

SERVING GOD ACCORDING TO YOUR GIFT

You are to serve God in the body of Christ according to the area in which He has gifted you.

Introduction

God has gifted all of His children with spiritual abilities to serve Him in the body of Christ. You are to exercise these abilities in humility, according to the faith and grace of God. Service in your area of giftedness is the only way that you can effectively serve God within the body of Christ.

Romans 12:6-8

Romans 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Prophecy

- The prophet is one who speaks to people on behalf of God.
- Making predictions was just a part of the prophet's work.

The work of the Old Testament prophets was not only to foretell future things, but to warn the people concerning sin and duty, and to be their remembrancers concerning that which they knew before. (Matthew Henry).

- Even if a prophet made an accurate prediction, he was to still be considered a false prophet if he tried to lead God's people to follow false gods.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, 2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; 3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. 5 And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.

- Likewise, when a prophet speaking in the name of the LORD, makes a prediction that fails to come to pass, he too is a false prophet.

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of

other gods, even that prophet shall die. 21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? 22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

- Jesus Christ is the final Prophet of God.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. 17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. 18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

- The New Testament prophet was also someone who spoke to the church on God's behalf.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 15:32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

1 Corinthians 12:28-29 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

1 Corinthians 14:29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

1 Corinthians 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

- The teacher fulfills this role in the church today.
- Notice how the Bible compares the prophet of Old Testament with the teacher of the New Testament.

2 Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

- God still speaks to us today but only through His Written Word, The Holy Bible.
- The Bible Teacher speaks to the congregation on behalf of God.

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

- He convicts them with the Word of God.
- He corrects them with the Word of God.
- He cheers them to obey the Word of God.

**[7] Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering;
or he that teacheth, on teaching;
[8] Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation:**

Ministry, Teaching, and Exhortation

- MIN'ISTRY, n. [L. ministerium.] The office, duties or functions of a subordinate agent of any kind. Webster 1828.
- The one with this gift is equipped to be an aide to the leaders and congregation of the church.
- *Wait on our ministering* means to be active in doing our ministry.
- The minister is to be busy doing what God has gifted him or her to do.
- The deacon is a minister.
- DE'ACON, *noun* [Gr., a minister or servant.]
 - A person in the lowest degree of holy orders.
 - The office of *deacon* was instituted by the apostles, Acts 6:1, and seven persons were chosen at first, to serve at the feasts of christians and distribute bread and wine to the communicants, and to minister to the wants of the poor. (Webster's 1828).
- The same holds true for the teacher, and the exhorter as they too are to work only within the sphere in which God has gifted them.
 - Where the gift of ministry works primarily in the physical realm, the gift of teaching works on the mind.
 - The teacher is gifted and used by the Holy Spirit to work on the renovation of the believer's mind by exposing the congregation to and explaining to them the Word of God.
 - The one with the gift of exhortation ministers to the soul of the congregation, particularly the will as he or she encourages the believer to allow the Holy Spirit

to apply the truth of God's Word that has been taught to their minds to operate in their everyday lives.

- The *pastor-teacher* of Ephesians 4:11 is one that is equipped with all three of these gifts to some degree.
- He ministers to the spiritual needs of the church by teaching them the Word of God and encouraging them to yield to its truth under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

- *2 Timothy 4:1-2 (KJV) I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; [2] Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity;

The Giver

- The giver is the one equipped with a big heart to share what he or she has with others.
- The person truly equipped with this gift gives with *simplicity*.
 - This means that they give out of a pure heart with no ulterior motives.
 - Their giving is for no other reason than truly wanting to help those in need while expecting nothing in return.

he that ruleth, with diligence;

The Ruler

- The ruler is the one in charge of the group.
- Think of the tool we use to measure with.
 - It is used to keep things straight.
 - It is used to keep things in order.
- God uses the believer with this gift to keep the group straight and in order.
- He is to rule with all diligence.
 - DILIGENCE, *noun* [Latin , to love earnestly; to choose.]
 - Steady application in business of any kind;
 - constant effort to accomplish what is undertaken;
 - exertion of body or mind without unnecessary delay or sloth;
 - due attention;
 - industry;
 - assiduity.
- DILIGENCE is the philosophers stone that turns every thing to gold.
 - Brethren, give *diligence* to make your calling and election sure. 2 Peter 1:5.
 - **2.** Care;
 - heed; heedfulness.
 - Keep thy heart with all *diligence* Proverbs 4:23. (Webster's 1828)

he that sheweth mercy,

Mercy

- MER'CY, *noun* [Latin misericordia.]
 - That benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves;
 - the disposition that tempers justice, and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than law or justice will warrant.
 - In this sense, there is perhaps no word in our language precisely synonymous with *mercy*.
 - That which comes nearest to it is grace.
 - It implies benevolence, tenderness, mildness, pity or compassion, and clemency, but exercised only towards offenders.
 - *Mercy* is a distinguishing attribute of the Supreme Being.
- The Lord is long-suffering and of great *mercy* forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty. Numbers 14:18.

with cheerfulness.

- CHEERFULNESS, *noun* Life; animation; good spirits; a state of moderate joy or gayety; alacrity.
- He that showeth mercy, with *cheerfulness* Romans 12:8. (Webster 1828).
- 2 Corinthians 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
- Following God's example. James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Conclusion

Your service to God in the body of Christ is fruitful as you humbly serve Him in the area in which He has gifted you, according to the faith and the grace that He has given to you.