

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to Romans 12

Once again – we are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this amazing letter that Apostle Paul – under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit –

Wrote to a group of believers in Rome –

A place he had never been to

To people who he didn't even know

About the fundamentals of the gospel of grace.

That we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

Jesus paid the debt that we were unable and incapable to pay –

He did the work

Salvation is

Not by our works

Not by our self righteousness / by trying to follow a list of dos and donts

Not because of our heritage or religion

We are saved by His grace –

My testimony and your testimony and every believer's testimony is exactly the same –

We did everything we could against it and God did the rest –

This is the message of salvation in a nutshell.

We didn't do anything for it; we did everything against it. God did the rest.

It is a gift

We receive it

We embrace it

And we live in His grace

That is our response –

It is the only logical / the only reasonable thing to do

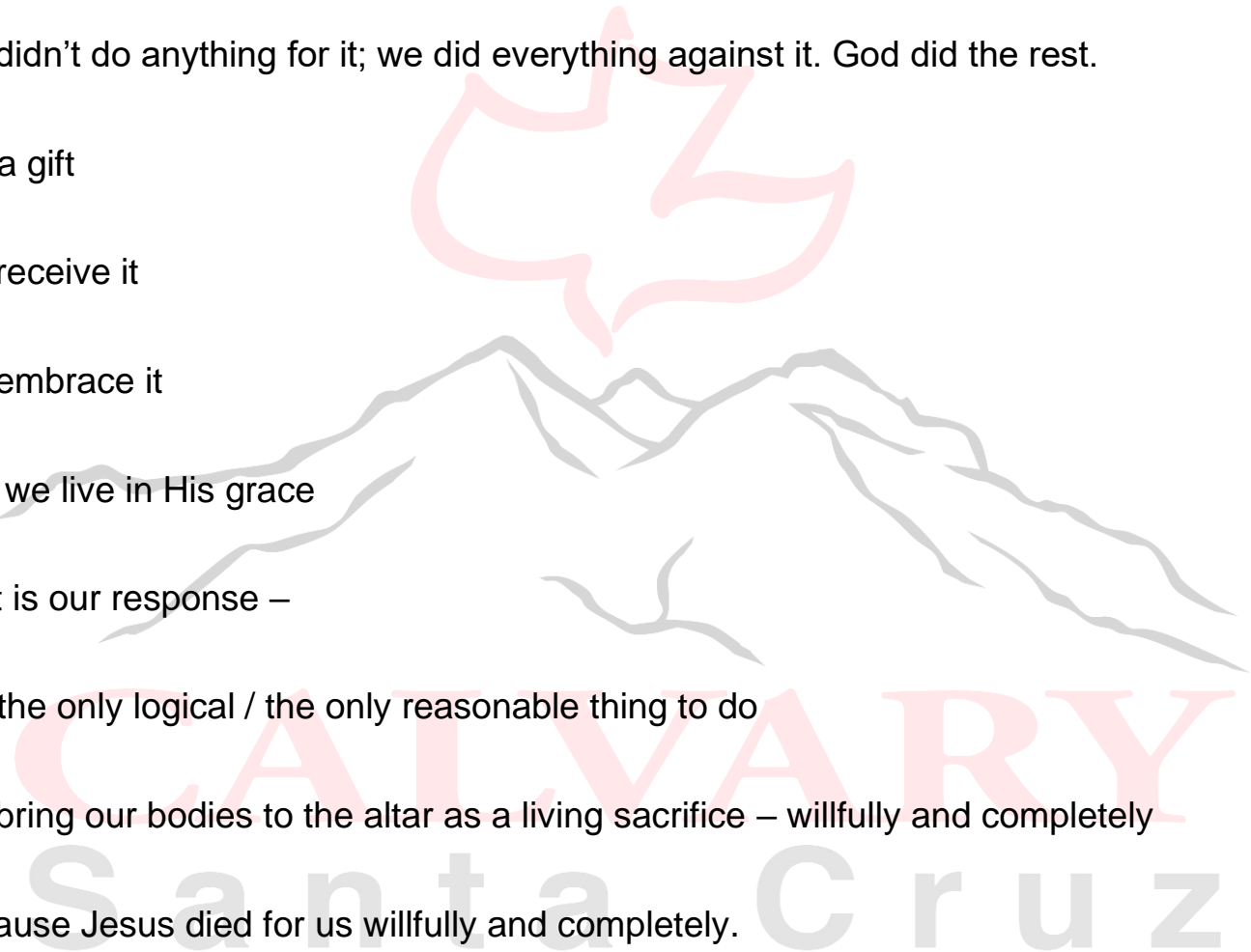
We bring our bodies to the altar as a living sacrifice – willfully and completely

Because Jesus died for us willfully and completely.

And so our response is one of worship -

We surrender to Him and His will

We serve Him and those that He has gathered together around us – the church



And in His grace –

God has equipped every single believer with a spiritual gifting.

Not so that we hoard them – they are to be used to build up the church

We began to look at each of the spiritual giftings in our lesson last Sunday –

Jesus – during His earthly ministry – He operated according to these giftings

And now – by the power of the Holy Spirit – we get to operate in these giftings and minister to people in Jesus' name.

So - This morning – we are going to look at the next two spiritual giftings that Paul mentions.

The gift of teaching and the gift of exhortation

Again, my prayer is that as we go through these – we may all truly understand what our gifting is and also – we need to know where to plug in and how to use them

We need to exercise our spiritual gifts – because that is God's will for our lives – we are His workmanship

He wants us engaged in the ministry serving people and pointing people to Jesus.

Let's pray...

Read Text – Romans 12 (4-8)

In our study last Sunday –

We looked at two of the spiritual giftings that God has given the church – by grace.

We looked at the gift of prophesy –

It can be summarized in – “one who declares the truth”

It is the supernatural gift that allows the believer to be able to hear from God, take His word and cause it to shine in a person’s life.

God puts a bible verse / a word of encouragement in your heart – to share to them.

They receive it – answered prayer. That is the gift of prophesy.

We also looked at the gifting on ministry / service.

The gift of ministry is practicing the truth.

Those with this gift – serve and serve and serve.

They wait on tables.

It is service to the church but also to the watching world.

**[Gal 6:10 NKJV] 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

They see a need and they fill it.

It is service

It is practical service

It is observable service

All to the glory of God

And one of the things that I have found in my personal life and in scripture is that when we are faithful in one of the giftings – it will often lead to the manifestation or expression of other gifts.

Do not despise the small things –

When we are faithful in the little things –we see the work of the Holy Spirit manifested in us and through us - more and more.

Perfect biblical illustrations -

We look at the life of Stephen in the book of Acts –

When we first find Stephen – he is waiting on tables

Gift of ministry – He was one of the seven men of good reputation.

He is praying with men and women

He is serving them / he is feeding them

In his faithfulness, it appears that God opens up an opportunity for Stephen and he begins to evangelize –

Then by the time that ch 7 comes along – Stephen has the gift of teaching as he addresses the religious rulers.

Same thing with Philip –

He is serving tables too –

Next time we see Philip – he is in Samaria – preaching Christ to them

The Holy Spirit leads him to an encounter with the Ethiopian in Acts 8

Where the Ethiopian asks Philip to explain to him the scroll that he was reading,

Philip explains to him – preached Jesus to him

The Ethiopian responds -

The Ethiopian gets saved –

Philip takes the Ethiopian into the water to be baptized –

Two go into the water but only the Ethiopian comes out –

Philip is transported hundreds of miles to the north

Both of them exercising the spiritual gifting that God had given to them.

Let's look at the next gifting –

Which we saw that both Stephen and Philip had –

The gift of teaching -

**7 or ministry, [let us use it] in [our] ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;**

Teaching is the supernatural ability to communicate biblical truths to others.

It is the supernatural ability to explain, to root, and ground the saints in the Word of God.

It is not simply the ability to tell someone what the text says – it is the ability to explain the text and apply it to our lives – so the person receiving it – not only learns it but understands it and it changes their life.

It is the ability to interpret God's truth and present it understandably.

And there will be times when the teacher will bring great comfort – but at other times, the person with the gifting of teaching will bring great discomfort to the listeners.

Because some of God's word is offensive to man

The bible says as much – that the cross of Jesus Christ is offensive.

The British Evangelist, G. Campbell Morgan said that when he first came to this country, a lady came up to him and said, "Dr. Morgan, the cross is offensive to me. I

don't like to hear a preacher talk about it because it is ugly and it is unsightly, and I don't like to hear that sort of thing."

"Madam, I thoroughly agree with you. It is an offense. It is an ugly thing. But the only ugliness in that cross is your sins and my sins."

There are many pastors and teachers that try to stay away from the offensive parts of the bible.

But God intended His word to be offensive to grab our attention

That we may grasp how God has chosen to save humanity –

Think about Cain and Abel's sacrifice –

Cain brings his fruit basket as a sacrifice – all clean and shiny / aesthetically pleasing and Abel brings a bloody lamb – pointing to the cross.

So – we want to have a teacher that is going to teach the whole counsel of God

We want a teacher that is going to help us connect to God's word

There is a lot of teaching going on today that is passed off as bible teaching that is not.

It is not fruitful

It is not helpful

It is not edifying



It is not building people up

It is not equipping the saints for the ministry

Turn with me to 2 Tim 4

Paul in his letter to Timothy –

He writes – Timmy!!!

**[2Ti 4:2-4 NKJV] 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season [and] out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, [because] they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn [their] ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.**

People with the gifting of teaching – will preach the truth and nothing but the truth

They will tell you the truth and you laugh

They tell you the truth and you cry

They speak the truth when we like it and they speak the truth when we don't like it.

They spoke the truth when it hurt and they spoke the truth when it brought great joy

And God has placed individuals with the gift of teaching in my life that God used to help me grow through the systematic teaching of His word.

Individuals who connected me with the text

Individuals who connected me with Jesus

Not only from the pulpit –

At work

At school

At home

Individuals keeping me rooted and grounded in the scriptures –

Which by the way - is part of the Great Commission

**[Mat 28:19-20 NKJV] 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, [even] to the end of the age." Amen.**

teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you

So we are to receive instruction

**[Pro 1:7 NKJV] 7 The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of knowledge, [But] fools despise wisdom and instruction.**

The person who says - I don't need sound biblical instruction is the person who doesn't have the fear of the Lord

And without biblical instruction – we all go astray – because we do not give ear to God's word.

How do I know if God has given me the gift of teaching?

In order to teach – one has to be teachable.

So there is a joy when it comes to studying God's word and this is coupled with the love to help other people to learn and understand.

Those with the gift of teaching usually are individuals who are self disciplined and self motivated – because that is how God has spiritually wired them.

Applying God's word in every day situations.

The ministry of Jesus was one of teaching

Time after time in the gospels we see Jesus either referred to as "Teacher" or we see Him teaching.

He came to teach man that we are separated hopelessly from God because of our sin.

He came to teach man of the love and the grace and the mercy that is provided to all those who will call upon the name of Jesus Christ.

The whole life of Jesus was one of teaching –

Before the resurrection and after the resurrection

**[Mar 1:22 NKJV] 22 And they were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.**

**[Mar 6:6 NKJV] 6 And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.**

**[Luk 24:27 NKJV] 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**

He taught them –

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, through the Prophets – hey guys – this is Me, this is Me, this is Me – everything points to Me

In the early church – we see the gift of teaching

**[Act 2:42 NKJV] 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (that's teaching) and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

**[Act 4:1-2 NKJV] 1 Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, 2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.**

They taught and preached

Notice the distinction – it is not the same thing

There is a lot of preaching behind the pulpits in churches today – but not much teaching.

Preaching – by definition – is the proclamation of the gospel to unbelievers.

And so preaching has its place – when we are surrounded by unbelievers – we want to share with them about God's great love for them – their horrible state of sin – the opportunity to repent.

Teaching is directed to the believer

You and I (those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ) need to be taught

We need to know the Word of God – Genesis thru Revelation – not only intellectually – but we need to know the word of God and have it flow through our lives.

The believer that sits only through preaching – develops a very strong wave of guilt – so it is rededications after rededications –

instead of living ones life for Jesus – and growing in His grace.

That is the gift of teaching – very important in the fellowship – in the equipping of the saints.

The next gifting

Look at verse 8

**8 he who exhorts, in exhortation;**

The gift of exhortation –

This is the God given ability to offer counsel that is comforting and challenging and consistent with the character of God and the Word of God.

The individual who says – I enjoy counseling people, I am a comforter, I like to challenge people, I like to encourage people – those individuals might think that they have the gift of exhortation –

But if it is counseling disconnected to the word of God and disconnected to the character of God and the ministry of Jesus Christ – it is not the supernatural gift of exhortation.

Because the gift of exhortation is used to bring us to a place of obedience and submission to what Jesus says.

If the gift of teaching is explaining the truth

The gift of exhortation is applying the truth

It is done through encouragement, through strengthening, through comfort to move people forward.

This is what the Word of God says, this is what it means and this is how to apply in in your life.

The person with the gift of exhortation isn't simply there to encourage us – they pick us up and move us forward in the things of the Lord

They are careful in the words that they use

They listen

This is done through everyday conversations -

Turn to Revelation 2

I am going to show you this gifting in the life of Jesus

**[Rev 2:1-5 NKJV] 1 "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.**

Up to this point – all good. This is the type of notes we like to receive – a reminder of how good we are doing.

But it doesn't end there –

Jesus provides them the facts first – before He gives them the remedy

**4 "Nevertheless I have [this] against you, that you have left your first love. 5**

**"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place-- unless you repent.**

Gift of exhortation – these are the facts – get up and move forward – repent.

And it works the same way in the life of the believer – God puts people in the church with the gift of exhortation – who are going to come beside us – and tell us exactly the same thing –

get up and move forward – repent.

get up and move forward – repent.

Turn to Acts 14 –

We are going to see the gift of exhortation in the early church –

We are going to look at Paul and Barnabas –



**[Act 14:21-22 NKJV] 21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting [them] to continue in the faith, and [saying], "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."**

Paul and Barnabas reminded the people that they would face many trials as Christians, but they also encouraged them to keep trusting in the Lord.

Get up and move forward

And we all know the story that not too long after this –

Paul and Barnabas get into a disagreement over John Mark

Paul doesn't want to take him along and Barnabas wants to take him –

And it was Barnabas who put his arm around John Mark.

And years later – Paul writes to Timothy asking him to send John Mark because he is very useful for me to ministry.

This again points out the need for this gift of encouragement / gift of exhortation to operate in the church.

It is very important for those who have this gifting exhortation – to not lean on their own understanding and start to give their own opinion.

It is supposed to be led by the Spirit.

So one of the things that we can do in exhorting our brothers and sisters – is not to make their decisions for them.

We give them direction

We give them God's word – we tell them what God's word tell them to do.

It is not saying – You must do this –

It is saying, God's word says that we are to do this and you would do good in obeying it.

Changes the perspective in the conversation.

Much too often – we are so single minded and so focused on what we want and how we can get it – that we miss out on why God gave us these gifts.

These spiritual gifts have been given to us for one reason – not to make us happy – not to make us successful – not to make us accepted – but to give ourselves away to someone else.

And while all Christians should be encouraging one another, we should be especially thankful for those who have this particular spiritual gift of exhortation.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

F.B.Meyer: (an old dead dude)

“I used to think that God’s gifts were on shelves one higher than the other. The higher you reached the more you received. Now I know that God’s gifts are actually on shelves one lower than the other and the lower you bend the more you receive.”

It is all about serving –

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'



CALVARY  
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