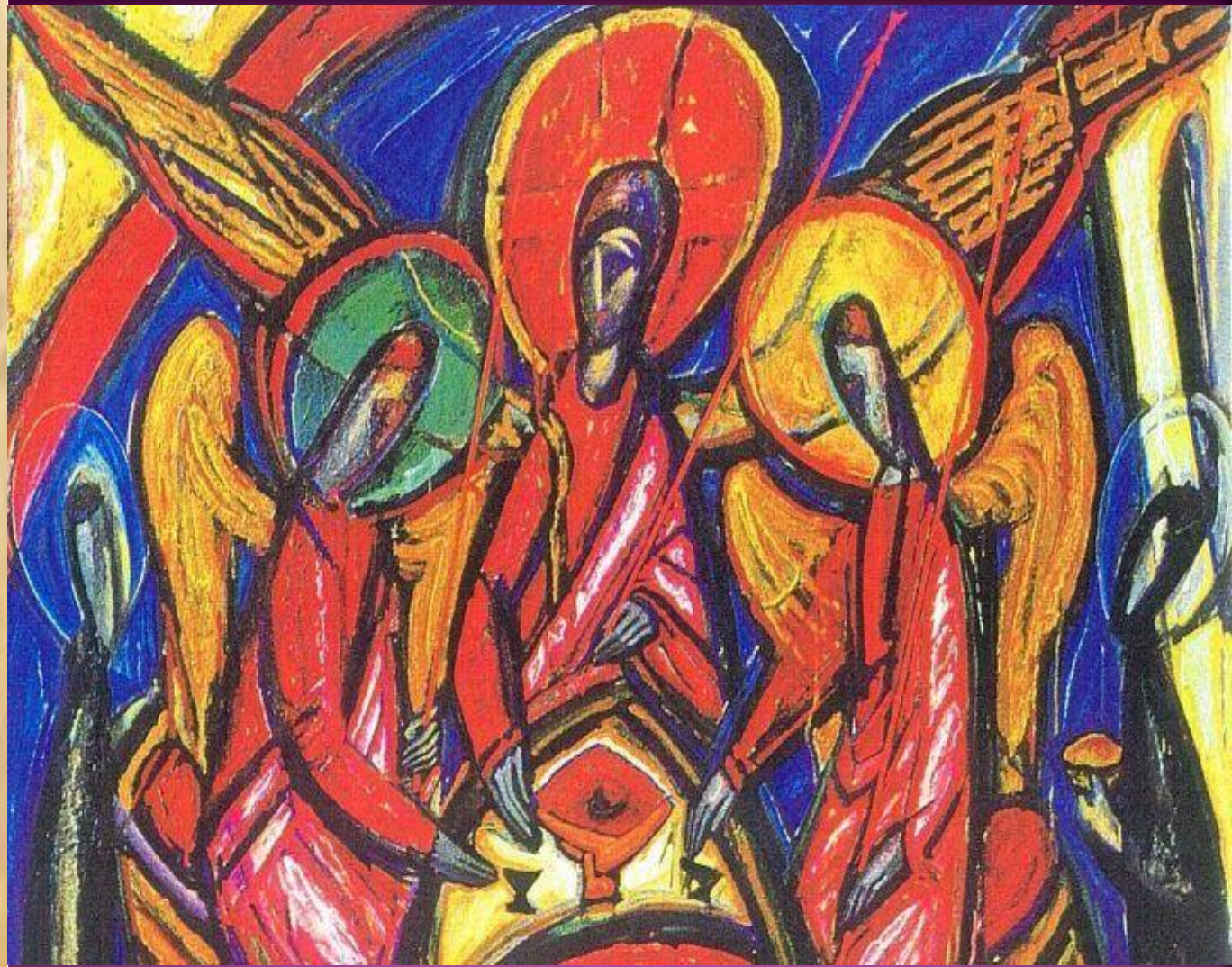


*Romans*  
*12:1-8*



*LIVING SACRIFICES*  
*SERVE CHRIST'S BODY*



# *Romans*

## *12:1-8*



Paul has thoroughly discussed the relationship of Jews and Gentiles with God; so now, he turns to the practical issues of how Jewish believers and Gentile believers relate to one another. Once again, he introduces a pattern from the Old Testament with a New Testament application: sacrifice.

At the time of the patriarchs, people offered sacrifices to thank God for His blessings or to participate in a fellowship meal with God and His people. Later sacrifices focused on “*atonement*.” They were offered to “*cover*” the sins of the people.

Introduction

# *Romans*

## **12:1-8**



Paul sets the tone in 12:1-2 for understanding our daily vocation or calling as a vital part of our worship of God. Our Christian worship is by no means confined to the time spent receiving God's gracious gifts in Divine Service, but continues as we live out these gifts in daily activities. The background for these verses is unquestionably the temple worship of Israel that enumerated the presentation of various sacrifices, especially slaughtered animals. Now that Christ has offered Himself as the once-for-all-time sacrifice, which is pleasing to God the Father, we are freed to present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him!

Introduction



# *Romans*

## **12:1-8**



Based on the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus, Romans 1–8 lays the theological foundation for Paul’s teaching about sanctification. In Romans 12:1–15:13, he illustrates in detail the sacrificial life of a person who is righteous by faith and lives in Christ and in the Spirit.

Thus, Paul’s exhortations are offered in order to help these converted pagans (Gentiles) in distinguishing their new life from their old one.

Introduction



# Romans

## 12:1



Presenting  
Bodies to  
God

*<sup>1</sup>I, therefore, urge you, brothers, through the mercies of God to present your bodies [as] a sacrifice, living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God, [which is] your reasonable worship.*

The Roman Christians would have immediately recognized “mercies” (οἰκτιρμῶν) from the Psalms, which they sang when they gathered for worship. The Psalms of the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) uses this word (from .ym3j5r1) to describe the surpassing loving-kindness and grace of God. The Roman Christians most likely followed the Jewish prayer custom of requesting God’s mercies. When they gathered for worship and Paul’s letter was read to them, they would have most certainly heard Romans 12:1 in this context. After asking God for His mercies, which serve as a foundation that follows, Paul’s letter encourages them—on the basis of God’s mercies—to sacrifice their lives to the Lord.



# Romans

## 12:1b



Presenting  
Bodies to  
God

<sup>1b</sup>...*to present* your *bodies* [as] a sacrifice, living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God...,

The content of Paul's exhortation is that the Roman Christians (and all Christians) .... Interestingly, this depiction of "*to present (presenting)*" a sacrificial offering to God using the Greek verb (παρίστημι) is unique in the NT. Another observation worth noting is the fact that Paul's use of "*bodies*" (σῶμα) does not occur in connection to sacrifice throughout the Septuagint. Thus, the technical use of "*body*" (σῶμα) for "*corpse*" is totally absent in Pauline usage; therefore, it's best for our purpose to allow Paul to complete his thought as he began in chapter 6.



# Romans

## 12:1b



Presenting  
Bodies to  
God

<sup>1b</sup>...*to present your bodies [as] a sacrifice, living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God...*

In Romans 6, Paul uses forms of the Greek verb (παρίστημι) “*present*” five times to show people presenting their “members” or “themselves” in service either to sin or to God. Here in v.1, the object isn’t “members” or “themselves” but, rather, “*your bodies.*” Romans 6 doesn’t have the same sacrificial connotation, though Paul’s use of “*present*” conveys a comparable action. Romans 6 speaks of Baptism (vv.3-4), a corporeal Sacrament in which water is applied to the body with the Word! Then the baptized are included into the bodily death and resurrection of Jesus. Your baptismal death to sin is the basis for Paul’s exhortation that you no longer live in sin (6:2), but live to God, a “*newness of Life*” that includes your bodily conduct (6:11-19).



# Romans

## 12:1b



### The Three Adjectives and Sacrifice

*<sup>1b</sup>...living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God...,*

Paul calls for the “**bodies**” of the baptized to become a “**sacrifice**” (θυσία). The manner in which he depicts sacrifice may be metaphorical, in that it does not require you to shed your blood! But this does not render the sacrifice any less real. On the contrary, it calls for an ongoing commitment “*to God!*” This is accomplished during your daily baptismal life (cf. Rom 6). Paul uses a participle and two adjectives to modify the kind of sacrificial life: “*...living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God....*”



# Romans

## 12:1b



*The Three  
Adjectives  
and  
Sacrifice*

<sup>1b</sup>...*living*, holy, [and] well-pleasing *to God*...,

First, “*living*” (ζῶσαν) is a connate in the common physical sense. Both aspects of life, however, stand as relevant and applicable to those in Christ who are being encouraged. And in both cases, the source is the freeing, resurrection-life-giving Holy Spirit (cf. 1:4; 8:2, 10-11, 23), who is “*the Lord and giver of Life*” (Nicene Creed). You are a living sacrifice, because the Holy Spirit has given you life!!

# Romans

12:1b



*The Three  
Adjectives  
and  
Sacrifice*

<sup>1b</sup>...*living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God...*

Second, “*holy*” (ἅγιος) is an adjective that carries the OT connotation of being “*set apart*,” which is the essence of the OT Hebrew word כָּדוֹשׁ (*kadosh*) found quite prominently in Isaiah 6:3. Therefore, it entails being dedicated or consecrated to the service of God. Hence, Paul’s use intends the sense of: *holy* = *pure, perfect*. Thus, “*holy*” describes a sacrifice that has been sanctified, purified, and cleansed: (ἀγαπητοῖς Θεοῦ κλητοῖς ἅγιος (1:7))!



# Romans

## 12:1b



*The Three  
Adjectives  
and  
Sacrifice*

<sup>1b</sup>...*living, holy, [and] well-pleasing to God...*,

Third, your sacrifice is “*well-pleasing*” (εὐαρεστον) to or before God; that is, actually, the Septuagint phraseology for people who live and walk by FAITH!

Comparable Hebrew expressions describe sacrifices upon which God looks with “*favor*” and which are “*pleasing*” to Him. These expressions are the positive alternatives to prophetic passages that speak of sacrifices not offered in faith that are unacceptable to or before God!

# Romans

12:1c



Reasonable  
Worship

<sup>1c</sup> “... [which is] your reasonable worship.”

This entire “*presenting*” Paul calls “*your reasonable worship*.” Both terms that Paul uses are very important to the Roman Christians and also to God’s children at SSLC!

The adjective “*reasonable*” (λογικός) is actually widely disputed, and the noun “*worship*” (λατρεία) exhibits another exceptional use! So let’s first look at the noun: “*worship*” (latreiva).



# Romans

12:1c



*Reasonable  
Worship*

<sup>1c</sup> “... [which is] your reasonable worship.”

Elsewhere in Holy Scripture, “*worship*” (λατρεία) refers to the liturgical worship God prescribed for Israel. As typical, though, in the NT, the OT language of worship is transformed; it is not restricted to corporate, liturgical worship in a specific location or on designated occasion, but characterizes the entire life of the believer on a daily basis in all of their vocations!

# Romans

## 12:1c



## Reasonable Worship

<sup>1c</sup> "... [which is] your *reasonable* worship."

Paul then modifies "worship" with the use of an adjective: "*reasonable*" (λογικός). This adjective only appears in the NT twice, here, and in 1 Pet 2:2. Why does Paul use this adjective? In essence, he is saying that the worship which is rendered is by the reason or soul ("*spiritual worship*"). Once again, Dr. Franzmann explains such worship:

"The new worship is inspired, not imposed *on* man but created *in* man, by the God who gives life to the dead."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Franzmann, *Romans*, 216 (italics his).



# Romans

## 12:1c



## Reasonable Worship

<sup>1c</sup> "... [which is] your *reasonable* worship."

Therefore, through the "mercies of God," such worship is, in fact, the only "*reasonable*," appropriate, and proper response!

And then, Dr. Franzmann eloquently elaborates the all-encompassing implications of Paul's thought in Rom 12:1b-c:

*"Since all men have bodies, all can sacrifice, all have become priests. Since men are never without their bodies, worship is constant. Since bodies are visible, all worship becomes a witness and a proclamation, a living doxology to God."* <sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Franzmann, *Romans*, 217.

# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be **conformed** to this age, but be **transformed** by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:2 adds further content to Paul's appeal from verse 1. He uses two imperatives (commands) translated as "***conformed***" and "***transformed***." Both verbs are, more or less, synonymous in Greek and the wordplay in English is effective.

Resisting conformity is not simply an outward action, since Paul openly admits that sin still is "*dwelling in me...this is, in my flesh*" (7:17-18). Furthermore, to transformation of bodies (v.1) into a living sacrifice surely shows itself in outward expressions.



# *Romans*

**12:2**



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be **conformed** to this age, but be **transformed** by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

*“Transformed”* describes the outward appearance of the Divine majesty of our incarnate Lord Jesus at His Transfiguration. In addition, God continues to use tangible, outward means of water, bread, and wine to transform us in Holy Baptism (Rom 6:1-13) and the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 10:16-21; 11:23-34)!

# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do *not* be **conformed** to this age, but be **transformed** by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Both of these imperatives are also in the present tense, and this is important! The first imperative, which Paul negates by the use of “*not*” (μὴ); with the meaning that one is bidden to cease from something already begun, or repeated, or continued. The present tense of both imperatives is best understood as expressing general precepts which convey an ongoing activity. Thus, Paul’s commands reflect an ongoing reality which calls for continual and necessary vigilance on the part of the believer.



# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do *not* be **conformed** to **this age**, but be **transformed** by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Notice that the “*not conforming*” entails an ongoing resistance to “*this age*.” This term refers to the sin-dominated, death-producing realm in which all people, included in Adam’s fall, naturally belong! Certainly, the Gospel “*now*” of our present Christian existence affirms that Christ Jesus has rescued us “*from this present evil age*” (Gal 1:4), but the “*not yet*” means that you and I still live in it and continue to struggle against sin as long as we are earthy present! However, our Lord Jesus, and Paul, does not call for us to withdraw from this world. Instead, the fact that Jesus rescues means that we have now been enabled to resist and battle against this ages evil forces.

# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this age, but **be transformed** by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

The second imperative, “*be transformed*,” has a rich background. The significant and typically Pauline move brings aspects of the age to come into our present reality (1 Cor 10:11). Thus already now we are being transformed into glory (2 Cor 3:18). The voice of this Greek verb is passive. This passive verb, therefore, is a Divine passive which means that God effects the change so that believers receive from the Lord their transformation. While the Christians’ transformation isn’t their work, but the work of the Holy Spirit, they (we), nevertheless, have a responsibility: *to let ourselves be transformed, to respond to the leading and prompting of the Holy Spirit!*



# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this age, but **be transformed by the renewing of the mind** so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Paul calls believers to “*be transformed by the renewing of the mind.*” In light of the use of “*newness, renewal*” in the Baptismal context of Rom 6:4, Paul surely means for us to hear a connection with Baptism and to view a renewed mind as one of its results. Paul asserts that our Baptismal union with our Lord results in a striking change of reality!

- + First, we are joined to Christ death and burial through Baptism, which accomplishes our death and burial to sin; and,
- + Second, as a result of our Lord’s resurrection, our Baptism means that “*we also might walk in newness of life*” (6:4b). Paul’s use of the same noun as in 12:2, “*renewing,*” in Titus 3:5 is in direct relation to the Holy Spirit’s work in Holy Baptism confirms the connection to baptismal renewal!

# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by **the renewing of the mind** so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

Paul continues by asserting that “*the renewing of the mind*” serves to and results in the ability of the Christian to “discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.” The presence of a “renewed mind” which discerns God’s will contrast sharply with the unbeliever’s “undiscerning mind” in 1:28. The “renewed mind” of the Christian discerns God’s will in the Law and consistently desire to carry it out. The agreement with and even delighting in the excellent Law of God in 7:16 and 22 stems from the renewed mind of a believer, whose will is now aligned with the will of God. This vocabulary affirms that Paul surely depicts his experience as a believer as seen in 7:14-25.



# Romans

## 12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.

As Paul did in verse 1, he proceeds with three adjectives that define the “*will of God*.” The first is “good” (ἀγαθός), connecting God’s will with the commands of His Law. Again, in 7:13, Paul describes the Law as “*good*” (he uses the same Greek adjective); prior to this use, in v.12, Paul says of the commandment as being “*holy and righteous and good*.” All these adjectives connect the Law with the will of God, which Christians are to “*discern*.”

# Romans

12:2



*Transformed  
and  
Renewed*

<sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind so that you may test and discern what [is] the good, **well-pleasing**, and **perfect** will of God.

The second adjective indicates that God's will, articulated in His Law, expresses that which is "**well-pleasing**" to Him.

The third and final adjective is "**perfect**." The "**perfect**" will of God provides a reflection of who He is so that those whom He transforms and renews may discern and then follow His perfect will.



# Romans

## 12:3a



Grace-based  
Admonition

<sup>3</sup>For through the grace which was given to me, I say to everyone who is among you not to elevate your mind high, beyond what is fitting to set you mind on, but to set your mind toward what is a **proper mindset**,

Paul then addresses ones ***“proper mindset”*** (σωφρονεῖν). This Greek verb, and the vocabulary that is associated with it, actually encompasses one’s worldview, not just one’s thinking. Paul is addressing believing Christians who have been baptized into Christ Jesus and who have the Holy Spirit. Therefore, while they have a “renewed mind and proper mindset,” they must not continually guard against lapsing into negative attitudes and set their minds “high, above” nor “beyond” what is appropriate for one who has CHRIST in (Christian)!

# Romans

## 12:3b



*The Measure  
of Faith*

**3b ... as God apportioned to each one a measure of faith.”**

This is how Paul identifies the “*proper mindset.*” Each one has been shown grace from God due to His mercy, with many different gifts (vv.6-8). It is that faith which believers have in common that Paul is highlighting as the standard against which each Christian is to estimate himself.



# *Romans*

## *12:4-5*



*One Body –  
Many  
Members*

<sup>4</sup>For just as in one body we have many members, but all members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup>thus, we, the many, are one body in Christ, and, [as] the [body], each one members of one another,

St. Paul now develops the body as a metaphor for the Christian community. He has done this fully in 1 Cor 12:12-27 (cf. Eph 4:4, 12-16). In Corinth, Paul proceeds to apply its result in order to remedy their fractured congregations. As you may recall, their divisions resulted from an overemphasis on flamboyant spiritual gifts.

However, Paul doesn't address these flamboyant gifts (cf. 1 Cor 12:28) in vv.6-8; rather, he moves quickly to address seven gift that seem to be rather more "mundane," since they speak of serving and speaking...Paul doesn't even mention the Holy Spirit! It seems that the divisive views of gifts which afflicted Corinth were not present in Rome.

# Romans

## 12:4-5



*One Body –  
Many  
Members*

<sup>5</sup>thus, we, the many, are **one body** in Christ, and, [as] the [body], each one members of one another,

In v.5, the “*one body*” does not merely provide an analogy; it is actually what we are in Christ Jesus: “*one body in Christ.*” The “*one body*” includes all those who “*were baptized into Christ Jesus*” (6:3). It is explicitly stated in 1 Cor 12:13 that this corporate belonging results from and resides in the incorporating action, the Divine work of God’s Spirit, in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Paul uses this imagery not to paint a picture of the universal (catholic) church; but rather, to describe the cohesion and interaction among a local congregation. Therefore, we see that Paul’s view of all believers in any given area as being of one body in Christ Jesus, though they all do not gather under one roof or in a particular house church (which Paul addresses in chapter 16).



# *Romans*

## *12:6-8*



### *Seven Gracious Gifts*

<sup>6</sup>and having different gifts in accordance with the grace which was given us, whether prophecy, according to the analogy of faith, <sup>7</sup>whether serving in the service, whether the one who teaches in the teaching, <sup>8</sup>whether the one who encourages in the encouragement, the one who gives in generosity, the one who stands before with eagerness, the one who shows mercy with cheerfulness.

There is the mistaken view that v.6 begins a new sentence and many translations do break up this very long sentence (that began in v.4). However, this breaks the flow of what Paul is saying and can actually change Paul's meaning. It's best to let the flow of this very long sentence surge to its conclusion (end of verse 8)! In this way, Paul's more immediate emphasis remains upon the One who gives the gifts: our Lord God, who apportions each gift to those who are one body in Christ Jesus!

# *Romans*

## *12:6-8*



## *Seven Gracious Gifts*

<sup>6</sup>and having different gifts in accordance with the **grace** which was given us, whether prophecy, according to the analogy of faith, <sup>7</sup>whether serving in the service, whether the one who teaches in the teaching, <sup>8</sup>whether the one who encourages in the encouragement, the one who gives in generosity, the one who stands before with eagerness, the one who shows mercy with cheerfulness.

Such a long sentence is not uncommon with Paul. He does this in order to maintain continuity in relation to God's grace and that all gifts are given by God's grace! As God's grace is given to us in Christ, so our Lord calls His people to freely give in response. Therefore, gift (χάρισμα) is the reality of **grace** (χάρις), which is a visible expression in the actual being and doing of members of the one body in Christ!



# Romans

## 12:6b-8



### The Gifts: Form and Content

<sup>6b</sup>... whether prophecy, according to the analogy of faith, <sup>7</sup>whether serving in the service, whether **the one who** teaches in the teaching, <sup>8</sup>whether **the one who** encourages in the encouragement, **the one who** gives in generosity, **the one who** stands before with eagerness, **the one who** shows mercy with cheerfulness.

Paul lists seven gifts of Grace! Each one are intriguing in both form and content. In form, let's note the following:

- + Each, besides the first (prophecy), is defined by a prepositional phrase “with” or “in” (ἐν) that expresses the manner in which the gift is to be used;
- + The second, third, and fourth gifts (serving, teaches, encourages) are cognate nouns that restate the activity;
- + The first two gifts (prophecy and serving) are presented as nouns that denote the activity; and,
- + The last five identify the gift with a nominative participle which is substantive: “**the one who....**”

# *Romans*

## *12:6b-8*



### *The Gifts: Form and Content*

<sup>6b</sup>... whether prophecy, according to the analogy of faith, <sup>7</sup>whether serving in the service, whether the one who teaches in the teaching, <sup>8</sup>whether the one who encourages in the encouragement, the one who gives in generosity, the one who stands before with eagerness, the one who shows mercy with cheerfulness.

In way of content, Paul's other letters reveal that this list in Romans 12 is not exhaustive. The general nature of these gifts stands out as the most overriding characteristic of the seven. Along with the absence of more "supernatural" gifts previously noted. Lastly, the final four (v.8) gifts, do not appear as spiritual gifts elsewhere.



# *Romans*

## *12:1-8*



## *Conclusion*

God's grace gathers people together in faith and into one body in Christ Jesus. Paul then lists some of the most basic, general, and essential gifts exercised by the one body of Christ! His order integrates gifts which highlight speaking with those that focus on acts of serving. This does not mean that the sequence lacks any discernible order or structure. Rather, Paul's point may well be that while speaking in faith and acts of love can be properly distinguished; they cannot be separated from one another. Otherwise, the parts of the one body in Christ Jesus cease to function properly.

*Romans*  
*12:9-21*



*NEXT*  
*SUNDAY*

*Authentic*

*Love*





PEACE  
IN CHRIST  
JESUS



AND BEGIN TO  
PONDER OUR  
NEXT STUDY!