

Series: Romans
Title: God's Will for Us
Text: Romans 12: 2-8
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Subject: God's Will for Us

In Romans 12: 2, Paul wrote of *"proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* Then he tells us two things that God's will for you and me who he has sanctified.

Divisions: 1) First, thing is humility. It is God's will that his child have humble spirit—**Romans 12: 3: For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.**

2) Second, is that we love one another. It is the will of God that each child use the offices and gifts Christ gives us to minister to our brethren in love—**Romans 12: 4: For as we have many members in one body [in our physical body], and all members have not the same office: 5: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us [let us use those gifts for one another's good according to the proportion of faith]**

Proposition: It is God's will that each of his saints have a spirit of humility and use God's gifts to serve one another in love.

HUMILITY

Romans 12: 3: For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

It is God's will that his child is not puffed up in pride but that we have a spirit of humility.

Paul begins this instruction very wisely—*"I say, through the grace given unto me."* He is speaking of being an apostle and of the gifts Christ gave him.

Paul held the highest office in the church. He had the most authority, right under Christ. Paul was an apostle called and sent by Christ in person. He had authority in all the churches to preach the word, to administer ordinances, to advise, counsel, direct, reprove, and censure.

Not only this, Paul possessed the greatest gifts in greatest measure. He had gifts only the apostles had. The gifts Paul had were gifts that only the apostles could pass on by the laying on of hands. When the apostles died out so did those gifts because no one else could pass on these gifts. Paul had the gift to heal, to speak in foreign languages, to discern spirits, to work miracles and many more.

Furthermore, under direct inspiration of God, Paul wrote $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the new testament. He was given great light. Paul said that he was called up to the third heaven and saw things not lawful for him to speak

But he said of his office and gifts and knowledge that it was all *"grace given unto me."* Paul knew he had no reason to think highly of himself. He knew he had no reason to look down on his brethren. *In himself, Paul knew he was nothing but a sinner. He said, "By the grace of God I am what I am."* What was he? By the grace of God, he knew and confessed that he was the chief of sinners. He was justified by the grace of God, made righteous by the grace of God. Paul knew he was only a sinner saved by grace. And when it came to his service, he said, *"and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor 15: 10)* Everything Paul had was *"grace given"* according to the measure Christ was pleased to give.

The same is true of every one of God's saints—you and I included. So Paul writes this to every believer—*"every man that is among you."* Every believer needs to hear this faithful instruction. None of us are exempt from pride. Someone said that for every one person in religion who fell away by poverty that saw ten falls away because of prosperity.

It is God's will for his child, *"not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think."* God says, *"It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory" (Pro 25:27).* He gives strength to those who have no strength. But to those who exalt themselves, *"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Ob 1:4).* Christ said, *"Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt 23:12).*

Let's hear God speak. God hates *"a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."* But above all, that which produces all these others, God hates, *"A proud look" (Pro 16: 17-19).*

Pride was the first sin. When devil heard God's purpose was to choose a people by grace and save them in and by his Son, that Christ might be the firstborn among many brethren; when he heard that God's Son would be *before all things, and by him all things consist*, that he would be *the head of the body, the church: the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence*; when the devil heard that *it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*, pride made the devil think more highly of himself than he ought and he became Christ's murderer from the beginning. Pride made him abide not in the truth. Pride made him reject Christ and worship his own will and works.

Isaiah 14: 12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13: For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15: Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Brethren, God hates pride because it makes sinners do what the devil did. It makes sinners murder Christ in their hearts and worship their own will and works. The first way the devil attacks a new preacher is to lift him up in pride. That is why Paul told Timothy, "*Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil*" (1 Ti 3: 6).

Therefore, it is God's will that we think "*soberly, [sober minded] according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith*" (Rom 12: 3). A drunk man thinks he is 10 ft tall and bullet proof. Likewise, pride makes us drunk. Be sober-minded. God keeps his child humble by reminding us that in ourselves we are nothing but sin. Everything we have is the gift of God's grace according as Christ Jesus our God hath dealt to every one of us the measure of faith.

As Paul told the Ephesians, "*Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*" (Eph 4: 7). He is not talking about the gift of salvation. Christ gives us righteousness in abundance. Christ is our holiness in abundance; he makes us meet to be partakers with the saints in light. Christ redeemed us in abundance. He is speaking of offices and gifts of the Spirit. We have knowledge of the gospel only because Christ gave us *the Spirit of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*. But he does not give us all the same measure of faith or knowledge. He does not make us know the Gospel as we will in glory, only in very little a measure.

Every virtue in our new man is the free gift of Christ Jesus our God and Savior in measure

2 Peter 1: 3: According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5: And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith [all these graces are gifts of Christ given in measure by the Spirit] virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We are to give diligence by hearing the gospel, studying the word, asking God to grow us in grace and knowledge of Christ. But Christ said, "*Without me ye can do nothing.*" We only grow in these virtues by God's grace, by the Spirit making us to grow.

Also, Christ gives us *the offices and gifts* he lists in our text. These are the gifts that remain in the church today.

- **Romans 12: 6: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith**—Christ gives some the ability to preach the gospel of Christ. Let us preach with the proportion of conviction of the truth he gives with the faith he gives. Never preach something you don't know or believe
- **Romans 12: 7: Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering**—he gifts us to serve our brethren in various way; let us not be puffed up about our gift; but let us wait on our ministering, serving in the way Christ has gifted us to serve; knowing it is a gift of God's grace.
- **Romans 12: 7: or he that teacheth, on teaching**—we are all teachers in some measure but Christ gives some brethren an extra measure to be able to teach. If so then let them teach as one who is nothing in themselves but who knows their gift is all of grace.
- **Romans 12: 8: Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation**—Christ gives some the gift to privately instruct your brethren: to beseech, encourage, comfort. Then let him exhort in the proportion of faith. But let him not think more of himself than he ought.
- **Romans 12: 8: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity**—we all are gifted to give. But some are gifted with more cheerful hearts to be abundant givers. Let him not sound a trumpet, thinking more highly of himself than he ought, but let him do it with simplicity—with singleness of heart for Christ, while not drawing attention to himself.
- **Romans 12: 8: he that ruleth, with diligence**—Christ gifts us all to rule in some capacity in our home or in our workplace. But others Christ gifts to have a talent to manage men in the church when special projects come up. Let them do it with diligence in humility.
- **Romans 12: 8: he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness**—Christ gifts us all to show mercy to some measure. But Christ gifts others in greater measure to be able to show mercy to brethren overtaken in a fault, to pity the afflicted, with cheerfulness.

The surest way to lift us in pride is to promote us. But Paul says every promotion is from Christ. So don't think too highly of self, think soberly. Use Christ's promotion in the faith he gives, with simplicity, with diligence, and with cheerfulness.

LOVE

Romans 12: 4: For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5: So we, *being many*, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us [let us minister to one another] according to the proportion of faith...

It is God's will that we love our brethren by using the office and gifts Christ gives to minister to one another.

In our physical body we have many members. We used to sing to the kids, "Head, shoulder, knees and toes." In our physical body we have many members and our bodily members carry out many different offices. But they all make up one body and each member with its different office is needed for the good of our entire physical body. So the body of Christ is like our physical body, "*We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another.*"

Brethren, this is amazing grace, "*we, being many, are one body in Christ.*" Christ is our Head and we the body and each are members one of another. This is a great mystery but we are member one of another in Christ! "*For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*" (Eph 5:30).

But, like our bodily members, Christ has given each member gifts for the purpose of ministering to the good of the whole body in love. That is the will of God for you and me saved by his grace. Each member with each gift in measure is necessary for the good of the other members of the body.

1 Corinthians 12: 15: If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16: And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17: If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling? 18: But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19: And if they were all one member, where *were* the body? 20: But now *are they* many members, yet but one body. 21: And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22: Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23: And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable

In our physical body we have organs like kidneys or the liver which are less comely than our face and body. But when the kidneys start to fail or the liver, we find out how needful they are.

1 Corinthians 12: 24...upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness. 24: For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked: 25: That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. 26: And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

If I have a toothache, my whole body suffers; if that toothache goes away, my whole body feels good. It is the same in Christ's body.

1 Corinthians 12: 27: Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28: And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29: *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles? 30: Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? 31: But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. 13: 1: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2: And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3: And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4: Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5: Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7: Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8: Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9: For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11: When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12: For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13: And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

1 Corinthians 14: 12: Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church...26: Let all things be done unto edifying.

All the offices and gifts of God are given us so we can minister in love to our brethren with whom we are one in Christ's body. My brother's edification is my own edification because we are one body.

So, brethren, let us seek Christ above at all times that we might be renewed in our minds that we might know God's will and prove it at all times. For it is God's will that his child be humble and not go around thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought. Let us be sober-minded. For it is God's will that we use his gifts of grace to serve our brethren in love.

Amen!