

Unity in Diversity 2022-08-28

Romans 12:5

so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Romans chapters 1-11 are practical theology and chapters 12-15 are practical application based on good theology.

- All Christians are one body, each with diverse God-given gifts to benefit the whole body.
 - Unity in diversity is only possible because “in Jesus Christ” & Holy Spirit empowers.

Must humbly recognize/embrace concept of one body in Jesus Christ. Romans 12:3-5, 1 Corinthians 12:17-22

- body illustration is complementary relationship of unity and diversity of the church.
 - part of one body (unity) but do not share same functions (diversity).
 - unity does not mean sameness (personality, gifts), interchangeability.

Individually members of one body...*interdependent* not independent.

- Fight the tendency to disconnect from body....attend, listen, leave.
 - body illustration implies God does not called us to isolation but relationship with one another
 - Benefits of loving relationships outweigh risks of hurt.

Requires humility see we need each other to grow/stand strong.

- Need help from others in our areas of weakness. Elders
 - “one another’s” in New Testament outside gospels, 58 times “one another.”

without interdependency, the body is dysfunctional because no one member possesses all that is needed for body/church to function properly. Romans 12:6a, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

- God-given faith transforms natural abilities into spiritual gifts that produce supernatural joy/fruitfulness for others, especially in the Body.
 - Spiritual gifts transmit God’s grace through human means to others for strengthening faith, hope, love, healing, guidance, etc.
 - charisma [gift] manifestation in word/action of charis [grace].

Seven gifts representative but not exhaustive.....Paul urging us to exercise ones we have faithfully, generously, cheerfully....only address prophecy. Romans 12:6b-7

- Prophecy: foretell future or forth-tell God's messages with wisdom/insight.
 - LEFC: “sign” gifts not ceased but not inspired same as Scripture, not inerrant, must be evaluated by hearer.

I am persuaded that the gift of prophecy is valid for today and is not equal with Scripture in authority but is valuable as a Spirit-guided expression of something

we otherwise would not know or say, which is powerful for that particular moment and brings conviction or exhort or consolation for the awakening or upbuilding of faith. It should not spook us as something uncontrollable, but should be treated as any claim to insight. It is fallible. It may prove true and it may not because the human channel is sinful and fallible and finite. - John Piper

Every Christian has at least one unmerited spiritual gift. 1 Corinthian 12:4-7, 11-13a,

- Do not boast in your gifts, envy others gifts. cooperate not compete with one another
- whatever God-given gifts entrusted to you belong to the body....do not bury/squander
 - Spirit gifts are God's means for sustaining His body/church.
 - When not faithfully using gifts, the body suffers.

Discover gifts: serve in different ministries, area that you complain about. i.e. teachers

- Not like spiritual gift inventories. boxes in and use as excuse. "Not my gift."

Almost all spirit gifts corresponding commands for all Christians. Exhort, teach, evangelize

- See a need, fill a need.....no matter your spirit gifts. Sunday School, tech, etc.

In Jesus Christ, one body, each with diverse God-given gifts for benefit the whole body.

- Members of one another with differing gifts given by God to use for His glory, edification of saints and building up body.
 - Unity in diversity.....only possible because "in Jesus Christ" and the Holy Spirit empowers.

One Anothers

"Members of One Another" Romans 12:5

"Devoted to One Another" Romans 12:10

"Honor One Another" Romans 12:10

"Be of the Same Mind with One Another" Romans 15:5

"Accept One Another" Romans 15:7

"Admonish One Another" Romans 15:14

"Greet One Another" Romans 16:3-6, 16

"Serve One Another" Galatians 5:13

"Bear One Another's Burdens" Galatians 6:2

"Bearing with One Another" Ephesians 4:2

"Submit to One Another" Ephesians 5:21

"Encourage One Another" 1 Thessalonians 5:11