

Exegetical Notes - Romans 12:3-8

“Living Sacrifices AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD - Part 1”

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(In Romans 12:1-2 Paul called the church of God to becoming “living sacrifices” whose minds have been renewed so that they may be able to discern the will of God. In the passage which follows he explains how their new way of thinking will affect their behavior, first among other Christians, and then, in the world.)

Romans 12:3-8

Verse 3

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

- “By the grace given to me,” Paul has been called by God to instruct the Church in the ways of God. He is now acting in accord with his calling. His intention is to instruct the Church, not to offend Christians. He is acting out of his calling. He must do what he is doing for the good of the Church in obedience to God.
- “To every one of you” - this message is not to any one particular Christian but to all the elect of God.
- “Do not think more highly of yourself than you ought” - this is a warning against over-inflated self-image (see Romans 3:10-12). Instead, each Christian should look at himself with “sober judgement.” We have all fallen short.

Verses 4-8

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith;⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach;⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is

giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

- The Church should see itself as one body. Like the human body, it has many parts. It functions well when its parts act in agreement and harmony. It functions badly when its parts work together poorly or at-odds with each other.
- As God has fashioned the human body so that its parts function together, not all the parts of the human body perform the same function. This is also true in the Church. God gifts the members of the Church so that it can function well, but not all the parts perform the same function (this principle is more fully discussed in 1 Corinthians 12). The point here is that the parts of the Body of Christ must not think that their function is more essential than that of some other part. The parts of the body of CHRIST, must work together in harmony if the body of Christ is to be effective.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Living Sacrifices AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD – Part 1*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. All rights are reserved by *Cornerstone Fellowship*, Coatesville, Pennsylvania, & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)