

*“Nothing Like the Real Thing:
Christians and Spiritual Gifts”
Romans 12:6-8*

*“Wherever you are, be all there. Live to the hilt
every situation you believe to be the will of God.”*

Martyred Missionary Jim Elliot, *Through Gates of Splendor*

I. Romans: A New Life, and A New Lifestyle

“Therefore I beseech brethren by the mercies of God (the new life), to present your bodies as a living sacrifice to God (the new lifestyle).”

Apostle Paul’s Letter to the Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 1

A. From Pride to Humility: Romans 12:3 in Action!

“If you want to join a church with no problems...don’t – you’ll ruin it!”

Dr. Charles Swindoll, *The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart*

1. I show sinful pride when I _____.
2. I will stop _____.
3. This week I will start _____.
4. A Bible verse or passage that specifically addresses my sinful pride is
_____.
5. I will ask _____ to hold me accountable.

B. Transformed or Conformed in Romans 12:1-5

“What is the challenge to informed biblical Christians in an individualistic age such as ours? We should work for any valid visible expression of our oneness in Christ that is attainable, and we should avoid unnecessary divisions and even try to learn from one another in a humble, teachable spirit.”

James Montgomery Boice, *To the Glory of God, A 40 Day Devotional in Romans*

Transformed:

“...that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You loved Me.”

Jesus Christ, *The Gospel of John*, Chapter 17, Verse 22-23

1. God's model for the church is unity in diversity.
2. Unity achieved by the baptism of the Holy Spirit at salvation.
1 Corinthians 12:12-13
3. Each person uniquely serving every person.
1 Corinthians 12:1-27
4. Each person being fitted for such service by God.
1 Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18; Ephesians 2:20-21; 4:16

Conformed:

1. A Culture of Decisions and Preferences
2. A Culture of the Individual
3. A Culture of Self-Indulgence
4. A Culture That Values Happiness and Avoids Hardship
5. A Culture of Entertainment Leading to A Culture of Boredom

II. **Spiritual Gifts in Romans 12:6-8 (1 Corinthians 12-14)**

"No gift or ability, spiritual, or otherwise, is of value if it is not used."

Dr. John MacArthur, *Romans New Testament Commentary*

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Apostle Peter's First Letter to Saints in Turkey, Chapter 4, Verse 10

A. **The Background of Spiritual Gifts in Corinth 54 A.D.**

1 Corinthians 12-14

1. Thriving, seafaring, cosmopolitan metropolis; center of worldly entertainment and pagan mystery religions; Temple of Aphrodite with 1000 temple prostitutes.
2. Even to the pagan world, Corinth was renowned for moral corruption and depravity. Gross immorality was "Corinthian." **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**
Some Corinthians believers saved; some brought immorality and pagan mystery religion into the church. **1 Corinthians 5:1**

3. **Mystery Religions: Pagan Cults of Greece & Rome**

Dominating near eastern world for 1000s of years before Paul.

Many forms and variations, but a common source: _____

Revelation 17:1, 5, 13 (The final completion of what began in ancient Babylon)

Organized pagan religion began with descendants of _____, Noah's son. (**Genesis 10:9-10; 11:4**) Apostate Nimrod's counterfeit religion. God crushes their pagan solidarity at Babel and scatters them abroad (**Genesis 11:7-8**). They spread their idolatrous religious seeds all over the world! The basic system remains in false religions even today, for Babylon is called "*The mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.*" **Revelation 17:5**

Nimrod's wife, Semiramis, was high priestess of the Babel religions and the founder of all mystery religions. She was worshipped as a goddess under different names: Ishtar of Syria, Astarte of Phoenicia, Isis of Egypt, Aphrodite of Greece, and Venus of Rome: always the deity of sexual love and fertility. Her son, Tammuz, was deified under different names. Tammuz was "conceived" by a counterfeit "virgin birth," like Jesus, from a sunbeam. He was known as Eros in Greece and Cupid in Rome. Worship of them was always connected with sexual immorality.

The celebration of _____ originated not from Scripture, but from the pagan celebration of Semiramis's 40 days of mourning over Tammuz's death before his counterfeit "resurrection," again just like Jesus. Mystery religions also created salvation by water baptism, mutilation of the flesh to atone for sins and gain spiritual favor with the gods, pilgrimages, and paying penance for forgiveness of sins.

Several pagan practices influenced the church at Corinth, especially the practice of ecstasy, the highest expression of religious experience. The practice strongly appealed to the sinful human flesh because it appeared to be a supernatural, dramatic, bizarre communion with a deity. Some Corinthians Christians confused the true wonders of the Apostles with the counterfeit wonders of pagan mystery religions.

Through frenzied hypnotic chants and ceremonies worshipers experience semiconscious euphoric feelings of oneness with the god or goddess. Vigils, fasts, religious objects, whirling dances, incense, chants and drunkenness were used to induce an “out of body” experience. (**Ephesians 5:18**) We see these things today in Hindu yoga, Buddhist Nirvana, Roman Catholicism, and the Charismatic Movement. Accompanying these things were often emotional enthusiasm, mantic formulas, divination, and dreams and visions.

4. Some of these bizarre and dramatic practices were mimicked in the Corinthian church. Perhaps because true miracles, signs and wonders had recently been done by the Apostles, the church wanted to experience these things for themselves. (**Mark 16:17-18; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:3-4**) *Satan began to counterfeit the gospel and its wonders, and the gullible, worldly, self-centered, thrill-seeking Corinthians with their pagan backgrounds were prime targets for his assaults.*

Satan does not counterfeit what is not _____. He counterfeits the Spirit’s gifts because he knows they are so valuable in God’s plan. If he can get God’s people confused about or to abuse spiritual gifts, he can undermine the effectiveness of the church. Satan does this by _____ demonstrations of spiritual gifts, or by _____ use of those gifts.

One of the evidences of the spiritual immaturity of the Corinthian Christians was their lack of _____. If a worldly practice seemed to have supernatural effect, they assumed it was from God. If a priest performed a miracle, they assumed it was from God. If something _____ in the church, they assumed it was from God.

B. Some Basics about Spiritual Gifts

1. **1 Corinthians 12:1**
 “Now concerning” = **1 Corinthians 11:** _____
 = “in the second place”
 = they had a history of _____ and misuse!
 Let this be a warning to all of us too about abuse and misuse of spiritual things!

“spiritual *gifts*” = Not in the original copies, implied by context
(12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 14:1)

Literally = “Now concerning things of the _____; or
_____ things; that which has spiritual qualities or
characteristics; or is under some form of spiritual control.”

“Spiritual gifts are _____ enablements for ministry given to every believer by the Holy Spirit in different measures for the strengthening of the church and the glory of Christ, and are to be completely under the Spirit’s control at all times.”

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| Romans 12:3 | <i>“to each a measure of faith”</i> (for gifts) |
| Romans 12:6 | <i>“according to grace given us”</i> (for gifts) |
| Romans 12:6 | <i>“proportion of his faith”</i> (for gifts) |
| 1 Corinthians 12:4 | <i>“the same Spirit”</i> (for gifts) |
| 1 Corinthians 12:7 | <i>“of the Spirit; common good”</i> (for gifts) |
| 1 Corinthians 12:8-9 | <i>“Spirit, Spirit, Spirit, Spirit”</i> (for gifts) |
| 1 Corinthians 12:11 | <i>“The Spirit works all these gifts, distributing to each one individually just as He wills”</i> |
| 1 Corinthians 12:18 | <i>“God has placed the members in the body, just as He desired.”</i> |

Spiritual gifts belong to the _____, not to me. Spiritual gifts are not sought after by the Christian, but received from the Holy Spirit who gives them.
“He distributes spiritual gifts just as He wills.” **1 Corinthians 12:11**

Romans 12:6 *“gifts given to us by God’s _____”*
= undeserved and unmerited gifts

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| 1 Corinthians 12:4 | The gift itself | <i>“varieties of gifts”</i> |
| 1 Corinthians 12:5 | The specific use | <i>“varieties of ministries”</i> |
| 1 Corinthians 12:6 | The results | <i>“varieties of effects”</i> |
| 1 Corinthians 12:11 | Sovereign Spirit No human merit | <i>“distributing as He wills”</i> |

How do you serve other Christians? _____

What ministries are you involved in at church? _____

Do you know what ministries the church offers you? _____

Do you know about the 6 commissions? _____

Do you willingly serve, or do you avoid serving and make excuses? _____

Do you desire to serve others or do you want to be served? _____

Do you think God had a plan for your life after He saved you? _____

Do you think God's plan for you involves the church? How so? _____

What does God expect from you regarding your church? _____

What do others gain by you serving in the church?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

What do others lose by you not serving in the church?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

What do you personally gain by serving in the church?

- 1. I am imitating Jesus' sacrificial service for me and others.
- 2. I am obeying Jesus' command to be active in church.
- 3. I am fulfilling my calling and destiny as a Christian.
- 4. I am encouraging and strengthening other Christians.
- 5. I am actively denying myself and sacrificing for others.
- 6. I am submitting to the Holy Spirit and being led by Him.
- 7. I am demonstrating servant leadership to others.
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

"American mothers preserve their children's first shoes in bronze to represent freedom and independence, whereas Japanese mothers preserve a small part of their child's umbilical cord to represent dependence and loyalty. Dependence and loyalty beautifully describe the interrelationship the Lord desires for the Church."

1 Corinthians 12:1 “*brethren*” = even with sins, faults, weaknesses, still believers
 Paul had given strong rebuke in **11:17-34**, regarding abuse
 This is sometimes necessary
 Corinthians not acting spiritual, or like Christians
 This happens sometimes
Romans 12:2 “*transformed vs conformed*”
 Regarding church; each other, spiritual gifts

1 Corinthians 12:1 “*I do not want you to be unaware*” = “to be _____ of”

- = Paul was very concerned that they have proper understanding of gifts
- = **1 Corinthians 10:1**; Israel in the wilderness led by Moses
- = Introducing an exceptionally important subject
- = See **Romans 1:13; 11:25; 1 Thessalonians 4:13**
- = The word _____ comes from this word
- = No “agnosticism” regarding the Spirit’s gifts to believers
- = Gifts necessary for church to function properly and mature
- = Beware of Satan’s counterfeits!
- = Beware of ignorance, neglect, abuse, perversion, misunderstanding!

“Christians and the church represent Jesus Christ. Spiritual gifts are the Lord’s primary channel of making Christians become Christ in the world, His visible and manifest body. Spiritual gifts are characteristics of Jesus Christ that are to be demonstrated through the church body, just as they were demonstrated through the body incarnate of Jesus Christ. Each spiritual gift now given to believers by the Holy Spirit had its perfect expression in Jesus’ own life and ministry. His church continues to live out His life on earth through the power of His Spirit working in His gifted people.” John MacArthur, *1 Corinthians Commentary*

*God’s plan for your life clearly includes involvement in
 spiritual things and involvement in the church.
 Are you occupied by spiritual things or by the world?
 Do you desire spiritual things or worldly things?
 Are you using your gifts, talents, and abilities to serve God and others or
 are you using them to pursue worldliness for yourself?
 As a Christian, your calling and destiny is spiritual things in the local church.
 Are you fulfilling your calling and destiny, or are you wasting them?
 Jesus said, “The unbelievers eagerly seek after all these worldly things, but you must
 seek **FIRST** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.”*

Matthew 6:32-33

Quick Scripture Help *Putting Off Pride, Putting On Humility*

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| Adultery | Matthew 15:19; Proverbs 6:20-35; Exodus 20:14; 1 Corinthians 6:11 |
| Addiction | 1 Corinthians 6:11, 15; Ephesians 5:15-18 |
| Anger | James 1:19-20; Colossians 3:8; Ephesians 4:26 |
| Bitterness, Resentment, Hate | Ephesians 4:31-32; Galatians 5:19; 1 John 2:9-11; Matthew 5:43-48 |
| Blame Shifting | Genesis 3:12-13; Proverbs 19:3; Matthew 7:1-5 |
| Church, Attitude | Ephesians 1:20-23; 2:19-22; 5:25; Hebrews 10:25 |
| Communication, Gossip, Lying | Psalm 19:14; Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29; Proverbs 12:22; 26:20 |
| Complaining | Numbers 14:27; Philippians 2:14; Ephesians 4:29 |
| Conscience, Guilty | 1 Peter 3:15-16; Acts 24:16; Hebrews 10:22 |
| Contentment | 1 Timothy 6:6; Hebrews 13:5; Philippians 4:11-13 |
| Coveting | Luke 12:15-21; Colossians 3:5; Matthew 6:33 |
| Decision Making | 1 Kings 18:21; Hebrews 3:7-11; Romans 12:1-2 |
| Depression | Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 32:1-11; 42:5-6; 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, 16-18 |
| Envy | Romans 13:13-14; 1 Cor. 3:1-3; Titus 3:3; James 3:13-18; Psalm 73 |
| Fear | Romans 8:15; Psalm 118:6-7; Matthew 10:28-30; 1 John 4:18 |
| Forgiving Others | Matthew 6:12-15; 18:23-25; Ephesians 4:32; 1 Corinthians 13:5 |
| Friendships, Avoiding | Proverbs 27:6, 9, 17; 1 Samuel 20:17; 23:16; James 4:4 |
| Gentleness | Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Peter 1:13-17 |
| Giving, Refusing | 2 Corinthians 8:1-12; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Malachi 3:7-10 |
| Gluttony | Proverbs 23:2-3, 21; Hebrews 12:16-17; Romans 13:13-14 |
| Gossip | Proverbs 11:12-13; 2 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Timothy 5:13 |
| Greed | 1 Timothy 3:3; 2 Corinthians 8; Luke 12:13-21; 16:10-15 |
| Hope in God, Lack of | Psalm 39:7; Romans 5:1-2, 5; 15:13; Colossians 1:5, 23, 27; Titus 2:13 |
| Humility | Micah 6:8; Eph 4:1-3; Phlpns. 2:1-11; Isaiah 66:2; Prov 16:19; 1 Pete 3:8 |
| Jealousy | 1 Corinthians 13:4; Romans 13:12-14; Proverbs 6:34-35; 27:4 |
| Joy, Lack of | James 1:2-4; Philippians 2:17-18; 3:1; 4:4; Psalm 32:11 |
| Judging Others | Matthew 7:1-5; Romans 14:1-4, 10-13; James 4:11-12; Galatians 6:1 |
| Kindness | Colossians 3:12-14; 2 Peter 1:2-11; Luke 10:25-37 |
| Laziness | Eph 4:28; 2 Thess 3:6-15; Prov 6:6-11; 2 Peter 1:2-10; Col 3:17 |
| Loving God | Matthew 22:36-40; John 14:15, 23-24; Hebrews 6:10 |
| Loving Others | Matthew 22:36-40; John 13:34-35; John 15:12; Romans 13:8-10 |
| Marriage, Value of | Gen. 2:18-25; Eph. 5:23-32; 1 Peter 3:1-2, 7; Matt. 12:25; Heb. 13:4 |
| Money, Loving It | 1 Timothy 3:3; 6:7-11, 17; 2 Timothy 3:2; Proverbs 11:24-25 |
| Others First | |
| Accept one another | Romans 15:7 |
| Admonish one another | Romans 15:14 |
| Bear with one another | Colossians 3:13 |
| Build one another up | Romans 14:19 |
| Care for one another | 1 Corinthians 12:25 |

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| Comfort one another | 1 Thessalonians 4:18 |
| Confess sins to one another | James 5:16 |
| Complain not against others | James 5:9 |
| Devoted to one another | Romans 12:10 |
| Encourage one another | 1 Thessalonians 5:11 |
| Envy not one another | Galatians 5:26 |
| Fellowship with one another | 1 John 1:6-7 |
| Forgive one another | Colossians 3:13 |
| Greet one another | 1 Peter 5:14 (kiss is optional ☺) |
| Hospitable to one another | 1 Peter 4:9 |
| Humble to one another | 1 Peter 5:5 |
| Kind to one another | Ephesians 4:32 |
| Lie not to one another | Colossians 3:9 |
| Love one another | 1 Thessalonians 3:12 |
| Peace with one another | 1 Thessalonians 5:13 |
| Pray for one another | James 5:16 |
| Prefer one another | Romans 12:10 |
| Regard one another | Philippians 2:3 |
| Same mind to one another | Romans 12:16 |
| Seek good for one another | 1 Thessalonians 5:15 |
| Serve one another | Galatians 5:13 |
| Speak not against one another | James 4:11 |
| Submit to one another | Ephesians 5:21 |
| Sue not one another | 1 Corinthians 6:7 |
| Teach one another | Colossians 3:16 |
| Truthful to one another | Ephesians 4:25 |
| Patience | Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; Psalm 37:7; 1 Peter 2:18-20 |
| Peace, with Others | Colossians 3:14-15; Romans 14:17; Psalm 34:14; Romans 14:19 |
| Peace, when Sinned Against | Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 12:14, 12, 18, 19, 21; Prov. 20:22; 1 Pete. 2:19-23 |
| Prayer, Lack of | Hebrws 4:14-16; 1 Pete. 5:6-7; Phlpns. 4:6-7; James 5:16; Pslm 34:15-18 |
| Pride | Proverbs 6:16-17; Psalm 12:3-4; 73:3-9; 1 Corinthians 4:6-7 |
| Rebellious to Authority | 1 Peter 2:13-16; James 4:7; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 5:5-6 |
| Repentance, Lack of | 2 Corinthians 7:8-10; Luke 15:11-24 |
| Sacrifice for God & Others | John 15:12-13; Ephesians 5:1-2; Philippians 2:1-8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 |
| Self-Centeredness | 1 Corinthians 10:24; 13:5; James 3:14-16; Romans 15:2-3 |
| Self-Control, Lack of | Proverbs 14:16-17, 29; 29:11; 25:28; 2 Peter 1:5-6; Titus 2:11-12 |
| Self-Discipline, Lack of | 2 Timothy 1:7 |
| Self-Pity | 1 Kings 19:1-18; Psalm 73:13-28; Proverbs 15:13; Psalm 37 |
| Serving Others | Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 4:10 |
| Sexual Immorality | 1 Corinthians 6:13-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4 |
| Slander | Prov. 10:18; 11:9; Ex. 23:1; James 1:26; 1 Peter 3:8-9; 1 Peter 2:21-23 |
| Ungrateful | Romans 1:21; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Hebrews 13:15 |
| Worry, Anxiety | Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:6-7; Psalm 37:4 |