



HEBRON

Sunday, January 27, 2019

Dr. Landon Dowden

## THE GOSPEL CHANGES HOW WE VIEW OURSELVES AND THE CHURCH

Romans 12:3-8

Passage in a Sentence: By God's mercies, the gospel changes how we view ourselves and other believers, which leads to our joyful use of our spiritual gifts for each other's good and for God's glory.

- I. THE GOSPEL CHANGES HOW WE VIEW OURSELVES (Rom. 12:3)
  - a. Two important initial notes:
    - i. What Paul says is because of God's grace given to Him. This passage is a word of grace about God's gifts of grace.
    - ii. This is a word for ALL OF US – written to EVERYONE.
  - b. Whether we struggle with over thinking or under thinking (conceited or low self-esteem) the root issue is the same:
    - i. We keep finding our identity in ourselves rather than Christ.
    - ii. Or to say it another way – We think improperly about ourselves because we think mainly about ourselves rather than Christ.
  - c. Warnings against pride (Prov. 16:18; 29:23; 8:13; Ps. 31:23; Rom. 12:3, 16; Gal. 6:3)
    - i. Pride contributes to relationships diminishing but humility is a solid foundation for friendships to flourish.
  - d. Dangers of thinking too highly of ourselves:
    - i. Arrogance
    - ii. Independence (Prov. 18:1)
  - e. Two resources for right thinking – How can I think with sober thinking?
    - i. Think on God (Rom. 11:20; Ps. 115:3)
    - ii. Think on faith
      1. Our faith is in Christ
      2. Our faith is from God (Phil. 2:13; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Cor. 4:7)



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- II. THE GOSPEL CHANGES HOW WE VIEW THE CHURCH (Rom. 12:4-8)
- a. In Christ, we are united to other believers.
    - i. Osborne: As sinners, we are naturally divisive; so it is only through the presence and work of Christ that we can remain together.
    - ii. As many members of one body and members one of another we are to:
      - 1. Be devoted to one another (Rom. 12:10)
      - 2. Honor one another (Rom. 12:10)
      - 3. Be of the same mind with one another (Rom. 15:5)
      - 4. Accept one another (Rom. 15:7)
      - 5. Admonish one another (Rom. 15:14)
      - 6. Serve one another (Gal. 5:13)
      - 7. Restore one another after sin (Gal. 6:1)
      - 8. Bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2)
      - 9. Bear with one another (Eph. 4:2)
      - 10. Submit to one another (Eph. 5:21)
      - 11. Encourage one another (1 Thess. 5:11)
  - b. In Christ, our unity does not mean uniformity, but rather God's design in His diverse distribution of spiritual gifts is for our dependence on Him as well as each other.
    - i. What is a spiritual gift?
      - 1. Grudem: *"A spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church."*
    - ii. Why is it important that we have identified and are using our spiritual gift(s)?
      - 1. Knowing our gift(s) helps us make the most use of our time and resources for the sake of the Kingdom.
    - iii. Considering Spiritual Gifts:
      - 1. God graciously gives us our spiritual gifts.
      - 2. There is no such thing as a "one-person church" and no person has every spiritual gift.
      - 3. Gifts are given for the common good (Rom. 12:7)
      - 4. Gifts are for using, not just having, and they should be strengthened.
      - 5. Gifts are best identified through use and not just a spiritual gift inventory.



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- iv. Using our gift(s) will
  - 1. Help us fulfill the Great Commission.
  - 2. Help build our faith family up in love (Eph. 4:16).
- c. Some final considerations on being members one of another
  - i. We have responsibilities to one another:
    - 1. Spur one another on (Heb. 10:24-25)
    - 2. Remind each other of sin's deceitfulness (Heb. 3:13)
  - ii. Being one body is not just about what I can get, but what I can give.
  - iii. Maximizing being individuals but members of one another:
    - 1. Happens best in small groups and not just Sunday morning attendance.
    - 2. Happens best when you commit to a group and not just hop church to church based on preferences.
    - 3. Happens best as we use our gifts in each other's lives.