

## ***Let Them use it.***

These are interesting words!! Paul talks about gifts and the use of them. He releases us to use our God given gifts but we have here some boundaries. Boundaries are important. No boundaries, then we don't know how far we can go.

In addressing himself deliberately to "every one of you," Paul grants that every believer has some spiritual gift (cf. v. 6; 1Pe 4:10) Peter says in 1 Peter 4: ***10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.***

All of us have gifts.

But his primary goal in getting their attention in this regard is to drive home the necessity of appropriating and using their gifts with utmost humility.

***: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you***

Paul recognizes the danger that the possession of a particular gift can easily result in pride. Cross reference this with his experience with the Corinthian church cf. his experience with the Corinthian church, He talks there with a similar theme of the body working together and states in the middle of it.

***1CO 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.***

Why because Paul is totally aware of the fact that pride and arrogance and self seeking creep into church life just as much as any other area of life.

Back to Romans and He equates humility with "sober judgment," in contrast to thinking of oneself more highly than one should .

A friend of mine used to always say I had a superiority complex rather than an inferiority complex. These days I tend to put myself down a bit. But both pride and putting yourself down are I think of equal danger to the church. There is a big difference between being proud and humble but there is also a big difference between being humble and lacking confidence in a God given gift. That is why evaluating oneself with sober judgement is an excellent process.

Notice it is tagged with ***in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you***

Your faith in your ability to do God's will and work is dependant on God given faith in God's ability to give you the required skills.

Let me explain. I can get up and preach confidently. I have done the homework, God has given me certain skills, I am confident I can do it.

But there are some areas of ministry that I am not as comfortable in. Administration is one. I have to work hard, sometimes put extra effort in because it doesn't come naturally to me. There are other areas as well and it is God's way of working that we are gifted differently. That does not mean that I become arrogant because I can preach or get down on myself because I am not a natural administrator. I use my limited administrative gift along with people who are gifted with more admin skills and together we get the job done. I need to have faith God has called someone with those gifts to work with us.

Paul explains this in his usual way. Comparing our giftings to that of a body.

***.<sup>4</sup> Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.***

It's a good picture isn't it. I read a coaching manual once about how injured body parts that are not related to the sport still affect performance. For example. Break your little finger and it technically should not affect a cyclist, after all you use predominantly your legs in cycling, but there is as much as a 14% performance depreciation due to an unrelated injury.

If in our body, that is the church, someone is hurting then we have a performance depreciation also. What percentage I cannot tell you. After all our job as a church is to glorify God. And as last week stated as living sacrifices meaning in everything we do. If one part of the body can't do that, it affects how the rest of the body glorifies God.

It happens all the time, people having issues with each other affects the way we are in church. I mentioned to some people recently that I felt Satan was having a real go at us lately. Causing all sorts of arguments over insignificant issues. Why is Satan doing that, because he is worried we are doing a good job. Why, because we are. Our services are great, all three of them, each department does a great job and if we become effective, Satan will try and stop us.

Now, if you feel I am calling your issue insignificant and that is offensive, I apologise but in the big scheme of things, yeh they aren't that huge. Most arguments in churches are caused by what people want church or programs to be like what they want. These days rarely is theology an issue or biblical interpretation. Normally we want church to be comfortable for us or our kids.

In a body, you can not become the centre of attention ***<sup>5</sup> so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.***

Now don't get me wrong here. That does not mean you lose your right to be you, it does not mean you don't have the right or responsibility to make personal decisions, it means

we need to think through those decisions with a body mentality. Your decisions affect the rest of us.

Paul goes on and explains it to their situation. This is not a exhaustive list of gifts it is an example of gifts, it is not in hierarchical order, it is an explanation.

***6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.***

We have here some gifts. Other lists include apostles, evangelists, faith and prayer, hospitality etc. Here we have a general list of gifts that could possibly be found in a average church.

We have different gifts yes, but notice the qualification given. ***according to the grace given us***. It is given to us by God. We do nothing to deserve it, we do nothing to rewarded for. Sometimes people are gifted and we cant work out why. I know a guy who is a truly gifted preacher, but is really obnoxious. I sometimes think he doesn't deserve that gift. I'm right he doesn't but hey, none of us do. God graciously lets us participate in the development of His kingdom.

A couple of things: NOTE the use of the term – **LET HIM**

Allow people to minister.