

"Grace & Peace to You"

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia
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ROMANS LESSON 78 PART ONE: DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

ROM 12:3-6A *For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to [α] measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

⁶ *Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us... if prophecy, in proportion to our faith.*

The Apostle Paul has made a plea to the Roman Believers (and us) to respond in "worshipful service" to the outpouring of God's Mercies shown to us in Salvation through Jesus Christ. Offering their bodies as "living sacrifices" they will: **1)** Stop being conformed to the patterns of this Age; **2)** Allow themselves to be transformed by the renewal of their minds; **3)** To be able to demonstrate God's Will through their lives. **The very first way that His Will is demonstrated in the Believer's life is by taking our place IN the Body of Christ... His CHURCH.** Everyone has a place... and everyone has received the grace to fulfill their function.

PROVING THE WILL OF GOD (Finishing Last Session)

12:2C *"...so that [you may prove by demonstration] what is the will of God: what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

- *So that... that which is the result of what preceded*
- *May Prove... (Dokimazo – to show the reliability of a thing by "testing" – to prove / approve – to make demonstration...*
- *The Will of God...*

Three uses of the word "will" in relation to God:

- **First**, God's Sovereign Will, which is hidden and is only revealed as God intends it to be
- **Second**, God's Moral Will, which is revealed in Scripture
- **Third**, God's Specific Will For Individuals, which is what people are usually thinking about when they speak of searching for or finding God's will – revealed to us by the Holy Spirit

- *What is Good... (Agathos) – Good by its nature whether apparent / appealing or not*

There are 2-Words

- Kalos – Apparent Good – Outward / Noble / Beautiful / Desirable
- Agathos – Inherent – Inward / Perfect / Absolute
- *What is Acceptable... (Euarestos – "good pleasing") – It is "Pleasing before (God) therefore it is pleasing to me..."*
- *What is Perfect... (Teleios – complete / having reached its intended purpose) -*

IF it is our desire to make demonstration of the Will of God through our life (*what is illustrated in CHAPTERS 12-16*) then we must STOP allowing ourselves to be Conformed to the image of this Age, and allow ourselves to be Transformed by the Renewal of our Mind!

DEFINING "GRACE"

In order to get the most from Paul's words in the following passage we need to enlarge what we understand by the word, "grace." Normally we think only of grace in relationship to God's response to man's sin. But the word has a much broader definition and application than that.

Charis: *Favor or Benevolence granted by one who is able to make good on what is promised; The use of power or position to supply the need of one unable / inadequate to help themselves; It is given without merit or demerit having no regard to the recipients abilities or liabilities.*

ROMANS LESSON 78 PART TWO: DIFFERENT BY DESIGN

A Scriptural definition of "Grace" –

2 COR 12:9 *But [The LORD] said to me, "My grace is sufficient [an overwhelming supply / provision] for you, for my power is made perfect [reaches its intended purpose] in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses [deficiencies / inabilities], so that the power of CHRIST [His All-sufficient Grace] may rest [dwell] upon me.*

- The emphasis here is that IN the "grace" which Jesus was giving to Paul there was the "perfected power of Christ" to overwhelm the lack / weakness he was facing.
- Whether in relation to sin / sickness / provision / peace... the Lord's GRACE is the provision of His power to overwhelm the need.
- We will use this understanding as we expound upon these verses.

"5" SYNONYMOUS PHRASES

In VERSES 3-6, we will find "5" phrases that relate to the same thing: **God's Gifts of Grace** to every Believer. ROM 12:3-6 *For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.* ⁴ *For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function,* ⁵ *so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.* ⁶ *Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us... if prophecy, in proportion to our faith.*

They don't all mean the same thing, but they relate to a similar principle. We will enlarge on each as we encounter them in the verse, but here is the bottom line:

- Each "gift of God's grace" is received and accessed by the "measure of faith" assigned By God.
- These "graces" do not all have the same function and have been designed by God to compliment the whole of the Body (Church).
- They differ according to God's perfect design and the grace given to the individual.
- We are to "use" our gift by drawing upon it by the faith needed to "employ" it.

NO "LONE WOLVES" IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

ROM 12:3 *"For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think with sober thinking, each [one] according to [a] measure of faith that God has assigned."*

Breaking this verse into the individual phrases we can see Paul's progress of instruction / correction.

➤ *By the grace given to me ...*

- **What WAS the "grace" given to Paul?** – Here he is using grace as synonymous with "gift" The "Charismata" are the 9 "Manifestations of the Spirit" we call, the GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

But Paul is making use of "grace" here in referring to his *Apostleship*. THIS was the "grace" Christ had given to him, and "Set" within the Body... **EPHESIANS 4:11-16**.

- Jesus had given **a divine impartation of His power** to Paul to be an Apostle to the Church (U)
- So here, Paul is speaking from the Authority of an APOSTLE to the Believers in the Church at Rome ... *and to us*. These are the Lord's ideas... they are the Lord's desires!
- *To everyone among you ...*
 - What Paul has to say is for ALL the Believers...
 - He is NOT addressing just a group within the Church ... or a segregated / qualified portion as if they might apply to some and not to others...
- *NOT to think more highly than he ought to think ... But to think with sober thinking ...*
 - Paul uses a "4-Fold" application of different forms of the same word
 - **Phronein** – *thinking that results in forming an opinion and therefore influences the will*
 - **Huperphronein** – *thinking that exalts itself over others resulting in arrogance / superiority*
 - **Sophronein** – *"Sound-minded" – to think with discipline / self-control – to align thoughts to that which is wise and beneficial – to think in such a way as to be stable (without extremes)*
 - This is about **NOT developing** an attitude of "independence" or "isolationism" that may result from a sense of "superiority" about their "Gifting" or about "status"
 - But to think carefully how our "giftings" may be used in their most beneficial way so as to help others and to help ALL – **"What is good for the WHOLE is good for ME"**
- *According to [a] measure of faith ...*
 - Often this **"measure of faith"** is applied to the **"faith we received in order to be saved"** – Everyone has received it SO everyone CAN believe and be Saved – *"Everyone has the same measure"*
 - But that is NEITHER the subject of Paul's instruction NOR the context of the passage
 - It is **"A" measure of faith** – NOT **"the" measure of faith**
 - EACH one has **"a measure"** necessary to access the **"grace-gifting"** that has been given to them
 - THIS **"measure"** is further defined by the next phrase...
- *God has assigned (to them) ...*
 - *Has assigned* – **"Merizo"** – *to divide among / to distribute to each / separate into different parts...*
 - The verb form used indicates that this is a completed work – it HAS been done...
1 COR 12:12-13 indicates this was completed when we were **"baptized into Christ"** – **Saved**...
¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For "BY" one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
- The parallel passage in **1 COR 12:12-31** enlarges greatly upon this subject –

ONE BUT DIFFERENT

ROM 12:4-5 *For as in one body we have many members, and the members **do not all have the same function**,⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

I heard a teacher one time make the following application of **ROM 12:3-6A** and **1 COR 12:12-31**

You can't be someone else...

God has created you to be unique – one of a kind. If you try to be “someone else” ... you can't be. God already has “one of those.” But when you don't want to be the “you” that God created, you rob God and others of the uniquely gifted person God made you to be.

- **In one body... many members... –**
 - As Paul had already covered this in detail in his **1ST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS** (written 2-3yrs prior), it is probable the Roman Believers had heard these principles – Especially as there were several in Rome who were from Corinth (including Priscilla & Aquilla)...
 - It is a simple and easy to understand illustrated point...
- **Do NOT all have the same function... –**
 - **Function...** – “Praxis” – practical usefulness
 - The “parts” do not ALL have the same function... SO they are **ONLY ENABLED** to do **THEIR function**
 - **IN THE SAME MANNER...** Not every Believer is “graced with the same ability”
 - **NOR** does every member have the same “faith” to access the “grace” given them...
- **Though many... are ONE... members of one another... –**
 - **TOGETHER** they make ONE...
 - **EACH** using their “grace gift” to serve the **OTHER MEMBERS...**

IT IS GOD'S DESIGN

ROM 12:6A *Having [therefore] gifts that differ according to the grace given to us... [Let us use them...]*

“Thinking soberly” means thinking responsibly in HOW I may use MY **grace-gifts** to **SERVE** the others in the Body. *Notice in this phrase the multiplication of the generosity of our Lord:* “Gifts... Given... by Grace”

- **Having... gifts...** – “Having” – to “hold / have as a reality -
 - Without any qualifying words, Paul openly states that these gifts ARE in your possession / authority / realm of usability...
 - The **Verb form** says they are yours NOW... nothing that must be obtained...
 - “Charismata” – **Operations of grace...** – Not the “Charismata of the Spirit” [1 Cor 12:4-11]– these “graces” are to identify your place in the Body and to be used to fulfill your “role”
- **That differ...** – “Diaphoros” – to differ by separation – distinct from one another by purpose / design
 - The difference is intended... Drawing from the “body” analogy the parts of the Body CANNOT all be the same...
- **According to...** – “Kata” – “under the influence of...”
 - Something is having direct influence over the reception of the Gifts each one has received...
 - There is **NO** provision for the Believer to “choose” or “fashion” their “Gift of Grace”
- **The grace given...** –
 - It is The Lord who is the source of the “Giving” –
 - Therefore, it is the Lord who has determined “What Grace” each one should have.
 - The “Gift” comes with the “grace” to access it through the “faith” which accompanies it... As the Believers are “Transformed” by the “Renewal of the Mind” they are able to “Make **emonstration**” of God's Will... “Serving ONE ANOTHER” through the “Grace” that has been given...