SNS 02245-461 12/15/2002
CHARISMA Decatur, IL

INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Romans 12:3-8**.
B. The word *charisma* means to have charm, personality, or appeal. In the NT it also means to be gifted. A charismatic people are a people who have gifts.
C. Today, the connotation of the word *charismatic* is given to those who believe in the modern day use of miraculous gifts. While that is another lesson, I sustain that Xians are charismatic today in a non-miraculous way.
D. We must know how what our gifts are and how to use them so that the body will grow.

I. **WE HAVE CHARISMA (GIFTS).**

A. Scripture text: Rom. 12:3-6a.
For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. **4** For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, **5** so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. **6** And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us,
B. First of all we must realize that a gift is just that, a gift! A gift is not education, or training, or experience--these things are earned.
C. I believe that person who comes into the body of X comes in with God-given abilities, and then is given a spiritual gift (see Mt. 25:15).
D. We also have the God-given authorization to use these gifts (see Mk. 13:34).
E. I want to look at Rom. 12:3-6a in reverse order:
[12:6] While we may not know what our gift or gifts are we can be assured that we have them.
[12:4-5] The gifts will be different, but that is a good thing! See 1Cor. 12:14-27.
[12:3] We are to be humble (sober) in the acceptance of our gift(s). It comes from God and we are to use it according to the measure of faith (maturity + knowledge, ability) that we have. By increasing in learning and experience you increase your ability to use the gift that God gives you.

II. **THE SEVEN FUNCTIONS OF GIFTS.**

A. Scripture text: Rom. 12:6-8.
And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *let each exercise them accordingly:* if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; **7** if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; **8** or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
B. The apostle Paul lists gifts of a miraculous nature in 1Cor. 12, and I believe that the list here in Rom. 12 is of spiritual gifts of a non-miraculous nature. I want to look at this text as a list of categories rather than specifics.
C. There are seven different categories of gifts to be used in the church:
1. Prophecy …to be able to preach the word publicly and privately to win lost souls.
2. Serving …manual labor to carry out various tasks.
3. Teaching …giving instruction for training.
4. Exhortation …to give comfort (lit., to come along side).
5. Giving …meeting specific needs of others (spiritual, emotional, physical).
6. Leadership …to plan and organize with diligence.
7. Mercy …to cheer the downtrodden and outcast (to work with the unfortunate).
D. Everyone can find one or more of these areas to work in.

III. **THERE IS MUCH WORK TO BE DONE.**

A. The church needs its members to use their gifts!

B. Six reasons why:

1. The body is to build itself up (Eph. 4:16).
   from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.
2. God wants to work through you (Phil. 2:13; 1:6).
   (Phil 2:13) …for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.
   (Phil 1:6) *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.
3. We are to fulfill (not leave undone) our ministry to the Lord (Col. 4:17).
   And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."
4. We are not to neglect our gift (1Tim. 4:14).
   Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery.
5. We are to grow in the use of our gift (2Tim. 1:6).
   And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
6. We are to use our gift to serve others (1Pet. 4:10).
   As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

C. All of the above characterize the essence of being faithful (Mt. 25:21,23).

D. Did you ever stop to realize that 99% of the gifts we have are used outside the worship service! A few of the men lead in the worship service and the rest of us do in participation. Yet very, very little of our gifts are used during this time. It's Monday through Saturday that we get busy in our gift utilization as we minister to others!

IV. **FINDING YOUR GIFT(S).**

A. First, in finding our gift(s) we must remember that it must be something **discovered**. It can't be assigned by someone else. You discover your own gift.

B. Let me suggest 10 things to think about in finding your gift:

1. Your gift must be something **is of your natural ability**.
2. Your gift must be something **that is authorized by God**.
3. Your gift must be something **of sober self-evaluation**.
4. Your gift must be something **not of education or experience**.
5. Your gift must be something **that is of use right now**.
6. Your gift must be something **that can be used in cooperation with others**.
7. Your gift must be something **that you are willing to volunteer** (time and/or money are not factors).
8. Your gift must be something **that you can use at every opportunity**.
9. Your gift must be something **you can do for the good of the congregation** making them better equipped for the work of serving.
10. Your gift must be something **that can be integrated into the body**.

C. As many of you already know, I have what I call a "gifts test" that you can take and grade by yourself. This test is structured along the things we just spoke about and will have you 3-6 areas that may indicate where your gift(s) lie and how you are to serve the body of X. If you want one of these write your name on a piece of paper and give it to me.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. Everyone brings ability into the body of X when they become a Xian. I believe each one is then given a gift to be specially used in ministry.
B. Knowing your gift(s) and using them is absolutely essential in being faithful with what God has entrusted us to do as stewards.
C. Who is ready to use their gift? Who needs to repent of not using their gift?
D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.