

# Being a living sacrifice – Romans 12

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 05 February 2023

Preacher: Peter Reimer

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Thank you for reading that scripture for me this morning, and thank you for the opening songs that were very fitting, and it is quite interesting how God loves to bless.
- We did, you've seen we did a baby dedication this morning, and we filled up the stage. She hadn't done a baby dedication in some time, and now there was that many blessings that were added to the family of God as well, or at least to the church anyways, so that is always exciting to have that, so it's very good.
- So I kind of knew that I wasn't the only one that was nervous this morning. For some reason, I am more nervous this morning than I usually am. I'm not sure why that is, but I'm thinking it's because I'm probably connecting to my flesh more so than I should, and generally that's what the issue is.
- So this morning's message, I have named it Being a Living Sacrifice, and we as people do not like to sacrifice things.
- Not necessarily as far as sacrificing the way we might think as, you know, sacrificing animals, but to give up.
- [ 1 : 2 3 ]     We don't like to give things up. You know, if you look at somebody that would like to get into better shape, and if he needs to give up certain foods, he generally does not like to do that.
- You know, I could afford to get into better shape if I gave up sugar, but I like sugar so much that I'm willing to deal with the extra weight that I have just so I can continue to have sugar.
- So it's, I'm not willing to give that up. And so we don't like to sacrifice things. So this morning's message deals with sacrificing and things that, you know, we need to give up.
- And I thought at first when I started working into this message that I would only do verses one and two, because there was enough there really to do a message. But then, as I studied into it a little bit more, I realized that verses four and eight can really tie into verses one and two as well.
- So we'll take it in as a whole this morning with verse three kind of in the middle there. So before we get started, let's just again commit ourselves to the Lord. Father, we come before you again this morning.
- [ 2 : 2 9 ]     I just want to thank you and praise you for each one that is here. Father, we trust that you will have a blessing for each one that has come out this morning to worship. Father, I ask that you would just lead and guide each one.
- Father, especially for myself, give me words to speak that would be clear for each one to understand that we could all apply some of this teaching to our lives.
- In Jesus' precious name, amen. All right. So we'll start off versus kind of looking, taking a close look at verses one and two. But firstly, we'll just do verse one.
- But there's basically three main points that I would take out of, that I would like to take out of verses one and two. And then once we get over to verses four and five, we'll go back and analyze a little bit to see how we're doing.

So it starts off with, in chapter 12, verse one, he starts off and he says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

[ 3 : 34 ] Now the translation that Dave read, I brought up here as well. I kind of like the last part of that translation better. It says, I'll read the whole verse, verse one.

It says, Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.

This is your true and proper worship. So they've now switched it to worship instead of this. And so offering ourselves, our bodies, is actually an act of worship.

So we'll start off, verse one, it says at the top there, it says, I beseech you therefore, brethren. So basically what he is saying is, I am challenging the church.

He is challenging the church because of what has been said. In light of what has been said, he is now challenging them. And so what has been said? If we go back into chapter 11, the first portion of it, Henry did that portion.

[ 4 : 40 ] And the main thing was, God has not given up on Israel. They had rejected Christ, but God hasn't given up on Israel. So the middle section I did, the last time I did a message in it was that he was, God has grafted in the Gentiles.

And then the last part, again, he ensures that he is not done with Israel. So now he starts off in chapter 12. He says, So how big are God's mercies?

So by the mercies of God, we ought to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Let's turn to Lamentations chapter 3, verses 22 and 23.

Lamentations chapter 3, verses 22 and 23. It says, So God's mercies are new every morning.

We get a fresh chance every morning. So when we fail, we get to start over every morning. Great is God's faithfulness. And he will continue to do this.

[ 6 : 18 ] This does not give us an excuse to fail, but it allows us to continue to move forward, even though we fail. Then he goes on and he says that you present your bodies a living sacrifice.

Now, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, what would that look like today, when we want to present our bodies? It is not, so he's saying a living sacrifice.

We are to stay alive. It is not like Jesus himself for our sins. He is saying we are to be a living sacrifice. And I thought I would look into the book of Luke, chapter 9, verses 23 and 25.

It explains that a little bit better as to what that would look like. After that, we'll turn to Galatians. So Luke chapter 9, verses 23. 23 to 25.

23 to 25. 23 to 25. 23 to 25. Okay, he says, Then he said to them all, If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

[ 7 : 30 ] For whoever desires to save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world and loses and is himself destroyed or lost?

So a living sacrifice or to live sacrificially is to give up of self and to live for Christ. And we'll get into that a little bit more later on, yet exactly what that will look like.

But let's turn to Galatians chapter 2, verse 20. And it says, I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

And which I now live in the flesh. I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. So I have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me. It is the giving up of self. It is no longer you're desiring to live only for yourself, but you're actually living for Christ.

[ 8 : 41 ] Let's go back to Romans. Romans. So then, if we are living for Christ, he says in the last portion here, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

So one, we are to live a life sacrificed to God. Secondly, we are to live a life, a holy life. So how can we live a holy life in the world today?

It is very difficult to live a holy life according to what other people think we should do. We live an actual holy life.

Let's turn to Ephesians chapter 4. And there's a very good recipe there as to how to live a holy life. We'll start in verse 17, and we'll read right to the end of the chapter.

And so if you're challenged or if you're struggling with living a holy life, turn here and you can use this as a gauge as to how well we are doing or areas we might need to work on.

[ 9 : 53 ] I'll just read the whole passage, then we might pick up on a few verses there. Verse 17, it says, Then I say, This I say, therefore, This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness in their heart, who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard him and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus, that you put off concerning your former conduct the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and being renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore, putting away lying, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry and do not sin.

Do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good, necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

[ 12 : 04 ] And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Now there's a whole lot of information there.

But if we follow that, that is a recipe for holy living. And we will all fail at different areas in different times, but God's mercies are new every morning.

So we get to start over if we fail. So if we go to bed with anger, the next day we can take care of that, and we can start over. He also talks about, let him who stole steal no longer.

That is not saying that somebody isn't supposed to steal from you. That is talking about an individual who is made a habit of stealing instead of earning. Rather, instead of stealing, go earn monies, enough money that you might even have enough to give.

[ 13 : 14 ] So you could actually give somebody that is in need. And so that is a new life. That is a life that is holy living. Let's turn back to Romans chapter 12.

So in the last part in verse 1, which is your reasonable service? And as I talked about it already, in verse 1 in the NIV translation, it says, which is your proper worship?

So to give up of ourselves and to choose to live another way is actually worship. You're worshiping God by giving up of self and living a righteous life.

And in this version, it says, which is your reasonable service? It just about sounds like that is the least you can do. because of what Christ has done for us. The main point that I wanted to take out of this verse was living a sacrificed life.

Verse 2. It says, Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and perfect will of God.

[ 14 : 32 ] So it gets a little bit interesting here. He says, And do not be conformed to this world. What does conformed mean? It means to go along with socially acceptable standards.

In Low German, you would say, Nicht bloß mit der Welt mit gehen. So, nicht mit der Welt mit gehen. Not going along with the world. Or not going along with socially acceptable standards.

So what are socially acceptable standards? And there's basically no standard. At this day and age, there seems to be absolutely no standard. But where do we draw the line?

What is being conformed to this world, and what is not? I've put a few of them down that I think are conforming to this world.

These might not necessarily be what convict you. Because a lot of conviction, a lot of the things that we would look at here when we're talking about conforming to this world is that evicts you.

[ 15 : 42 ] There is churches out there who will say that you cannot have an iPhone or you cannot have a phone. Because if this phone is, if you have a phone like this, you are conforming to this world.

And in part, they're right. You know, who does not have a smartphone? Pretty much everybody does. When they first came out, I didn't really want to go along with them either.

I just didn't like them. It was too much technology. I liked the old flip phone. I could text without even looking at my phone. It was just easier because I had the buttons memorized. And so it was just simpler.

But if I were to try to go back now, I would lose connection with probably most of you guys because WhatsApp is a very common way of communicating.

And so I would lose that connection. The difference is, are we using this as a tool or are we using this as an advantage or as a means for our flesh?

[ 16 : 42 ] And that is where I would draw the difference. So I would say that having one of those, you are not necessarily conforming to this world. You might be convicted otherwise. So I'm not going to stand very hard on that one.

Another thing that I thought that I would mention is rubber tires. There's actually churches out there who say that if you have rubber tires on your tractor, you are now conforming to this world.

Do yes, nie met, de valtmat. Now, you know, you will be excommunicated. And there too, I say, you know, I don't believe that rubber tires are going along with this world.

You are simply, you are using a tool that is making life a little bit easier versus steel tires. And so this being conformed to this world, people draw the line in the sand at different areas.

And each one of us is going to have to decide where we draw that line. Two other areas that I thought that I would talk about when it comes to, and these are areas that I believe that are actually, when we are going along with it, we're actually conforming to this world.

[ 17 : 51 ] One of them is dress, how we dress. And I'm going to give the men a hard time this round, because most of the time when we talk about dressing, we instantly focus on the women, and we say, well, you know, so and so and so.

I'm going to do this time. And the other one that I would, that I'd like to talk about as far as conforming to this world is the pursuit of money.

It is another one that I believe are, we are conforming to this world. Dress. Men and women, we tend to, well, we like to dress up, right?

And when I was a teenager, I grew up, I would have been a young teenager in the early 90s, early to the mid-90s. So what was cool for a young man to wear in that era?

Any of you guys remember? I didn't want to dress, what's that? Well, maybe, yes, partly, yeah. Where I grew up, the fluorescent colors, they came in in, I got some smiles already.

[ 18 : 57 ] The fluorescent colors came in in the late 80s, and they really took off in the early 90s. And what was pretty cool, at least the school that I was going to, is guys would wear shorts with these really bright fluorescent green or orange and pink, those types of colors.

And then you would wear a T-shirt. And it was also a fairly bright color. But this is a unique T-shirt. This wasn't just, this T-shirt only came down to about here. So you had these really bright shorts, and you had this, all a half of a T-shirt.

And that was cool. And I am so thankful that I never wore one of those things. I didn't, I didn't, I did not conform to the world at that time. Because if my kids were to see pictures of me wearing that now, they would have the last laugh.

So you're conforming to this world. Nowadays, I want to challenge the young guys nowadays. I have that same amount of issue with a dress thing that is happening today.

And that's skinny jeans. I have a special place in my heart for those things. Don't wear them. Do you know why? They make you look like a girl. They do.

[ 20 : 14 ] Plain and simple. A modern day dress for men today is, they're dressing feminine. You know, if you dress up, most of the men, if you look in styles, they look like girls.

They look more and more feminine. Men. We, God gave us, we are to be leaders and we are supposed to be men, not looking like women. So, you know, that's an area that I picked.

So, I believe that, you know, when we're going along with each and every style that comes out, and every year or two, there's a new trend that comes out.

If we're going along with that, whether it is men or women, we are conforming to this world. Let's turn to 1 Timothy 2. This speaks about women dressing.

1 Timothy 2, verses 9 and 10. It says, So basically, you know, don't go along with absolutely every new thing that comes out.

[ 21 : 41 ] You know, dress modestly. Dress decently. Because you never know. People take pictures of you, how you dress, and then in the future, your kids are going to see those pictures, and, you know, it might not always look as nice in the future as it does in the present.

And so it's something that we want to, that you want to watch. There too, in dress, there are certain churches that, or certain people that will have a line, this is as far as I'm going, and that's it.

I'm not, I'm not going any further. And, but I think dress is one thing that is really, if you want to conform to this world, you simply follow along with all the new dress that comes out, you're conforming to this world.

One other one that I thought I would mention is the never-ending pursuit of money. And with that, connecting retirement. I don't believe that scripture teaches us to retire.

And yet, it is such a common theme out there when you're out in the workforce or you're out in business and they're talking about work, and then it's retirement. You want to earn a lot of money in as short a time as you can so that the more money you have, the younger you are, you can already retire.

[ 22 : 52 ] There's individuals that if they have enough money, they retire at 45. That's my age. I'm too young to retire. There's also 50. I know, I have a close friend of mine who, yeah, he retired at 50.

Was financially set, retires at 50. Two years later, he phones me, he says, I'm bored. You got a truck available for me to drive because I just can't stand it. I have to do something. God did not create us to be retired.

Let's turn to Luke chapter 12. Verses 16 to 21. This doesn't specifically talk about retirement.

Luke chapter 12, verses 16 to 21. It says, and he spoke this parable to them saying, the ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

And he thought within himself saying, what shall I do since I have no room to store my crops? So he said, I will do this. I will pull down my barns and build greater.

[ 24 : 09 ] And there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, soul, you have many goods laid up for you, laid up for many years.

Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. Isn't that something that would very much fit in with the world today? Is to, you know, earn up as much as you can.

We might not have crops that we store in our bins, but we have a bin that's called a bank account. And we like to put lots of money there. And that money produces freedom for us and we can go and do whatever we might want to do, whether it is travel and things like that.

God then says, but God said to him, fool, this night your soul will be required of you. Then whose will these things be which you have provided?

So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God. So I believe conforming to this world is looking at only the earthly possessions and wanting to have great gain and forgetting to actually lay up treasures in heaven.

[ 25 : 23 ] That is an earthly, that is an earthly thing or that is conforming to this world. We could continue to go on on a lot of different examples, but I think that is probably more than enough.

Going on into the next statement, he says, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

So he says, don't do this, but do that. So what does transformed mean? It's not to put off, but to change.

So transformed of your mind isn't to put something away, but it is to change something. I was going to get a little transformer toy, like a jet or something, and you can transform it, and first it's a jet, and then it's usually a walking individual.

It's the same thing, but it does, has a different function. The same thing he is saying here now, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So what does the renewing of the mind mean?

[ 26 : 31 ] What, so, what are we transforming our mind to? So if we're changing our mind, if we are changing it from one thing to the next, what are we to change it to?

Let's turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 10 verses 3 to 6. It says, though I walk in the flesh, we do not war against the flesh.

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the, against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ and being right with disobedience when you are, when your disobedience is fulfilled.

So how well do we do in verse 5 there, he says, to bringing every thought into captivity. How well do we do in that area of our life? Because in Romans 12, he is saying, be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

So it is a, it is a different way of thinking things through. And I have, Wayne is, Pastor Wayne has often challenged me on this, is to, to take every thought into captivity.

[ 28 : 01 ] And as a trucker, I, there are times where I have time where, you know, I don't need to be listening to the two-way and I don't need to be doing anything and then I have found my mind wants to just wander off.

Is to take every thought captive is difficult and it actually takes a lot of practice to be able to take every thought captive. I have often found myself thinking of negative things.

And then, for a prolonged period of time, and then I end up coming home and then my wife has a thing where, when I've been at work the first 10 or 15 minutes, she watches me rather closely.

And, and it's because sometimes I, I've come home and I've had too many negative thoughts and it comes out very clearly. It, it shows very clearly that I am actually in a little bit of a bad mood or a sour mood.

And, it has, it is due, most of the time due to my thought life. Not necessarily to things that have happened at work, but due to my thought life. And, so it's good that we have wives, right?

[ 29 : 09 ] So they challenge us to become better people. And, so, to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. So it's a new way of thinking. So what, how are we supposed to think?

Let's turn to Matthew chapter 13 verse 44. Matthew chapter 13 verse 44.

We're transforming our way of thinking. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which a man found and hid. For the joy over it, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

So, our, our way of thinking needs to change from a physical or a personal me type of thinking to, I am thinking of God.

I am, I am, I am wondering what can I do for the kingdom of God. This individual, it's a parable here, he finds a, finds a treasure in a field, he takes and he sells absolutely everything that he has just so that he can possess by that field so that he can have that treasure.

[ 30 : 21 ] And that is the idea that we are to have as well, that we totally, 100% buy into this kingdom of God. There's always going to be earthly responsibilities that we have.

So, we cannot just, absolutely just only think about the, the, the kingdom of God all the time. We do have jobs, we do have things that we have to take, take care of and things like that, but at the same time, in, in our forefront or what we are working towards always needs to have the kingdom of God in mind.

So, when we go out to work, we need to have the kingdom of God in mind that we are going to work to either provide for our families and, but in the end, that we can have them come to the kingdom of God as well or that we can provide monies for the kingdom of God and things like that.

It's always having the kingdom of God in mind as to why we are doing what we are doing. So, that is being transformed by the renewing of our mind, changing the way we think things through.

So, continuing on to work through it, he says that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

[ 31 : 43 ] What is the will of God? I've often heard testimonies where people, not necessarily where they come up and share a testimony, but where people say that I don't know what God's will is for me in my life.

I'm trying to find out what God's will is for me in my life. And I don't know if you guys have ever, ever, ever heard that, but it's something that I've heard a number of times.

And we've just gone over that in verses 1 and 2 here. God's will for us is, the first one is that we live a yielded life.

That is a sacrificed life. That we are yielded to God. And it is interesting how they always use the lamb of God and it's a picture of a yielded life.

And I have never, I have seen an individual when they went to butcher a lamb, I've seen him put the lamb down or kill the lamb to butcher it. And what he did was he sat on it and he just lifted the head and he slit the throat.

[ 32 : 52 ] It is a humane way of putting him down. lamb. And I've never done it, but I have heard it said that it's very uncomfortable for you to do that. It just about doesn't feel right because once you take that lamb and you actually put it down on the ground, it completely yields itself to you.

It allows you to actually slit its throat. Whereas if you were to try to do that to any other type of animal, it will fight you the whole way. Whether it is a cow or a pig or anything like that, they will fight you till the bitter end.

Whereas the lamb, it just yields itself. And it's uncomfortable for them that this lamb would just yield itself. And so we are to live a yielded life.

So if you're wondering, in verse 2 there he says that we may prove what is the perfect and acceptable will of God, to live a yielded life. Secondly, is to be, not to be conformed to this world.

That is to live a separated life. To separate us from the world. Choosing not to follow all the new things that are happening in this world, ins and outs, whether it is dress or finances and things like that.

[ 34 : 06 ] Don't follow along. Or you could say don't just swim along with the river. You actually have to go against.

Make some choices. And then the other one is transformed mind, is a changed mind. Those three things. So if you're asking yourself the question, what is God's will for me in my life?

It's those three things that's God's will for your life. The rest will work out on its own. So then we get to verse 3.

And it's interesting, I question a little bit why verse 3 is there. Because you could quite easily read verse 1 and 2, skip over to verse 4, continue reading and there would be very little.

Aside from the very last part of verse 3, you would literally be able to just keep reading and you wouldn't miss a beat. And so why is there that warning in verse 3?

[ 35 : 01 ] It reads, For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among, think of himself more highly than he ought to think. So it's a warning against pride.



So he has just talked about how we are to live a sacrificed life, we are to have a conformed, we are not to conform with this world and we are supposed to have a transformed mind and then right at the heels of that has a warning.

Why do you suppose that is? I spent some time thinking on that a little bit as to why he would have a warning so quickly right after those things and got to thinking about it.

If we had all these things figured out, if I had a sacrificed life that I thought I was living a perfect sacrificed life and if I also thought that I wasn't conforming to this world and if I felt that I had a transformed mind how long would it take till I would start to become prideful or that I would start to think that I might be a little bit better than some of you guys.

It generally probably doesn't take very long. It just doesn't. Pride has a way of setting in without us even really realizing it. I had a brother from church share with me Mennonite church history for somebody able to listen through that and it's very interesting and at least I thought it was very interesting and I just thought that with pride that sets in, this type of pride, when you have a church that has lots of rules and some of our history has churches with lots of rules and if you could follow all those rules generally pride has a way of setting in.

[ 36 : 44 ] one of the things that struck me about the history is there was an individual or there was a church that would excommunicate people or men or women for wearing shirts that had buttons in them.

You would get excommunicated because you were conforming to this world. They would have buttons that were made up of short little sticks and they would be kind of shaped in a round pointed end and that's because that was it wasn't as worldly.

So they would excommunicate individuals for buttons. We look back at that now and we just about smile because it has no bearing on us whatsoever.

If you were in a church with that type of setting and if you were able to follow all those rules, would that not give you a little bit of pride? pride? And that is why that is here. Once we think that we have all this figured out, pride has a tendency of setting in.

One other one is, it's more recently, is buggy spokes. It's the spokes on a buggy wagon. There are some spokes that are made out of steel and then there are those wider ones that are made out of wood.

[ 38 : 00 ] And an individual got excommunicated because he had the wider spokes. It looks way fancier so he was dealing with pride so he needed to be put out of the church.

And so it's those types of things that our church has a history of struggling with. And it is being, you know, once we think that we have all this not conforming to this world figured out, pride has a way of setting in.

It just does. So then he continues on in verse 3. He says, So do not think more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly.

So how can we think soberly? He's not talking about intoxication. It's not about being intoxicated. It is to think soberly in our life. And if we were to think soberly about ourselves, what do we come to?

Where do we come from? And where are we? And where were you before you were a child of God? You were a lost sinner. just like everybody else was. What did it take for you to get to where you are today?

[ 39 : 13 ] It took an enormous amount of grace, just like it did for everybody else. We are not better than anybody else, even though our story or our history might be a little bit different, but it's just, we are, it has taken grace for each one of us to be here.

to think soberly, we are not better than anybody else, even though my testimony might be a lot better, like let's say, you know, there's an individual who has accepted the Lord at a young age and hasn't lived a filthy life, that individual is not any better than the guy that has lived a long and filthy life and then became a child of God.

He is, it took grace on both parts. So to think soberly. And then he goes on and says, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

Now that portion fits into this next section that we're going to talk about. And so has God dealt to each one a different level of faith? Do we know the same amount of faith?

What are your thoughts on that? Like we, some people will have more faith than other people will, right? They can simply, they just do. And it is a blessing of God that they do.

[ 40 : 26 ] But why do we have this different measure of faith? And this next portion kind of deals with that. Some people have more faith. This faith that we have is to carry out the duties that we're going to be talking about here in verse 4 through 8.

I'll read the whole section and then we'll work through it. It says, for as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ and individual members of one another.

I'll stop there actually. So, now he's kind of talking about the church. He has gone from do not be conformed to this world to a warning, and now he is, say, he's going over to start to carry out or start to live out this life that he has commanded us to do or told us that we need to do.

And he starts off with using an example as the body. And we all understand that we have many different body members, different body parts, and each part does something different.

And he's saying that the church is the same way, is that a church has lots of different people in it, and these people have different giftings, and that is how the church is made up.

[ 41 : 47 ] And so then continuing on, he says, having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them, if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith.

That in proportion to our faith, you could, pardon me, you could put that behind each one of these gifts that he's talking about. And he talks about seven different ministry gifts.

So if we were to divide our body into seven different parts, how many parts would we be, would you be living out? So if you had your feet, your legs, your torso, your arms, your neck, and your head, well, that's only six.

You could maybe count the spare tire around your belly maybe as number seven. How, you know, how many parts would be? A whole lot of them, right? So as we go through this, I want to challenge you guys to see where do you fit in.

What is the ministry gift? If you are a child of God, you have been given a gift, where do you fit in? You might not have that exact one, but you're going to fit into that general area.

[ 42 : 56 ] Are you a part of prophecy or giving or leading? So as we work through that, just, you know, we have, he uses seven of them, but, you know, there are lots of giftings within those as well.

So having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them. If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith, or ministry, let us use it in our ministering.

He who teaches in teaching, he who exhorts in exhortation, he who gives with liberty, he who leads with diligence, and he who shows mercy with cheerfulness.

So those are seven different ministry gifts that he's talking about here, and he says that everybody has been given a gift. If you are a child of God, you have given a gift. So if I were to go around now and ask you guys, what gift do you have?

What is your ministry gift? And I am guessing that a whole bunch of you would be saying, well, I'm not sure exactly what my gift is. And, you know, that's okay, because we need to figure out what we are good at.

[ 44 : 04 ] Not everybody is good at. Through this one by one, we'll look at prophecy first. Well, what is prophecy? Prophecy? So if you were to look at prophecy, what do you think prophecy is?

Or what is prophesying? Prophesying today is to declare the mind of God as it is revealed in the Bible. So that is basically doing what I am doing right now, is prophesying.

To declare what it, or to reveal what is the mind of God. God. And do you have that ability? Is the only way to prophesy the way that I'm doing it right now?

There's many different ways of doing it. You could be one-on-one sitting with an individual, having coffee, and you could be prophesying. You could be telling that individual about the mind of God, teaching him.

So that prophecy, the gift of prophecy, is not only given to men that have been chosen to bring messages. The gift of prophecy is actually a much broader term.

[ 45 : 11 ] And I think each one of you should look at yourself and see, do you have that gift? Do you have the gift of being able to talk to people about the will of God, or about the mind of God?

Then he goes on, he says, in proportion to your faith, as children of God, our knowledge of him always grows, and faith. So our faith continues to grow, just as our knowledge continues to grow.

So as you are prophesying, as you might be sitting and having coffee with this individual, you might only be at a level, a very basic level. But in time, you are going to mature, and you're going to be able to speak with these individuals at a much deeper level.

And you know, sometimes when we're simply sharing the gospel, it needs to be very basic, very simple. So you don't need to have a very deep understanding. So ask yourself, do you have the gift of prophecy?

So then verse 7 and 8, he says, or ministry, let or ministry, let each of us, or ministry, let us use it in proportion, in ministering, he who teaches and teaching.

[ 46 : 27 ] So what is ministry? So ministry, we will also very quickly connect to either a pastor or a teacher of some sort.

And ministry is actually a much broader term. It is actually, culture has actually kind of, I don't know if brought that word down a little bit, but it's excluded it a lot more than it should have.

There are churches who will, instead of having an altista, or like an elder, they will call him the minister, and he is like the leader. And so ministry then kind of goes to a very limited individual, whereas ministry is actually, an individual that has the gift of ministry has a servant heart.

You are willing to serve. You might not necessarily be good at the things that you're about to do, but if you can see that there's a need somewhere, you're going to be very quickly to just go and help out.

Whether you're good at it or not is beside the point, but if you see a need, you go and you fill it. If that is what you are, then you have the gift of ministry, because when you see a need, you go and fill it.

[ 47 : 41 ] And I think there's more people in this room that have that gift than you realize, because I have seen a lot of people with that gift. Then there's teaching.

Able to explain the word of God. Who here can explain the word of God? In some form or another, I think all of us can. So we all have a gift of teaching, but some of us are going to have a specific gift that are actually really quite good at it and are going to really enjoy it.

And I'm not a gift. But, you know, it is something that I can do, but I'm not sure if I actually have that gift. I know there's people within here that have that gift.

They are very good at teaching. The next one is exhortation. He who exhorts in exhortation.

So what is exhortation? What does that mean? It is to encourage someone to keep going in a difficult time. You know, so if somebody is going through a hard time, you can build them up.

[ 48 : 48 ] Do you have the gift of exhortation? Or if you guys are doing a job that is difficult, you can spur people on to keep going, even though it's difficult. You could have coaches, you know, that would stir their team on to keep going and to push harder.

You know, that is the gift of exhortation. There are people that have a gift for that. Then also there is a gift, it says, and he who gives with liberty. Did you think that giving was a gift?

It seems so simple, doesn't it? Because aren't we commanded all to do tithing? And yet, that he who gives with liberty. There are people who have a special gift of giving.

And often, these people also have a special gift of earning. So that they have the ability to give more. It's funny how God works. I have a niece who has this gift.

Or at least she had this gift when she was a little girl. She would love to give. If we came over there, our girls would be playing with their girl, with, it's Briella. And she just, she would have like her favorite toy.

[ 50 : 00 ] And before we would leave, she would go and tell Abigail, I want you to have this toy. Even though it hurt her to give her toy up. But she wanted Abigail to have that toy because she just loved to give.

So there are people that actually love giving. Their gift is giving. And it says with liberty. So they give more than the average person would and they enjoy it.

They love to give. And I think it's for those people that don't have that gift. It's important for, I'll say us because I don't know if I have that gift or not. At least I don't think I do.

That we don't take advantage of those individuals who love giving. Then the last one, or second last one, he who leads with diligence.

Leading is a crucial element of a ministry team. It is absolutely crucial that one of the team members needs to have the gift of leading.

[ 51 : 03 ] leading. And that is why I like the idea of an eldership team leading a church better than the altista or the one, the head pastor type.

If that head pastor does not have a gift of leading, the whole church struggles all the time because it's just simply not his gift. But if you have a plurality of leaders and if at least one of them has the gift of leading, chances are things are just going to go much better because there's always somebody that has that gift of leading.

Wayne has shown that quite clearly that that is a gift that he has to lead. And that is in large part why things are going quite well here as they are. The other one is, with leading also comes diligence.

And anybody that has ever led a crew of men or anybody that is managing certain individuals, whether it is two guys or 20 or 30 guys, they will know that if you do not have patience, you will struggle with leading.

It is something that I have had the opportunity to lead individuals, to have employees, and it takes patience and it takes forgiveness. You have to learn how to forgive.

[ 52 : 17 ] If you cannot forgive, you're going to struggle very much in leading because people mess up. They make mistakes and you have to learn how to let it go. So leading with diligence comes with patience and also forgiveness.

And which is the next one, he who shows mercy with cheerfulness. So how would we, and our, so there's people that are gifted with the gift of mercy. Where would we put them in, in a church setting?

Where do you think they would fit best? Probably in counseling is what I thought. Is individuals that have the ability to have mercy with cheer, or to show mercy with cheerfulness would generally show up in the area of counseling because they can understand and they can have mercy towards those individuals and they can go alongside of them.

Whereas not everybody has the ability to show mercy when there is need to be shown mercy. Sometimes we struggle with this. So, my challenge to you, which of these ministry gifts do you fit in?

You might not have that as your main one and you might have more than one that you are actually somewhat good at. But you have each one, each child of God has been given a ministry gift.

[ 53 : 34 ] My question to you is then, is are you struggling or have you ever struggled in serving? Whether it is in the church or if you have a ministry outside the church. I have been using the example of church ministry, but there are ministries out there that are not actually connected to a church.

Have you struggled at any point in time? If you have, or if you are struggling, go back to verses 1 and 2. Get three things organized. One, are you, ask yourself, are you living a sacrifice life?

Are you living a, have you given yourself over to God? Second is, are you struggling with conforming to this world? Are you going along with certain things in this world?

If you have the gift of giving, let's say you, you've been given the gift of giving and you are struggling with conforming to this world. This world does not teach giving.

It is actually the opposite. This world teaches you to be selfish. So it would be direct contrast of what this world is teaching. So if you have been given the gift of giving and you are struggling in that area, go back to this area, to verse 2 there, and see what's forming to this world.

[ 54 : 47 ] The other one is transformed mind. Are you maybe not bought totally into the kingdom of God? If you are struggling in your ministry, maybe you haven't completely bought in.

You know, those are areas that we need to ask ourselves. I'm not going to point fingers or ask questions to anybody because I can simply look at myself and I can know that I have struggled in different areas. And often I have found that the conformed part is where I was struggling.

I was conforming with this world. I was going along with the traditions of this world. Maybe not so much in dress, but in the way of doing, in the way of business, earning monies and things like that.

So I don't want to leave us on a sour note. I want to encourage you guys. You know, it is, we struggle in our ministries. Each one of us has been given a gift.

Use it for ministry. I want to challenge us to continue to do that. If you are struggling a lot, talk to somebody or take a good look at yourself where you are at and ask yourself why you can't serve.

[ 55 : 53 ] But in closing, I would, I'd like to turn to Philippians. There are my go-to verses for encouragement. Philippians chapter 3, verses 13 and 14.

It says, So I think in times we've all struggled in our ministry.

In whatever gift you have been given, you have struggled. And maybe you have never actually used your ministry gift yet. Maybe you haven't been challenged to do that yet.

Maybe the opportunity hasn't arised yet. I want to challenge you to find out what your ministry gift is and start to use it. And if you don't know what it is, try some different things to see where you're at.

Or maybe ask individuals. Often the people around you are going to be a lot better at telling you what your gift is than what you are yourself. Let's close in prayer. Father, we come before you this morning.

[ 57 : 05 ] Just want to thank you for each one that is here. I ask that you would just help us to examine ourselves. And especially if we are struggling in serving. Whether it is we have a ministry outside of the church or whether we are serving inside the church.

I just ask that you would just help us to find where the issue is. That we would be able to resolve it. And then move forward. And that your kingdom would be glorified through that. Lord, we just want to thank you and praise you for this time that we got to spend together and look into your word.

We trust that you will continue to be with us throughout this week. And pray that we would be able to come together again next week. In Jesus' name, amen.