is feeling, if you will. And people who have the gift of mercy... it's a powerful gift to watch on display because all of us as people, we long to be understood. We want to be understood so bad. That's that plaintiff spiritual we talked about last week. Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. Nobody knows like Jesus. Well, guess what? Nobody knows like Jesus. And that includes the Jesus that resides in a believer who has the gift of mercy. They know and there's something about that. And yet you take Teri has the gift of mercy and let's just let's say Heather has the gift of mercy. You take a Heather with the gift of mercy and take a Teri Politan with the gift of mercy and they'll minister to Debbie in the same way, but in a different way. It'll still be different because the measure of faith and the degree and so forth that God has invested with Heather will be different than what he's invested in Debbie. And it's just the way it is. All of this to say: you as a believer in Christ have infinite value to the to the community of God. You lend infinite, irreplaceable value, worth and necessity, need if you will, to God's glory in the community of God. And you need to build that bridge of grace with other believers strong enough to support the truth package that God has invested in you by His grace to minister to those needs. And I dare say to be ministered to in return. So that's what he's talking about there.

One more real quick, because Elvis, are you here, Elvis? Yeah, there you are. He's got broad shoulders. I can pick on him. Here's a classic example. I don't know if Elvis thinks he has the gift of evangelism or not, but somewhere in his gift package, he's got a heart strong for evangelism. You say, "Well, shouldn't all of us have hearts for evangelism? Don't all of us want to witness for Christ?" Yes, of course we do. We're all ambassadors for Christ to one degree or another. But there's a giftedness in Elvis's salvation package that is over the top. Now, a few years ago, we had a Friday morning men's Bible Study. I don't know if Wedge Lutz started it. I don't know if Elvis started it. I don't know if Brian started it. I can't even remember. But



we have this eight, 10, 12, 15 guys meeting on Friday morning for a Bible study. And we're sharing. Now, that wasn't good enough for Elvis. Elvis wanted that Bible study to get out of the private area where we were meeting. And he wanted to have it in a coffee shop because if we had this Bible study in a coffee shop, well, strangers would see us and people would see us. And we'd have an opportunity to share Christ. Now, we opted to go a different way. We didn't do that. We want to have more of a private study. And it may have frustrated Elvis. I don't know. I never talked to him about it. And the reason why I share this. Now, did that make Elvis wrong? It didn't make him wrong or right. It made him Elvis. That's his gift package. That's his heart. Me? I don't care if there's one person there. You want to talk about the Bible or something. I'll talk about the Bible with you for three hours. I can't stop. And if there's something we can teach and talk about and mutually learn, I'm all in. That's me. That's what God gave me. And everybody is uniquely different. It doesn't make anybody right or wrong. But I'll tell you what it makes you. It makes you necessary. You literally are necessary because there's a certain way in which Elvis' gift rubs off. There's a certain way I hope my gift definitely rubs off. There's a certain way that gift of mercy, that gift of help, that gift of giving, it all takes effect and rubs off, if you will.

Well, how can you discover your spiritual gift? Man, I hope I'm alive next week and I hope you're all here so we can get into how you discover your spiritual gift and where this is all going to lead. Let me just say that your life has incredible, infinite value. You need to understand your gift, know, so to speak, what your gift is, and use it. Use it to the glory of God.

As I close in prayer, Brian, come on up and lead us in whatever hymn you've selected. Father, we thank You for this time in your Word. I thank You for a heart surgeon in Indianapolis, Indiana named King Yee. And here, 25, 30 years later, his example on a day when he didn't even know a human being was going to see what he was doing is being used to edify a couple



hundred people in a church, is being recorded and will one day, hopefully, go out over a radio broadcast. And thousands and thousands of people may hear and be encouraged in their spiritual walk because of that one humble act that he did on a church workday that Saturday as he was living out Romans 12:1-2, using his giftedness in some way, his physical hands to do tiny, meticulous work to benefit others in the body of Christ. Oh, Lord, by Your grace, may we follow such an example. We ask it in the matchless name of You, in the person of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. And yes, indeed, amen.