

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – July 30, 2023

Theme: Romans: The Power of God at Work in Us **Topic:** Gifts of Grace for God's Service

Main Text: Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Key verse: Romans 12:6a *"In His grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well..."* (NLT).

INTRODUCTION: One recurring refrain in our study of Romans is 'God's grace.' And we have noted that grace undergirds all of God's dealing with man. God's gift of grace is multifaceted: grace for salvation (Romans 3:24); for obedience (Titus 2:12), to work hard (1 Corinthians 15:10), etc. Last week it was noted that even God's mercy to us is part of His grace to us. This week, we turn our attention to God's grace for service. What grace for service means is that the spiritual gifts and other 'natural' abilities we have are God's gracious gifts meant to enable us serve others for His glory and purpose. In Romans 1:5, Apostle Paul noted that *"We have received grace and apostleship through Him to bring about the obedience of faith among all the nations, on behalf of His name."* (HCSB)

- 1. In Romans 12:1-2 prior to the discourse on the various gifts God gives us for His service, Apostle Paul first reminded us of God's mercy and the need for us to offer all our being to God as living sacrifices. (a) What role does an appreciation of God's mercy play in how we exercise serving grace? (b) If we are to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, how would that look like in service to God? (c) Read Romans 12:1-3; 1 Corinthians 4:7. How does Romans 12:3 affect the way we view the different gifts and abilities for serving God?**

One of the ways to demonstrate transformation is by having a realistic (sober) attitude toward oneself, and whatever spiritual abilities one possesses. Transformation also shows in the level of humility and dedication put into the exercise of those gifts in serving others. That is the point of *'Think of yourself with sober judgment ...'* (Romans 12:3 NIV). The word translated as "Think" is the Greek verb *phroneō*. It indicates one's "mind-set" or attitude. Believers are to have an accurate picture of themselves in their own minds. They should not consider themselves more or less important than they are. Sincere and unreserved service of God and the church begins with a realistic appraisal of one's own strengths and weaknesses. Added to that, Apostle Paul compares the local church to a human body, in which every part functions for the good of the whole. If you're not a functioning, serving member of a local church, you are living outside the will of God. Because you're a part of the body, you matter. But because you're only one part, it's not all about you.

- 2. In Romans 12:4-5 and 1 Corinthians 12:12, Apostle Paul compares the Body of Christ, the Church, to a human body comprising of different parts and functions. (a) What should a believer do if s/he is the toenail or the powerful legs? (b) Which spiritual gift(s) and how many of those gift(s) does one need to be relevant in the Kingdom of God? (c) If the whole body suffers when just one part stops or malfunctions, what does that say about a local Church body of Christ if a believer refuses to put their gift to use in the service of God?**

God has given different gifts to the church - the Apostle, the Evangelist, the Prophet, the Pastor, and the Teacher, etc. to illustrate the diversity of the Christian church. He urges those who have been given such gifts to use them *"in proportion to his faith."* "Proportion" translates the Greek word *analogia*, which denotes the correct proportion or right relationship. Paul simply means that the prophet should say no more and no less than what God has given them. God is the One who distributes serving grace in measures that He has determined. This is why believers with similar gift will have differing degrees of impact. Each person is to be a good steward of the grace they have received. When we each minister in our area of grace or in the ability He has given, that is when God in all things is glorified.

- 3. (a) If serving grace is distributed in various measures that God has determined, where then should one focus his/her efforts? See 1 Peter 4:10. (b). In 1 Corinthians 12:15-16 God warns against looking down or otherwise on one's gifts. What dangers are inherent in such an attitude? (c) How has this lesson changed your perspective of spiritual gifts for service?**

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the privilege of having the ability to serve You. Help me to use it well, to Your glory and Yours alone. Amen.