

# ROMANS 12:3-21

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## REVIEW...

- **OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ROMANS...**
  - **CHAPTERS 1-8** -The doctrine of Salvation - by grace through faith in Jesus Christ...
  - **CHAPTERS 9-11** - The example of salvation by faith - Israel vs. Gentiles...
  - **CHAPTERS 12-16** - The application of our salvation – how we should live our lives in Christ...
- **CHAPTER 12:1-2** – A living sacrifice...
  - In light of Romans 1-11 – in light of the Gospel of Grace – the gift of God’s Spirit...
    - We should live our lives for the Lord – our reasonable/logical service...
    - Because we were bought with a price / because true life can only be found in Jesus!
    - So do not be conformed to this world – the standards / definitions of this world
    - Instead be transformed – renewed by the power of the Spirit – made into a new man
    - So that we will know the perfect will of God for our lives!
  - All of Romans 12 is one paragraph – one thought
    - In light of this transforming work of Jesus – how are we to live our lives...
    - In the context of the church – what is God’s will for our lives within the church...
    - 3 things - Live in Humility vs. 3-5 / Live in Jesus vs. 6-8 / Live in Love vs. 9-21

## 1<sup>ST</sup> - LIVE IN HUMILITY ~ ONE BODY... VS. 3-5

- Understanding our roles within the church...
  - Everyone has a role/purpose – a gift – they have been given by God to be used for God...
    - We may be called to a position of prominence within the church – pastor / evangelist...
    - Or we may be called to a role that no one will ever notice - janitor / help clean dishes...
    - The tendency is to think that one role is desirable – the other regrettable...
    - But in truth it does not matter what role God has called us to fill...
- The perspective – we are many members - but one Body!
  - \* **I Corinthians 12:14-20** – “Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am only an ear and not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? Suppose the whole body were an eye—then how would you hear? Or if your whole body were just one big ear, how could you smell anything? But God made our bodies with many parts, and he has put each part just where he wants it. What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body...”
  - So we all have our place within the body of Christ – our purpose God has given to us...
  - Each role is vital for the church – the body of Christ – to function properly...
  - If any part is missing – or not serving properly – the whole body suffers...
  - We might never notice we have a ‘big toe’ till we injure it – then that’s all we think of!
  - Now some of us might think we would rather be an ‘eye’ than a ‘foot’...
  - But try running without a foot – every part is important / every role is necessary...
  - We are many different parts – but we all come together as one body/family in Jesus!

- That is why we are told not to...
  - Think more highly – *huperphroneo* – exaggerated opinion of one's self
  - But think soberly – *sophroneo* - a moderate opinion of one's self
- Because it is God who has distributed to each a measure of faith...
  - It is God who calls us to the roles that we are gifted to fill...
  - **It is not to our credit – after all we are only clay pots – II Corinthians 4:7**
  - **Leaky vessels at that – we need to constantly be refilled – daily!**

## 2<sup>ND</sup> - LIVE IN JESUS ~ DIFFERING GIFTS... VS. 6-8

- The Gifts of the Spirit...
  - We have all been given “Gifts” – Gk. *charisma* – gifts demonstrating exceptional ability
    - **The idea is special abilities – talents – areas where we excel and do better than others...**
    - **We do not choose these gifts – they are given to us by God (*passive voice*)**
    - **Often we use these gifts for our own selfish reasons – but they were given to use for God**
    - **I have a trait that I don't give in easily – used for myself it is called stubbornness...**
    - **That same trait when used for God - becomes perseverance - not willing to give up...**
    - **Same gift – but when used for the purpose it was given – becomes an admirable quality**
  - There are 23 gifts of the Spirit given in the New Testament...
    - **Romans 12:6-8** – 7 gifts are listed...
      - 1. Prophecy 2. Ministry 3. Teaching 4. Exhortation 5. Giving 6. Leading 7. Mercy
    - **I Corinthians 12:8-10** - 9 gifts are listed...
      - 8. Wisdom 9. Knowledge 10. Faith 11. Healing 12. Miracles (*Prophecy repeated*)
      - 13. Discerning of Spirits 14. Tongues 15. Interpretation of Tongues
    - **I Corinthians 12:28** - 8 gifts are listed...
      - (*Prophets, Teachers, Miracles, Healings*) 17. Helps 18. Administrations (*Tongues*).
    - **I Corinthians 7:7** - 2 gifts are listed...
      - 19. Singleness 20. Marriage
    - **Ephesians 4:11** - 5 gifts are listed...
      - (*Apostles, Prophets*) 21. Evangelist 22. Pastors/(*Teachers*) – perhaps one gift...
    - **I Peter 4:9-10** – 1 gift is listed...
      - 23. Hospitality
  - The 7 listed here are what we call the ‘practical gifts of the Spirit’...
    - Prophecy – proclaiming the word of God – not necessarily the future...
    - Ministry – *diakonia* – deacon – serving / waiting tables / cleaning up after the people...
    - Teaching – *didasko* – impart instruction/instill doctrine/explain-expound God's Word
    - Exhorting – *parakaleo* – admonish, exhort, console, encourage, comfort – counseling...
    - Give – *metadidomi* – compound word – meaning “with giving”
      - Liberality – singleness of mind, simplicity, sincerity, no hypocrisy
      - Not having ulterior motives to the gift – just loving to bless others...
    - Lead – *proistemi* – the gift to lead others in their walk with Jesus – **I Corinthians 11:1**
    - Mercy – not getting what we deserve / Cheerfulness – *hilaros* – hilarious
    - **Every one of us has at least one gift we have been given – perhaps even more than one...**
    - **The purpose of those gifts is to build up and encourage the Body of Christ**
    - **We are to always be using our gifts to bless others in the church...**

- How do you know what gifts God has given to you...
  - More often than not we tend and fill a role – meet a need that we see...
    - The question is whether or not God has called us – gifted us for that purpose...
    - If we try to step in and simply fill a role – the results can often be disastrous
    - If we try to serve God in our strength – then we have to maintain the work
    - But if God is the one who does the work then He is the one who maintains it...
    - **John 15:16** – “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain...”
  - To find out our gift - step out in faith!
    - **Acts 16:6-7** - Paul is on his second missionary Journey...
    - He was stirred to share the Gospel in Asia - the Holy Spirit said no...
    - Then he tried to go into Bithynia, again the Holy Spirit did not let him...
    - In the Greek when it says he tried it is in the ‘imperfect tense’ - he kept trying....
    - I love it! As Paul was looking for where to go next he stepped out and tried...
    - Not just once - he tried again... and again... and again!
    - Not sure of your gift - want to find out what gift God has given to you...
    - Step out and try – try to teach / try to evangelize / try to give / try to help...
    - If it does not work – if there is no fruit – then try something else!
  - Recognizing God’s anointing...
    - In **Acts 14:23** - Paul return to the cities that he had been to previously...
    - Interestingly - Paul had not appointed elders when he first taught
    - Paul waited and acknowledged the obvious work that God was doing in them...
    - When God has called us – we will not be the only one to notice.
    - A story about crickets...
  - A comparison of two extremes - Peter / Paul
    - Peter the Apostle to the Jews / Paul to the Gentiles - **Galatians 2:8**
      - Yet Peter was the working man’s man - Paul was a Pharisee of Pharisees
      - Simple logic would tell us that God would have called Paul to the Jews...
      - Paul knew Judaism inside and out – he was perfect to minister to the Jews
      - Peter was a working man – he could have easily related to the Gentiles
      - Yet God called them to the exact opposite ministries – why?
    - We are not always used where we think we are the strongest...
      - If God called us to our strengths, then we would trust in our own abilities
      - More often than not God calls us to our weaknesses – so that we trust in Him
      - Never be afraid to step out...
      - Remember God a simple man to build the ark, while the experts built the Titanic

### 3<sup>RD</sup> - LIVE IN LOVE ~ IT IS ALL ABOUT LOVE... vs. 9-21

- Knowing your gifts and calling is wonderful – but more important yet is having...
  - Love - *agape* – perfect love - the same Love that God has for us – for each other...
  - \* **I Corinthians 12:31-13:3** – “But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so

that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”

- We can know exactly what God has called us to do – our gift - but that’s not enough...
- The church today is known for a lot of things it does not do...
- But the church should be known by our Love for one another!
- **John 13:35** – “Your love for one another will prove to the world you are my disciples.”
- If we do everything else right - but miss Love – we have done nothing
- The result of having sincere Love...
  - Putting other before you... vs. 10
    - In family - kindly affectionate – *philostorgos* – family love
    - In friendship - brotherly love – *philadelphia* – love of brothers and sisters
    - Ever find it difficult to love others - the Love of family & brothers flows from God’s Love
  - Not lazy but hard working – in serving the Lord... vs. 11
    - **I Corinthians 15:10** – “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”
    - Through the Love and Grace of God we are able to be hard working and faithful
  - Rejoicing in THE Hope - patient in tribulation – always in prayer... vs. 12
    - Our hope of eternal life with Jesus – the hope we are saved / redeemed!
    - It is in light of this great hope we can face any trial or hardship...
    - **I Thessalonians 5:17** – “pray without ceasing...”
    - Constantly connected to the Lord and in fellowship with the Lord
  - Distributing to the needs of the saints – given to hospitality... vs. 13
    - Distributing – fellowship or partner with those within the church – saints...
    - Given - to seek after eagerly - Hospitality - love to strangers
    - Reaching out to Love practically those who have need within the Body
    - Reaching out with the Love of Jesus to those who do not know Him
  - Rejoice with rejoicing / weep with weeping... vs. 15
    - I knew a couple who lost their child – two pastors came to ‘encourage them’
    - One gave them the ‘right’ verses / the other wrapped his arms around them and cried...
    - Loving with compassion – meeting people where they are at...
  - Do not set your mind on high things... vs. 16
    - Not forgetting where we came from – we were all lost sinners destined for hell...
    - Don’t think you are better than someone else – but share the love of Jesus with all men!
  - Do not repay evil for evil... vs. 17-20
    - Vengeance belongs to the Lord – He is the ultimate judge of men – **Galatians 6:7**
      - \* **Matthew 5:44-46** – “Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”
      - For our part - if your enemy is hungry feed him – if he is thirsty give him a drink...
      - God doesn’t only feed those who love Him – He sends rain on the just and the unjust!

- The same Love we have received from God – pass it on to others!
- If possible - as much as depends on you - live peaceably with all men...vs. 18
  - God does not promise that everyone will always be at peace with us...
  - But for our part we are not to seek revenge – not to stir up trouble – forgive in love!
- Overcome evil with good (*Imperative*)
  - As we live our lives for Jesus in light of His perfect Love
  - We will find that we have a humble view of our place in the Body of Christ
  - We will know what gifts God has given us – what He has called us to do in Christ
  - And the Love of Christ will flow from us revealing Jesus to a lost world!