

The Logic of Spiritual Gifts

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[0 : 00] Well, hello there. Howdy. Bring greetings from Rain City.

Okay, well, we get it first up north, right? Because it drains south, right? Is that how it works? North is higher than south, right?

That there canyon. We're living in a van down by the flowing river. Missed y'all. First week, first Sunday there, we're in the camper in 1009. We turn on the internet tweet thing, whatever it was.

James call it the interweb thing, the live stream. And we enjoyed worshiping with you all live.

That was great. It's not as good as being here. Not even close, but good. And then the second Sunday came, and we're just planning, you know, getting ready for worship.

[1 : 21] And like Ron would always say, are you ready to worship? We were ready to worship. And 1009 comes, and nothing. Okay, well, you know, it's a little log, you know.

1019 come, 9, 9, 9, 10. 1119, okay, this isn't happening. What's going on? And I understand there were things going on. That just happens.

But we missed it. I was out of rhythm. Now, we got to watch the sermon later, I think the next day or something, and just not the same.

I miss worshiping live with you. It is good to be in the Lord's house on the Lord's day with the Lord's people.

And something's missing when we can't be there. So, we had a wonderful rainy time.

[2 : 39] So, we can report that the big Thompson is even bigger. And overflowing its banks, and it was exciting. We had a few hours of sun over those three weeks.

Forecasts. I don't believe in forecasts anymore. because every day they'd say, oh, sunny today. By 11, it's raining like cats and dogs. About 2 o'clock, they'd update their, oh, yeah, it's going to be rainy today.

So, we've got to calling it aftercast because they don't know what they're doing. I mean, if I was a weatherman, I never want that job, but if I was a weatherman in Colorado, all you got to do is say, chance of rain every day.

That's all you got to do. Right? Because there's always a chance. I learned that the first year I lived here. All right, it's enough of that. We are beginning a new study.

We were praying over the months while we were doing the other study, walking through the Old Testament, and Mark and I were talking about what would be most helpful, where do we go next?

[3 : 48] We've been in the Old Testament, we need to go to the New Testament, and I was thinking about going to one of the Gospels, and Mark kind of said, what about spiritual gifts? I said, yeah, what about them?

Maybe that'd be good for the summer. I prayed about it, more thought about it, but yeah, it'd be good. So that's what we're doing. And I hope that you see over the next few weeks the importance of spiritual gifts.

What I've come to realize over this last week as I'm pouring into Romans 12, which is where we're going to be today, it's not a side issue. It's not an optional thing.

It's not an add-on. It is absolutely fundamental to Christianity. The way that Paul lays it out in the book of Romans chapter 12, he comes to what is the most fundamental things about Christianity?

What are the most basic, what is our most basic duty to God and to serve him? And you get in through five verses, verse six, gifts, gifts, gifts, gifts.

[5 : 05] It's how God has designed it. How do I fit into the church? Where's my place in the church? How do I serve the church? Well, your gift determines that.

It's not I determine where I want to. It's God has assigned you a gift. That's how you fit. That's your place. So, with that intro, let's read Romans 12, one through eight.

We're only going to really be looking at the first five verses this morning. Then we'll pray and then we'll dig in. So, if you're able, please stand. Romans 12, you'll find it right after Romans 11.

So, if you know, you open the Bible, you get to the Psalms, keep going to the right, you get to the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans. Okay?

It is probably Paul's, what do you call it, magna opus? Magnum opus? I mean, it's his, he's crystallizing everything here, okay?

[6 : 13] So, Romans 12, verse one. I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your logical worship.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Four, 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.

For, as in one body, we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another having gifts that differ.

According to the grace given to us, let us use them. If prophecy in proportion to our faith, if service, in serving, the one who teaches, in teaching, the one who exhorts, in exhortation, the one who contributes, in generosity, the one who leads, with zeal, the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness, so reads the word.

[8 : 19] Let us pray that we grasp. Father, lead us this morning, help us to see Paul's point, his calling of us.

What is basic Christianity? humanity? What is fundamental to all of us? What is our most appropriate response to all that you have done for us?

Help us to see it. Not only how we give our lives to you, but how we give our lives to one another. And how the gifts that you give to us determine how we do that.

So speak to us today, Father, we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. Speaking of logical, I came across this story some time ago, and I really enjoyed it, and I think you'll enjoy it.

It's about the old lady and the bank teller. Maybe you've seen this happen in your own bank. bank. An old lady handed her bank card to the teller and said, I'd like to withdraw \$10.

- [9 : 35] The bank teller told her, for withdrawals less than \$100, please use the ATM, thinking to dismiss her. The old lady wanted to know why.
- The teller returned her bank card and irritably told her, these are the rules. Please leave. If there's no further matter, there are customers behind you. What would you do?
- The old lady remained silent for a little bit, didn't go away, and handed her card back to the teller and said, please help me withdraw all the money I have.
- The teller was astonished when she checked the amount balance. She nodded her head, leaned down, and respectfully told her, you have \$300,000 in your account. But the bank doesn't have that much money currently.
- Could you make an appointment and come back again tomorrow? This is an old lady. She's been around a while. Is that what she's going to take that?
- [10 : 45] No. The old lady then asked, well, how much can I withdraw immediately? The teller told her, any amount, up to \$3,000.
- Well, please let me have \$3,000 now. The teller kindly handed her \$3,000, very friendly, with a smile to her. The old lady put \$10 in her purse and asked the teller to deposit \$2,990 back into her account.
- Moral of the story, don't mess with old people. They've spent a lifetime learning the skill of what makes sense.
- What makes sense. The same goes for for the church. What makes sense.
- Don't complicate the church. God has designed his body to function in a very simple, logical way that makes sense.
- [12 : 06] And what is fundamental to the body of Christ are spiritual gifts. I want you to see the simple logic before we dig in.
- I just want you to see the simple logic Paul uses in verses 1 through 5. Okay, verse 1. He appeals to them to present their bodies as a living sacrifice.
- Okay, so that's first. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice. Why? It's your spiritual worship. That's a terrible translation. What the word is, the word is not spiritual.
- If Paul wanted to say spiritual worship, he would have used the word for spiritual. He used the Greek word which is logikos. Logikos.
- Can you hear an English word out of that? Logical. Logical. Logical. Logical. I read commentary. Paul would have used the other word.
- [13 : 12] Sorry. Sorry. Sometimes you got to just yell at scholars because they're just being, doesn't make sense. Got to be an old person. Got to be an old lady with a scholar.
- Logical. Okay, so he's talking about what's logical. What's logical? Because of all the mercies that God has poured on us is to then give your whole life as a sacrifice to God.
- Okay, that's number one. Verse one. Verse two, then what do you do? Not be conformed to this world, but in contrast, be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God.
- So, step one, total surrender to God. Step two, renovate how you think. be transformed by renovating how you think.
- You've got to reprogram your brain. You've got to pre-program how you value and how you think and how you perceive things. Reprogram. Okay, what makes sense? Sacrifice to God.
- [14 : 14] Re-program. How you think? In what regard? Verse three, how you think about yourself. First of all, for 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.

So, I've got to renew my mind about how I think about myself. Each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. So, that depends on what God has assigned to me. What has God assigned to me? I don't determine what I do.

God determines what I do. Four, now he explains it further. How does my thinking about myself relate? Verse four, it relates to being in the body of Christ.

For as in one body, we don't have many members. We have many members, and the members do not all have the same function. So, we, though many, are one body in Christ, individually members of one another having gifts.

Hey man, how did he get to gifts? Talking about thinking, and then talks about the body, one body, many members. They don't all have the same function. What does that mean?

[15 : 23] Well, we all have a gift. We all have a function. We all have a practice, a place in the church, a role in the church, which is determined by what God has assigned to us.

That specifically being a gift. That's where we're going. See, spiritual gifts are absolutely fundamental to not just how we minister to one another, but how I serve God.

Because number one, I sacrifice everything for him. Number two, I reprogram how I think so that I can serve the body. That's fundamental Christianity.

Period. That's it. That's it. It's easy, right? Simple. Don't complicate it. Don't we need programs?

Don't complicate it. Shouldn't we do this and that and this and that? Depends. Don't complicate it. What's the design?

[16 : 35] Okay, so here we go. Okay. Slow down, Bill. Let's so Romans 12 comes after Romans 11, correct?

Okay, so there's something he said before he gets to this point in chapter 12. Chapter 12 and following of Romans is the application of everything he said before chapter 12.

Okay, do you see the one, two, three, four, the fifth word in chapter 12 verse 1. What's the fifth word? Therefore. When you see a therefore, what do you ask?

What's a therefore? it's a logical connection. He's making a conclusion. He's making a point. I've said all of this. Therefore, here's the point.

Present your bodies a living sacrifice of God. Because of what? Well, the mercies of God. So, we can't rightly grasp what these gifts mean and what they are until we understand the context.

[17 : 45] The therefore points us back to all these mercies of God. God has given, what are the mercies of God? Read Romans 1 through 11. To put it in a broader perspective, Romans 1 through 11 are in the indicative.

Any English people here today? Any English literature people get what an indicative? Indicative simply means it indicates what is. God has done this for you.

God has done this. He indicates what has God done. So, for 11 chapters, God has done this, God has done this, God has done this, God has done this. Chapter 12 is now the imperative. What's the imperative mean?

It's a command. It's what now I must do. So, chapters 1 through 11, what God has done, chapters 12 and following are how do I respond to that?

How then shall I live? Because of all these mercies. What mercies has he applied? We go back to chapter, shall we read through Romans? Yeah?

[18 : 52] I mean, that would be the right way to really grasp this. But can I give you like a whirlwind quick? So, back to chapter 1 verse 15, Paul's going to preach the gospel.

Chapter 1 verse 15, I am eager to preach the gospel to you who also are in Rome. By the way, they're already Christians, they're already believers. Why would he preach the gospel? Don't you just preach the gospel to people that need to be saved?

No, in fact, the gospel is the theme of this whole book. You want to know what Paul's gospel is? It's Romans 1 through 16. That's the gospel. I thought it's just those four things.

Well, yeah, we categorize it as, what is the gospel? Four words, right? What? God, man, Christ, response, or faith. Okay?

If you take any of those parts out, you don't have the gospel. You start with God because that shows us who man is. So, what does he do? So, in chapter 1, verse 5, I'm eager to preach the gospel to you.

[19 : 55] Verse 16, I'm not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. So, this is his subject, this is his theme, this is the gospel.

For in it, in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. There's the gospel in a nutshell. Righteous live by faith, not by law, not by duty, they live by faith.

What's, so God is righteous. There's the G, what's next? Verse 18, the righteous shall live by faith, for the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who, in their unrighteousness, suppress the truth, on and on and on and on.

So, from 118, it talks about who man is. God is righteous, man is unrighteous. In fact, man is so unrighteous that he suppresses the truth about who God is.

Even though creation magnifies who God is, man won't look at creation, he'll look within himself to find God. And man will exchange the truth for a lie.

[21 : 04] Man will exchange the glory of God for the glory of whatever else I think should be glorious. So, Paul takes the next two chapters to define the ruin of man, our utter rebellion, our utter neglect, avoiding, suppressing of God.

Okay? And then in chapter 3, verse 21, he finally gets to the good knees. So, he's talked about God, he's talked about man and all his ruin and you won't find a bigger exposition of how bad man's plight is than in Romans 1 through 3.

Okay? All have sinned. None do good. Period. You get to 321. So, all of that. And then you add that, verse 19, to the law.

The law. What does the law do? The law will save us, won't it? The law will put us on the right track, won't it? The law will help us, right? What's Paul say about the law? Verse 319, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law.

Why? So that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by the works of law, no human being will be justified in his sight since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

[22 : 26] Will the law save me? Will it help me? Yeah, it'll help me because it'll open my eyes to say, uh, I can't keep the law. The law's a killer.

The law's holy, righteous, and good. There's nothing wrong with the law. It just simply says, here's Bill. Eh, eh, eh, right?

Not good enough here, not good enough here, not good enough, oh, really bad here. Right? That's what the law does. So what do I do? So, verse 21, but now the righteousness of God has been revealed.

So remember, he talked about the righteousness of God in chapter one. But now the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from the law, although the law of the prophets talk about it. Verse 22, the righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

Verse 23, for all who sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We don't have any chance on ourselves, but we're justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus on and on.

[23 : 30] There's the remedy. As bad as we are, and the law can't help, the law is the first step to point us to our only chance.

The law says you're broken, you're never gonna be good enough. Your only hope is to cry out for mercy to the one, we're just saying only a holy God, right?

Only a holy God would send his son, a holy son, to take our place. Only God would think about rescuing unholy people. So, anyway, they spent too much, I probably spent too much time on that.

I get, the gospel's kind of exciting because it lays about basis for everything. So, Romans 1 through 11 is talking about God, man, Christ, faith.

Chapter 5 through 11 talks about all the implications, how we live by faith, how we're free from the law, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. And then it comes to chapter 12 and now he says, okay, based on all that, based on all that God has done for you, here's how you live.

[24 : 46] This is basic Christianity. This is Christianity 101. This is where we start. I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

So, we have two responses in these verses. What's our response? And the question I really want to get at, even though we could dig into one and two and just, we could spend weeks on verses one and two.

You know we could do that, right? And we'd profit from it. But I have to pull back and say, what's the purpose of what we're doing?

What we're trying to do is set up the context for spiritual gifts. How do spiritual gifts relate to all of this? Okay, so my question is this. Not only what is our response, but how is using our spiritual gifts the logical response to God's mercies?

How are spiritual gifts fundamental to my Christian life? Okay? And the answer is rooted in two mindsets. Mindset number one, verses one and two, serving God.

[26 : 04] Put it simply that, serving God. Sacrifice, total sacrifice, total surrender to serve God, first and foremost. Okay? Serve God. Verses one and two.

Knowing His will, right? Transforming my mind, all those kind of things. And then a second mindset we'll see in verses three through eight. Now he's going to explain, why do I need to know the will of God?

Verse three through eight is about how I serve the body of Christ. Because if I serve God, it doesn't stop there. It's not just me and God. It's not just about me and God.

If your Christianity is solely and only just me and Jesus, you're not a real Christian. You are fundamentally handicapped.

Because it doesn't stop there. Serving God means serving His church, serving His body. So that's the second part.

[27 : 06] So two minds. There's one serving God and the other one is serving the body of Christ, which means I have to be transformed by the renewal of my mind to get there. Because if I'm not renewing my mind, if I'm passively conforming to this world, guess what I will do?

I'll skip church. I'll avoid church. I'll do things for myself. I got better things to do than serve the body of Christ. And that's why it stood out to me the last few weeks when I was not able to be here.

Even by live stream. Which is a gift and it's wonderful. It's great when it works or when we can use it. Yeah, thank you for making that work.

But it's not even close to the real deal. And I don't realize how great the real deal is until I miss a few weeks. It's like, ah, something's missing.

So, okay. So, first mindset. Total surrender to serve God by being transformed. How we're gonna put it.

[28 : 24] What is basic? Verse one. What is so basic? What is the therefore, therefore? What is my response to all that God has done to me? Note that there's a sacrificial language here.

Present your body. That's interesting. Present your body. Why didn't he say present your soul? Why didn't he say present your mind? Why didn't he say just present your life? Why didn't he say body?

Bodies matter? Body. That's interesting. So, your body. And how? As a living sacrifice.

Well, that's kind of a contradiction, isn't it? Isn't a sacrifice something that dies? Right? You put a sacrifice, right? It dies in your place. So, how are you a living sacrifice?

What does that mean? What does it mean to be a living sacrifice? Think about that. That means my whole life is an offering in one sense. And if it's a physical living sacrifice, then it means my whole physical existence is an offering to God.

[29 : 36] God, I don't want to think about that, do you? That's going to get wow. And then he calls it holy and acceptable.

Holy. What's holy mean? Set apart. Right? I set apart to God. And acceptable means well-pleasing to him. I'm doing what pleases him. Okay? But why?

He adds at the end of verse one, this is your, as the ESV has, spiritual worship. But I've already told you the word is logikos.

It's not spiritual at all. It's logical. And why would he bring logic into this? Paul's a very logical person. It's logical because it makes sense.

If God has done all of this for you and saved your life, what do I owe him? Everything. Has he saved me so that I can go and have, do whatever naturally comes, whatever passions and pleasures I want?

[30 : 51] He's just saved me from being snared by that. Because when I pursue those selfish pleasures, what do I, do I find real satisfaction? No.

In fact, the longer I'm a Christian, the more I'm disappointed in those sins. Sin is not as fun as it used to be, you know? Why? Because I know something better.

I know I'm cheaping out. I owe him everything because I've experienced his mercy. He's delivered me from the slavery to sin.

He's removed my guilt and shame. He's forgiven my debt, canceled my obligation to the law. He enables me to live.

He empowers me to overcome. He adopts me as his child so that I might have peace and joy and hope. He cleanses my heart so that I can actually serve a holy God.

[31 : 51] He gifts me so that I can serve the body. Have you experienced his mercy? So how? Living sacrifice, well, how does that play out?

That's a mental thing, but how? So verse 2, he's going to expand on this. So what that looks like is not conforming to the world, but being transformed by the renewing of your minds.

We have a choice. Notice there's a contrast here. Not this, but this. Not conformed to the world, but being transformed by the renewal of your mind. So does anybody know what the word church means literally?

The Greek word is ekklesia. Anybody know what church means? Ek means out. Ekklesia means call.

So put it together, you got call out. They're the called out ones to assemble. Church commonly means assembly, but technically it means called out to assemble together, to join together.

[33 : 07] Ekklesia, called out ones, called out of the world to gather together. So if we're passive, so here's our choice, conform to the world or be transformed.

So what would it be, what would be my choice if I was being conformed to the world? He says, do not be conformed to the world. So in other words, it's something that happens to me.

Do not be conformed. So I'm allowing that conformity to happen. How do I do that? If it's not even a choice. See, conformity to the world isn't something I go, oh, I want to conform to the world.

I'm a Christian. I want to conform to the world. It's something that happens to us. How does it happen? Passivity. If my faith is passive, if my Christianity is passive, I will just naturally conform to the world.

I allow that to happen. Or my choice is to be transformed. Well, Bill, you just said be conformed or be transformed.

[34 : 18] That's also something. Being transformed is something that happens to you too. How do you allow that to happen? Is that just be passive and it just happens? No. If you're passive, what will happen is you'll conform to the world.

That's natural. How do I be transformed then? What's the next word? By the renewal of your mind.

That's deliberate. There's a dependence on God to transform me as I deliberately renew my mind to the will of God.

Right? I reprogram. I renovate how I think, how I perceive, how I act, what I do. And I do it, verse 2, be transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern what is the will of God.

What is good and acceptable and perfect. I renew my mind according to what? To what I think is best? No, never. Do not lean on your own understanding. I renew my mind according to what?

[35 : 22] What's the will of God? And he says this in an interesting way. That by testing you may discern what is the will of God. What's testing? And the word there testing means you know when you test metal you burn it.

Speaking of that which I don't know. You purify it and all the corrupt stuff comes at the top. So you're testing it. You're purifying it. Smelt.

Smelt yourself. So right? So now he's saying okay we do that in relation to the will of God. I'm renewing my mind by smelting by some kind of experient process to discover the will of God.

So in other words it's a process. Now how do I know what the will of God is? Well the will of God is clear, right? Total surrender to God. Right? Renewing my mind according to what God thinks.

But there's also a process. I realize as I go through this transforming what his will is in particular details of my own life.

[36 : 40] Right? How do I walk with the spirit? Well I might do that in a practically different way than you do. Because my mind might think differently.

My baggage is a certain. Right? You see what I'm saying? I have to kind of figure that out. So where's it going? How do we renew our minds?

Let's get practical. Paul talks about this whole process of renewing our mind again in Ephesians 4. And Ephesians 4 kind of spells this out what it looks like.

What does it involve to renew my mind? Right? So here he's setting up how we used to live with how we are called to live.

So in Ephesians 4:17 Paul says I say therefore and affirm together with the Lord that you walk no longer as the Gentiles also walk. How do they walk? They walk in the futility of their mind.

[37 : 46] They're darkened in their understanding. Look how much of this is related to reasoning. How much of this is related to thinking. Darkened in their understanding excluded from the life of God.

Why? Because of the ignorance there we go again not thinking not knowing that is in them. Why is that? Because of the hardness of their heart. Oh it goes to the heart. Hardness of their heart.

Which in Hebrew heart means what? Thoughts and intentions. Thoughts and intentions. Again back to thoughts.

And they having become callous have given them soberly to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. That's being conformed to the world. But you, here's the difference, but you did not learn Christ in this way.

If indeed you have heard him and have been taught in him just as truth is in Jesus, that, what do I do? What did I learn from Jesus?

[38 : 47] What has basic Christianity taught me about Jesus? What did Jesus call me to do? That in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is still being corrupted in accordance with the lust of deceit.

That's still in us. If I don't lay aside the old life, I'm still being corrupted. I'm still being deceived. Doesn't go away. I have to put it off.

And, he lay aside the old self, and that you what? Be renewed in the spirit of your mind. There it is, renewal of the mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in the righteousness and holiness of the truth.

So you're a new creation. You're recreated. That doesn't happen all by itself. It happens by a process. It happens by me putting off and putting on.

But notice in the middle of the putting off and the putting on is what? The renewal of the mind. That's the difference. That's the trigger.

[40 : 00] How do I stop my old life and my old habits? Just put them off and put on the new one. Right, yeah, that's easy. No, I've got to renew. I've got to reprogram.

I've got to rethink. I've got to reevaluate. Why am I doing these old things? I've got to make sense of why that's corrupting me. And why do I want these new things to replace the old things?

I'm renewing my mind. The rest of chapter 4 of Ephesians goes on. I put off what is false and I put on what is true. I stop stealing and I start working so that I can share.

I stop my corrupt talk and replace it with good talk. I put off bitterness, anger, slander and replace it with kindness, tenderness, forgiving.

Just as Christ has forgiven me. How do I do all that? How do I stop the bad and start the new? I have to renew my mind. It does not start with your soul.

[41 : 01] It does not even start with your will. soul. It starts with your mind. Your mind will lead your heart which will lead your soul.

Remember what Jesus said about the soul? The soul is what we listen to most of the time, right? Do you wake up hearing voices? Not voices. Do you, first thing in the morning, are you hearing, I don't know if I said that right.

Are you listening to something? I do. Do you listen to your mind or whatever it is, your conscience, or do you talk to your conscience?

See, if I listen, I'm just being passive and when I listen, it tells, you're too tired, you know, right? Especially as you turn 64. Well, as I turn 64.

64 is the new 94 in my mind, but I can hear a lot of negative stuff, right? So do I just let that conform me or do I?

[42 : 23] Because David says in Psalm 42, what happens when my soul is in despair? What does he do? I say, soul? He talks to his soul.

Soul, why are you in despair? Put your hope back in God. He doesn't listen to his soul, he tells his soul, he preaches to his soul.

That's the Biblical. So I, remember what Jesus said? Do not love your soul in this world. If you love your soul in this world, you will lose your soul.

Hate your soul in the world. In other words, don't trust it. Hate your soul in this world and you'll save it. Interesting, isn't it?

Jesus, Jesus was all about soul too, remember? He talked about his soul. My soul is in anguish. And the cross, my soul is in anguish. What did he do? He renewed his mind.

[43 : 27] Let this cup pass, but what's he do? Not my will, but thine be done. Don't listen to that soul. My soul wants to give up.

My soul wants to get out of this. So basic Christianity is total surrender to God first and foremost. That's what makes sense.

God has given me everything. He's given me a new life. He's given me much more than a new life. He's given me an afterlife of hope. And so what can I do? I give him everything.

I totally surrender. And to do that means I work on renewing my mind so he's transforming me.

I work with him. I'm being transformed by him as I get in the right road where he transforms me. Jesus gives us things paths and patterns that he wants us to develop in our life so that we stay on the right road.

[44 : 36] Right? He talks about being on the narrow road. He talks about staying on track. What are the things that keep me on track? Prayer, the word, and the body.

That's what keeps me on track. That's where he does his work of transformation. As I'm talking to him, as I'm listening to him, and as I'm working in the body, that's where he transforms me.

Okay, there's a second part for this. so the first mindset is total surrender to God.

That makes sense. The second mindset is interesting, kind of seeing where he's going. The second mindset is this sober humility to serve Christ's body as God assigns gifts.

humility. That's me trying to make sense of all these verses into one line. It's a sober humility. Not only do I surrender totally to him, but then as I renew my mind, I have a sober humility with the goal to serve Christ's body as God assigns me a gift or gifts.

[46 : 03] Okay, so watch how this progresses. Verse 3, there's a renewal about humility. Verse 3, by the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you, not to think of himself more highly than they ought to think, but to think with sober judgment.

Judgment that is not me rethinking about myself, it's judgment that comes from God. Think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. So I don't stand back and evaluate myself.

That's what most people do, right? I just got to get into myself and evaluate and assess myself, see what I, you know, what's my true meaning of life, right? And when we do that, what do we, you know, we end up with something self-serving, right?

Not real God pleasing. God is saying, you don't know yourself well enough. So you need to depend on what I tell you. Lean not on your own understanding, right?

Right? Don't trust yourself. That's the opposite of what the world says. Don't trust yourself.

[47 : 08] Don't trust yourself. You're deceptive. You'll deceive yourself. You'll always justify yourself. You'll always deceive yourself. You'll always come out better in your own estimation, right?

How about some truth? The truth means that these come from God. Who am I, God? And who am I to be? Well, that, what did you say? Think with sober judgment, each of us according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

So whatever God has assigned to me, that has to do with my faith. To rightly assess my place in the body, which is about my gift, then is about God's design.

What God assigns to me, what gifts he gives to me, determines how I serve in the body. Because that's where he goes in verse 4. Right?

Each according, think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. Verse 4, why? Where's he going? What's the explanation of that? For in one body. Now he's bringing up the body.

[48 : 18] He's not just talking about self assessment for whatever I want to do in life. He's talking about self assessment so that I know how to relate to the body of Christ. Each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned for, as in one body, we have many members and the members do not all have the same function.

So we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually members of one another having gifts that differ. He goes right into the gifts.

See? And so I was working on it. I'm like, how does that lead right into gifts? How does that for him in this whole logical progression lead right into gifts?

And then he's going to name seven of them, right? And then in 1 Corinthians 12 he's going to name nine more. And then in Ephesians 4 he's going to name four other ones.

So these seven aren't all of them. And then Peter's going to name two general kinds. He's going to talk about speaking gifts and serving gifts. So Peter's real helpful in terms of how those general categories fit.

[49 : 30] But here's going to say, here's, and since this is Romans, okay, I've got to think about what Paul's doing. Since this is Romans, Paul is writing a document to the church.

It's called a letter, which is, you know, how many pages long? It's a long letter, right? It's an epistle. But it's one that he's been working on, okay?

As we see how he works all the way from chapter 1 to 12 and then except. he's thought this out. He's not just, let's see, let's say, what are the kind of gifts going on? We'll throw that one in.

If I was writing, I'd put in gifts like, oh, singing, what else? Hammering. Paul didn't think that way. He's not thinking about natural gifts.

He's thinking about spiritual gifts. God assigned gifts. gifts. They might relate to your natural abilities. In some cases, they might not.

[50 : 32] What I'm doing right here has nothing to do with my natural ability. How in the world did I ever figure out how to do this because I was not somebody who wanted to come up in front of people?

I'm an introvert. I am passive. Whatever. How'd God get me up here, right? My mama going, what's that boy doing up there?

He's quiet as a mouse. Unity, or humility. Then, verse 4, he goes into diversity.

He talks about the diversity of the body. Verse 4, one body, many members. And the members do not all have the same function. So, he's using a picture of the body, right?

So, instead of using the word church, now Paul puts in a different word that gives us a picture of the church, a body. So, what does the body picture?

[51 : 38] If you picture a body, don't picture mine, by the way. I'm going to hide now. If we think of a body, what is a body?

It's one body. What does it have? It has hands. It has feet. It has a nose. It has ears. It has eyes. It has a mouth.

Right? It has all these parts. Many members. But it's one body. All those members are connected to one body. But his point is, though it's one body, it's diverse.

It has many different functions. My hands do something. My feet do something else. My eyes do something. My ears do something else. Right? They all have different functions, but they serve one body.

So there's diversity. Right? We're not all the same. And so he's going to relate the body parts to now gifts. So now the gifts become those parts of the body.

[52 : 41] The gifts become the eyes and the ears and the hands and the feet. So what's the hands and the feet? Look at verse 6.

We've got prophecy, service, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, and mercy. See how different they are? Prophecy, that's probably a mouth thing.

Serving, that's got to be hands and feet. Teaching, probably a mouth thing. I don't know. Exhorting, that could be done in many ways.

Exhorting, comforting. Contributing, giving, well that means you have to be rich, right? No. Giving, giving comes in all kinds of different ways.

Leading, and mercy. Mercy, mercy. I really admire that one. Because I don't have it.

[53 : 44] I feel guilty if I don't, you know. People with a gift, I'll get into that later, sorry. So this is his picture, a body with many parts.

So he's not going to talk about diversity, but he's going to talk about unity. Even though there's one body with many parts, there's a lot of diversity, it's still members of one body.

It goes both ways. It's got diversity, but it's also got unity, because all those members are still part of one body. They are still expressions of the same body. They are not, the hand doesn't go off and do its own thing.

The hand does what functions for the body. The eyes don't go, right? Well, shouldn't. The mouth hopefully is controlled. So in other words, your spiritual gifts are like those parts of the body.

Whatever gift God has assigned to you determines how you function in the body. We are one body. Made up of people who have prophecy, people who serve, people who teach, people who lead, people who have mercy, people who encourage, people who give.

[55 : 02] And then in 2 Corinthians 12, Paul's going to add another nine, which might be expressions of these. I don't know how they all. so let me say this.

We're members of one another. That's an odd expression. He's trying to say, you know, we're members of the body of Christ, but he actually says we're members according one to another, to one another.

together. So it doesn't translate well. So it translates we're members of one another. There's a connectedness, there's a joinedness, which totally excludes any kind of individuality of gifts.

individualism. I go off and do my own thing. I got my gift, I go off and do my own thing. No, you don't. Your gift is to serve the body.

Your gift is to serve the body so that the body has an powerful impact in the world. And it has a powerful impact because I don't do what I think. Oh, I see a hole over there, I'll go serve there.

[56 : 18] That's not how I determine how I serve. I served a parent to dependent on what's my gift? How has God gifted me? That becomes the big question. Do you know your gift?

Or gifts? Do you know your place? I'm not talking about the place that just is common sense, you know.

I'm talking about what God has assigned to you. That becomes absolutely fundamental. to your Christianity. So I'm praying and hoping in these weeks ahead, as we open up what these gifts are, you'll say, oh, oh, I didn't know that was that.

I had a real heart for that. Maybe is that mine? Is that mine? Maybe I should try it. how did I ever discover that teaching was something God would use me in?

My youth pastor, who's also my older brother, said, boy, boy, you teach in the ninth grade boys. I am? Yeah, you are. Okay.

[57 : 37] So do I just play games with them? What do I do? I don't know. He said, follow me. I'll show you. Pretty soon, oh, I get this.

Ooh, I got a better way of doing it than brother Ron. Okay. Here's the other thing.

Since this members of one another is key to fundamental Christianity, let me say this very boldly if I can. If you are avoiding church, if you are skipping church, how are you even a basic Christian?

If you are only paying attention to one thing, which is a good thing, my relationship with God, how can you even know Him if you don't see that that is what causes you to do the other?

You see, it makes no sense. It's like the old lady saying, right, oh, you have a relationship with God, what church do you go to? I don't do church. Well, that don't make no sense, boy.

[58 : 59] See what I'm saying? I'm saying that hopefully to awaken some people because we're living in a time where people are used to not going to church anymore, where they've filled their lives with other things, and they think they're okay, and they're not.

they are at the very least greatly handicapping themselves and the church. I didn't prepare a statement, so I'll be careful with my words.

Jesus said, follow me, right? If you will follow me, then he calls us to do what?

deny myself, take up my cross, and follow me. How's that looking in your life?

So, one more passage just to pull this together. He talks about humility, right? Right thinking about myself. How does that relate to my gifts and serving the body?

[60 : 33] Let me just close with Philippians chapter 2 where Paul says, if there's any encouragement in Christ, anybody encouraged in Christ? If there's any comfort from love, the love of God, any comfort from that?

Any participation in the Spirit? Do you have any effect of the Holy Spirit in your life? Any affection and sympathy? If any of those things are true, complete my joy, Paul says.

What will make me so joyful is that you be of the same mind. and have the same love? In other words, serving others.

Being in full accord and of one mind. In other words, it's not about me. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Let each of you not look to his own interests, but also the interests of others. This is basic. Have this attitude among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, here's the example, here's who we follow, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God as a thing to be grasped or literally to be held onto.

[61 : 54] In other words, Jesus was not selfish and Jesus was not withdrawn, but he emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form.

Not only was Jesus not selfish or withdrawn, he did not stay away, he did not avoid, he got involved. Follow him. And he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross, that's total surrender to serve God and resulted in serving the body of Christ.

This is the logic of spiritual gifts. Because of all God's mercies, his forgiveness, the freedom, the delivery, the healing, the adoption, the empowerment, because of all those things, I then, it is logical for me to surrender all to serve him, to seek to continually be transformed by the renewing of my mind according to his will, to soberly evaluate myself according to God's assignment of gifts so that I might recognize my place and use my gifts in the body.

like Jesus. This is basic Christianity. This is not a radical version of Christianity.

This is not an over zealous religious fanaticism. This is just plain Christian life. Does it sound radical?

[63 : 45] And you haven't read Paul. and you haven't read Jesus. A true Christian is surrendered to serve God and transformed to serve his church.

It makes sense and it's simple. Don't complicate it. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We pray, oh God, that you would stir up within us the passion that Paul felt about this.

That we would begin to connect dots with his thinking. How he has thought this out. Help us to think like that.

To think with sober judgment according to the grace that you've assigned to us. Help us, oh Father, if we know not what our gift is, that you would begin to open our eyes to see what you've given to us.

Help us to do what we need to do to discover it and use it. Bless this church, oh God, in the way that you desire to.

[65 : 02] Bless each member here. Thank you, Lord, for these dear, dear people. Thank you for the privilege to be together.

together. Thank you for the way your spirit works when we are together. We thank you in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.