



# World Christian Fellowship

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## Romans 111 Serving God with your Gifts Romans 12:8-9

**Romans 12:4-9**, *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,<sup>5</sup> so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.<sup>6</sup> Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;<sup>7</sup> or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;<sup>8</sup> he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.<sup>9</sup> Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*

Church is not a museum to collect rare prices and accumulate but to use them for His glory.

Church belongs to God not to me or anyone of us here.

The ministry is committed to us.

The work of the kingdom depends upon our usefulness, faithfulness, and our commitment.

We must offer ourselves in the single supreme act of worship that any believer can do as a living sacrifice.

Offering to the Lord our whole soul, body, mind and will, **Romans 12:1-2.**

God wants our life as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to Him, which is the basic act of spiritual worship. That is the entrance into usefulness.

There are no two Christians alike.

There are no two of us who can serve the Lord alike.

There is tremendous distinctiveness in all of us.

The greatest saints in the church's history who changed the course of the world and who impacted the history of the church.

They learned the meaning and the value of **Romans 12:1-2.** They learned to live that way.

Our usefulness now depends on three things.

1. **Attitude,**
2. **Relationship,**
3. **Service.**

## **1. Attitude**

### **Attitude of humility.**

*V 3, For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

Humility!

## **2. Relationship.**

*V 4- 5, For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*

We are in one body in Christ, the church, and everyone has gifts differing according to the grace given to us.

As the body is one and yet many members

The church is one and yet many members.

*V 6, Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;*

God given His gracious gifts as channels in the believer, sovereignly designed for every Christian through which the Holy Spirit ministers to the building up of the church.

Believers are the channels in us through which the Spirit of God can minister. They are for the common good.

- My gifts are for the church.
- Your gifts are for the church.
  
- Mine are not for me,
- Yours are not for you.
  
- Mine are for you and
- Yours are for me.

**1 Corinthians 12:7**, *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:*

The proper relationship is that we are a body.  
A body is dependent.

We are not disconnected rather we are intimately connected to each other.

We are absolutely dependent on the interchange that occurs between us as a body is on the interchange of its own vital members.

Examples of the gifts, the proper service:

- Prophecy,
- Ministry,
- Teaching,
- Exhortation,
- Giving,
- Ruling and
- Showing mercy.

In the New Testament, there are three categories the gifts fall into.

Three categories.

- a) Sign gifts,**
- b) Speaking gifts, and**
- c) Serving gifts.**

**Sign gifts.**

They were unique and primarily to the time of the apostles.

They were unique to the New Testament age.

They were unique to the establishing of the new covenant, to the time when Israel rejected the Messiah, when the apostles' teaching needed to be authenticated.

They were unique to the time of the writing of Scripture.

**2 Corinthians 12:12**, *For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.*

These special gifts or signs that belong to an apostle.

So, the sign gifts, or the miracle gifts, tongues, healings, miracles, interpretation of tongues, and those miracle gifts were for the apostolic period.

### **Speaking Gifts.**

In **1 Corinthians** we have the gift of the word of wisdom, word of knowledge, very much like teaching.

The gift of prophecy.

The gift of faith.

The gift of discerning spirits.

Romans adds the gifts of exhortation, giving and showing mercy. So, some of them are the same and some of them are different.

A great diversity.

First, present yourself to the Lord.

Second, rightly evaluate what it is God has given you to do.

### **Serving Gifts:**

*V 8, he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Exhort means to encourage, to strengthen, to advise, to comfort.

- It could be to encourage in the sense of encouraging them out of sin into righteousness.
- It could be used in the sense of comforting them in trouble.
- It could be in the sense of finding someone that's weak and encouraging them to be strong.

Get stronger to trust the Lord and walk by faith and God will work it out.

It's a very broad thing.

Some people are just great at comforting those that are in sorrow.

Some people are very great at infusing strength into those that are weak, in encouraging those that are fainthearted, as Paul mentions them in his letter to the Thessalonians.

These are the encouragers.

God uses people to encourage me with kind words by phone, email, or messages.

- Prophecy proclaims the truth.
- Teaching systematizes the truth.
- Exhortation calls for a right response to the truth.

Serving puts the truth into action.

The gift of exhortation is the ministry of challenging God's people to act consistent with God's will.

If you are weak and defeated, then somebody needs to come to you and say, "Cheer up, my brother, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. God is the victor and quit being downhearted and live on the victory side because you are promised victory".

Start living the way you are supposed to be living. If you find somebody in sorrow, go to that person and say, "Why are you sorrowing as those who have no hope? Our God is a God of

victory, and your sorrow will be turned someday into joy. Get on the joy side."

In other words, get up there and live consistently with God's revelation.

If someone is fainthearted and afraid, you need to remind them that God is the one who leads, and God is the one who wins in the end and no enemy is greater than God. No one shall distress. No harm shall fall on us but only beside us, as Psalm 91 says, because God is our source of strength, our refuge, our help in time of trouble.

In other words, you are pulling them up to the level of living according to God's revelation.

So, the preacher proclaims it.

The teacher systematizes it.

The exhorter calls for people to live according to it.

The New Testament we will see exhortation after exhortation.

If that's where God has gifted you, then use it, if you feel prompted in your heart to do it.

### **How do you know?**

If you see a situation and you just feel in your heart that you would like to speak to that, then that's probably the Spirit of

God prompting your heart to do that. Be of good courage, be strong, be joyful.

**V 8, he who gives, with liberality;**

The word for "give" in the Greek is **didmi**.

But this word is **metadidmi**, it's intensified.

It means to super-give.

To impart one's earthly possessions, to be a super-giver. If you have got the gift of super-giving, all of us are to give, but some have the gift of super-giving, do it with liberality.

The word that is the root of that in the Greek means with no motive.

In other words, when you give with simplicity, it is that you give for a single purpose.

- For the glory of the Lord,
- For the joy of giving,
- For obedience to Christ, and
- Nothing else is in your mind.

They gave, on the one hand they gave to discharge their religious duty. On the other hand, they gave to be seen by men. None of that.

Like the Macedonians, who out of their deep poverty gave liberally with no thought for themselves.

**2 Corinthians 8:5**, *And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.*

We are to give liberally and generously.

In **Acts 2** it talks about the fact that people were selling what they had and when people had need, they were distributing to everybody.

When the Feast of Pentecost came, people were all coming to Jerusalem for the celebration. As they moved into the city they would stay in the homes of the Jewish people and even the city government provided extra food for them so they could house all these strangers who came in for the festival.

When Pentecost came and all these people got saved, a lot of the people who were saved that day were from out of town. But they didn't want to leave because now they have been introduced into the community of those who worshiped Christ and so they stayed. The church had a real problem.

Most of the people that got saved were poor, not many rich, or noble. The people who had resources had to be gifted in giving to dispense that.

The early church was an absolute model of generosity. Those with the gift of giving were willing to sell property, do anything they had to share with those who had need.

If you have the gift, then use the gift.

### **How do you know you have the gift?**

If it is in your heart to do it.

If you feel the moving of the Spirit of God to do it, to be generous, to give over and above, it's that alone that can identify that gift.

When you do it you sense an overwhelming joy and response. Certainly, all of us should be doing more than we are doing. But some super-givers are uniquely gifted by God.

### **Gift of ruling.**

*V 8, he who leads, with diligence;*

### **What is the gift of ruling?**

**1 Corinthians 12:28**, *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after*

*that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.*

The word here just means to lead, to manage, to be in charge, to oversee, or to rule.

This is the gift of leadership, the ability to organize, administrate, make something happen, cover all the details, get the people together, mobilize them, get them moving, accomplish the job. It is a leadership gift.

The word **kubernets** is the skill of piloting a ship.

In other words, the gift of running things, piloting.

The gift of leadership.

It belongs to the elders of the church. The gifts of leadership belong to the deacons and many of the deaconesses of the church.

The deacons were to be those who manage their own household just like the elders who demonstrated ability to control varying elements within their own home.

The basic difference between a deacon and an elder was only one thing, and that was the qualification skilled in teaching. Deacons were not primarily the articulators of the faith, the

skilled teachers, but they were equally qualified and, in many cases, would be equally leadership quality.

**(1 Timothy chapter 3.)**

Very important gift.

**1 Corinthians**, there's no mention of leaders.

That may have been part of their problem.

They had a disastrous democracy which turned out to be a mess, with everybody doing exactly what was right in his own eyes.

Those of you who have gifts of leadership, get involved in that. Apply yourself to that. Paul says do it with speed, do it with haste, do it with zeal, diligent, and fast. Get on with it.

The church can't function without that.

God has designed the church to have leaders.

**Acts 6** the apostles did not want to be bothered by the work of feeding the people rather they selected leaders to take care of it.

The church needs administrators who can keep the church on course with fairness, wisdom, efficiency, and humility. This kind of management ability is indispensable to the church.

## **Mercy ministry.**

**V 8**, *he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

## **What is showing mercy?**

Compassion.

It refers to those people whose very special preoccupation is toward people in misery, the poor, the imprisoned, those who really have it tough.

That is a beautiful gift, mercy toward those who are in pain.

Mercy toward those who are deprived.

The jail ministry.

The hospital ministry.

The street ministry for the homeless.

The rescue mission.

Trying to reach out to the poor and the distressed and the hurting.

**Proverbs 14:21**, *He who despises his neighbour sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.*

**Proverbs 14:31**, *He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who honours Him has mercy on the needy.*

Jesus came to preach the gospel to the poor, to set at liberty the captives, to bind up the broken-hearted. He came for the downcast, the poor, the needy.

Bless God for the gifts of mercy to those who are deprived.

**How are we to do it if it is your gift?**

With cheerfulness.

If you are going to go to miserable people, you better not be miserable at it. Go with a joy.

**Prophecy** = Proclamation.

**Ministry** = Operation.

**Teaching** = Systematization.

**Exhortation** = Motivation.

**Giving** = Implementation.

**Ruling** = Mobilization.

**Showing mercy** = Commiseration.

**2 Timothy 1:6**, *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

## **Introduction to Romans 12:9-21.**

Lord is going to use in wonderful ways in our lives as we respond in obedience. It is kind of a grocery list, just one thing after another, beginning in **verse 9 -21**.

There are more than twenty separate exhortations here.

**Romans 12 9 to 21** is sort of New Testament law.

It's not negotiable.

It's the law that we are free to fulfil with obedience.

We have some of the principles for living the Christian life.

In one sense, they are general.

In another sense, they are specific.

They are general in the sense that they can touch all kinds of areas of life.

They are specific in the fact that they must be applied in each incident of life, in each action and reaction of life.

This is not absolutely comprehensive. There are other things that we are responsible for. There are other elements of our lifestyle that God would have us to follow that aren't listed here, but this is a wonderful sampling of things that should be true of the Christian's life.

Christian living is not mystical. It is quite practical. It is a matter of thinking, speaking, acting, doing in a certain way, and this is the way Christians are to live.

The real heart of the book of Romans begins now.

The whole intent of this epistle was to call upon believers to live a certain way.

The **first 11 chapters** were simply the foundation for that living. Here are eleven chapters of what God has done to make this possible. Now you dedicate your life to Him!

**Romans chapters 12 to 15** we are going to come face-to-face with some very practical injunctions for Christian living.

**How we are to live with each other in the family?**

**How we are to live with those outside the family?**

**How we are to respond to those who are our avowed personal enemies?**

**How we are to react to the government?**

**How we are to deal with those who are weaker in the faith than we are?**

These practical injunctions in **chapters 12, 13, 14** and a little bit into 15 are really where Paul has been going all along.

## **Why did Paul spend so much time on the foundation?**

Because he wanted to lay it well.

Because we needed to know the richness of our salvation.

Because it ought to make us so infinitely grateful that the right kind of living pattern is an obvious and a very immediate kind of response.

If you understand what the Lord did for you in **Romans 1 to 11**, it seems a small thing for you to return to Him the love given to you in a life of obedience as indicated in **chapters 12, 13, 14 and 15**.

**Romans 12:9** onwards listing of Christian duties, things that are very down to earth and very practical.

Now the section resists a tight outlining. It really does, verses 9 to 21. It is very difficult to just cut it up into little slices.

Have some sort of imagery in your mind, is that it's an ever-expanding circle. It starts small, gets larger and larger and embraces more and more people.

For example, verse 9, is pretty much very personal.

**Verse 9** Personal.

**V 10-13** Wider circle,

**V 14-16** Big wider circle.

**V 17-21** Final Circle.

**V 9**, *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*

It starts with me.

It talks about my love and my hating what is evil and holding tightly to what is good.

That's just very personal.

That's a commitment in my own heart, so the circle begins with me.

**Widen in V 10-13.** *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour giving preference to one another; <sup>11</sup>not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup>rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; <sup>13</sup>distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.*

Widens to include others while also reaching back to speak of things in my own life again.

**V 12**, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation and continuing diligent in prayer.

So, the circle gets a little wider but doesn't lose sight of me. It talks about others and my relation to them and then backs up and talks about me again.

Big widening **V 14-16**, *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.* <sup>15</sup> *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.* <sup>16</sup> *Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.*

The circle widens beyond the family of God, my brothers, and sisters in Christ. Embrace all people in general.

- whether they persecute us, and we are to bless them,
- whether they rejoice and we are to rejoice with them,
- whether they weep and we are to weep with them.

We are to consider them all equally and not think of ourselves as better than they are.

**V 16** that speaks of my own personal pride.

The circle enlarges to embrace a new category of people each time but still reaches back and touches the others as well.

Final circle widening **V 17-21**, *Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.* <sup>18</sup> *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all*

*men. <sup>19</sup> Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Encompass even those who are our very personal and avowed enemies who do things against us, beyond just a general persecution of what we believe, but who wound us and injure us and harm us and sin violently against us.

Instruction there as to how we are to respond to that, not giving back evil for evil, not holding vengeance in our hearts.

Even though the circle widens to embrace our personal declared enemies. It also reaches back to touch attitudes in our own hearts and the way we live such as learning, in verse 18, to live peaceably with all men.

So, Paul is really grasping at some random things, but in his mind, he is enlarging his circle of thought each time.

This section of things you already know and many things you are already practicing.

Paul seems to Favor little triplets.

There is three in verse 9.  
There is three in verse 11.  
There is three in verse 12.

## **Personal Duties.**

Three basic duties that flesh out in the way we live relative to our own personal thinking patterns.

**V 9**, *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*

Very easy to understand we don't miss it.

### **1. Let love be without hypocrisy.**

The greatest thing in the life of a Christian is Love.

**1 Corinthians 13:13**, *And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

**Romans 13:8**, *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.*

**Romans 13:10**, *Love does no harm to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilment of the law.*

Lord Jesus told us the same.

**Matthew 22:37-40**, *Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’<sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment.<sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’<sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”*

Love is the supreme thing.

**Galatians 5:22**, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

Everything begins with love.

The starting point of the Christian experience is love.

**John 13:34-35**, *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.<sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Love is the greatest thing.

Love is the supreme reality, and so he begins with the fact that we are to live lives of love.

**Romans 12:9** terms, without hypocrisy.

Love that is not fake love,  
Love that is real love, genuine love,

The first duty of a Christian listed here.

The result of the new birth is an unfeigned love, a non-hypocritical love.

The greatest sinner who ever lived because of the profound depth of his hypocrisy and that was Judas.

Hypocrisy is the most distasteful and ugly of all sins for it feigns affection and is filled with hate.

No sin is worse than hypocrisy.

No vice is more destructive than hypocrisy, and no virtue is more wonderful than love.

Christians are commanded to live a pure, true, and genuine love.

**1 John 3:14**, *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.*

**1 John 3:18**, *My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*

Genuine love will manifest itself not in some sentimentalism but in deeds of kindness, deeds of caring, of meeting needs, of support.

**Luke 22:48**, *But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"*

He used the word a kiss of love.

The first supreme Christian duty is to live a life of unhypocritical, honest, legitimate, genuine, truthful love which manifests itself in selfless, and sacrificial service to those who have need.

Lord was asked after having said, "Love your neighbour as yourself," the question came to Him, "Who is my neighbour?". Jesus told a story about a man lying in the road on the way to Jericho.

The point of the story was whoever is lying in your path with a need is the one you need to show your love to. The primary duty is love.

## **2. Hate that which is evil.**

**How can I say I love you and tolerate sin?**

I can't because sin destroys my relationship with you and your relationship with me.

Sin is a disastrous invasion into a love relationship.

**Psalm 97:10**, *You who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.*

God is too holy to tolerate sin.

The basic essential characteristic of God is His holiness. He is holy, holy, holy. That is the most distinctive definition of God.

Holy means is separate, and what that is saying is that God is utterly unlike we are.

He is not like us, and the reason He is not like us is because He is holy without sin.

God is a God of absolute utter purity and sinlessness. Consequently, He cannot look on evil, cannot tolerate evil, and one who truly knows the love of God and loves God in return would have to hate evil.

Be constantly hating that which is evil. It's a very strong term.

Evil isn't something we can tolerate at any level.

Evil is something we must hate with a passion.

**Psalm 101:1-8**, *I will sing of mercy and justice; To You, O Lord, I will sing praises. <sup>2</sup> I will behave wisely in a perfect way. Oh, when will You come to me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. <sup>3</sup> I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me. <sup>4</sup> A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness. <sup>5</sup> Whoever secretly slanders his neighbour, Him I will destroy; The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure. <sup>6</sup> My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land, That they may dwell with me; He who walks in a perfect way, He shall serve me. <sup>7</sup> He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence. <sup>8</sup> Early I will destroy all the wicked of the land, That I may cut off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord.*

David is really exercised.

**Matthew 18:8-9**, *“If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. <sup>9</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.*

**Amos 5:15**, *Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate. It may be that the Lord God of hosts Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:22**, *Abstain from every form of evil.*

**Hebrews 1:8-9**, *But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your kingdom. <sup>9</sup>You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."*

Jesus was exalted above all because He had a pure love of righteousness and a pure hatred of evil.

Every Christian needs to see the infinite beauty of holiness and the infinite damnability of sin.

A good man hates evil, not because he fears the consequence but because he loves holiness.

### **3. Cling to good.**

**V 9**, *Cling to what is good.*

The same word of a marriage bond. It's a word to mean to glue. "Stick to that which is good, don't ever leave it, don't be separated from it."

Be bonded. Be stuck to that which is good.

**Psalm 1:1**, *Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;*

First you walk and then you stop to see what's going on, and soon you have taken your seat.

Blessed is the man who does none of them.

**Psalm 1:2**, *But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.*

**Philippians 4:8**, *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*

That is how you cleave to what is good.

A true Christian is one who hates evil and loves righteousness.

First, love without hypocrisy.

Secondly, we hate what is evil, and

Thirdly, we cling to what is good.

How do I know what is good?

They are in the Word of God.

If you study the Bible, you will find out what's good.

Christian duty begins with a pure love, a hating of evil and a sticking to what is good.