

ROMANS 12:1-16:27 | LIFE TODAY

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 46

ROMANS 12:1-15:14 | JEWISH LIFE BEYOND THE TEMPLE

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ROMANS 12:1-21 | DAILY PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT

Verses 1-3, see session 33**VERSES 4-5 - BLACK**

Verses 1-3 were marked in green, indicating an incidental application to the body of Christ. However, I believe that verses 4-8 are only applicable to the Pentecostal-era body.

Passages such as Ephesians 4:4-6, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, and Colossians 3:15 illuminate the concept of "one body, many members," echoed in Verses 4-5. These verses could be marked in blue (indicating a broader application), but due to their intricate linkage with verses 6-8—which I see as non-applicable to the Body of Christ after the apostolic era—I have marked them in black. Further evidence for this position will be presented in the next segment.

In the context of the 17th century, when the KJV was translated, the word "office," found in verse 4, had a broader meaning than it does today. It could refer to a task, duty, or function, not just an official position or title as we commonly understand it now. This aligns with the Greek word "πρᾶξις" (praxis), which generally refers to an action, practice, or function.

VERSES 6-8 - BLACK

Virtually all forms of Christianity, from Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy to Protestantism, Evangelicalism, Fundamentalism, and Charismatic groups, believe that the spiritual gifts listed here are applicable to the Body of Christ today. The only difference in interpretation among these groups would be the definition of the gifts and the local doctrine of expression for these gifts.

The seven gifts listed in Romans 12:6-8 are prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and showing mercy.

A somewhat standard Evangelical interpretation and explanation of these gifts would be:

- **Prophecy:** The ability to speak forth the mind and counsel of God, often seen as proclaiming truth in a way that builds up, encourages, and comforts believers.
- **Ministry:** Serving others, particularly within the church, often associated with practical acts of service that support the body of Christ.
- **Teaching:** The ability to instruct others in the faith, providing clear understanding and application of the Bible's truths.
- **Exhortation:** Encouraging and urging others to apply the truths of Scripture practically in their lives, often related to motivating and inspiring believers to live godly lives.
- **Giving:** A willingness to share material resources generously, with an attitude of simplicity and without ostentation.
- **Ruling:** The ability to lead or govern within the church with care and diligence, ensuring that God's people are guided in a way that honors Him.
- **Showing Mercy:** Extending compassion and kindness to others, particularly to those who are suffering or in need, and doing so with cheerfulness and grace.

The gift of prophecy carries the most divergence of opinion today. Most Catholics, Orthodox Christians, and Fundamentalists view prophecy as a gift from the Biblical era. Many Protestants and Evangelicals view it as the ability to apply God's word to contemporary society. Some Evangelicals and most Charismatics view the gift as the ability to receive new revelation for today.

I believe that spiritual gifts are physical manifestations of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. These gifts are an immediate and miraculous change of ability given to a person who has received the Holy Ghost. 1 Corinthians 12:7 states that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." Furthermore, there is no mention of any "giftedness" prior to the day of Pentecost, and from that point on, giftedness is always associated with the Spirit.

In the current era of Christianity, known as the Dispensation of Grace, the traditional understanding of spiritual gifts needs significant scrutiny. Once viewed as clear and immediate manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power, the present teaching on spiritual gifts has transformed into a complex and often conflicting system. The evangelical approach has shifted from the biblical representation, incorporating practices such as the utilization of Jungian psychology and non-uniform, evolving definitions of gifts.

Crucially, the spiritual gifts that served a specific and unique purpose during the time when the Kingdom offer was presented are no longer necessary in an era where such manifestations of the Kingdom are not required. These spiritual gifts were part of the Kingdom program and not the Grace program initiated by Paul. As the age of grace emerged, the focus shifted from miraculous manifestations to a reliance on God's revelation in Scripture. This transition was gradual, mirroring the diminishing of Israel and her Kingdom message.

Further proof that spiritual gifts have now ceased is seen when comparing Romans 12:6 with Ephesians 4:7. Verse 6 speaks of "gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us." But Ephesians 4:7 says that "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." In the first there are "gifts differing" but in the latter the grace is the same. The word for "gifts" in verse 6 and "grace" in Ephesians 4:7 is of the same root word. It is notable that Ephesians 4:7 is written late in the transition from Kingdom to Grace, and by this time there is a singular measurement of grace, whereas under the Kingdom message the grace was meted out individually by measure of need in the body.

VERSES 9-21 - BLUE

Verses 9-21 present a general set of instructions that outline the ethical responsibilities of believers. These instructions find their resonance in the broader Judeo-Christian tradition, yet they are laid out here in a manner characteristic of Paul's writing, but are not "Pauline" in a doctrinal sense.

Such lists are not unfamiliar in Paul's epistles. Similar patterns of moral guidance can be found in passages like Galatians 5:19-26, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22, and Colossians 3:12-17. They often serve as condensed ethical imperatives, summarizing the practical application of theological truths.

This segment should not be seen as a replacement for the Mosaic Law but as a practical guide for living out the grace received in Christ. These instructions are viewed as ideals of Christian behavior for those free from the Law. That is, these ethical instructions do not create a new legalistic system but rather guide the believer in a life that honors God. They encapsulate the moral and ethical imperatives fitting for the age of grace, emphasizing love, service, and compassion.

The list of moral virtues in these verses is self-explanatory for the most part. Here are a few points of insight:

- "Dissimulation" in verse 9 means "not hiding it." We might say, "Love boldly."
- In verse 11, "Not slothful in business" is a fairly broad statement, not just relating to employment and business issues.
- In verse 13, the distribution to saints is likely the care for suffering Jewish believers persecuted for their Messianic belief.
- In verse 20, the phrase, "heap coals of fire on his head" is unclear in its meaning. Some take it to be a positive thing, others negative.