

FBC - 1/30/85

WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICE

Sun. ~~Wed.~~ Evening
From Tape/mc

THE BODY - THE PLACE OF THE GIFTS IN THE BODY

1 Cor. 12: 8-31

Open your Bibles to 1 Cor. 12. I want us to complete this book readily and I'm going to cover fairly rapidly and then we will be in Psalms. We want to study through Psalms. In 1 Cor. 12, Paul is dealing with the Body, the church, and the place of the gifts in that Body. We looked at the first seven verses last time, concluding on V. 7, which says that each person has been given a gift. A gift of the H. S. This, of course, is very important - you young people - each of you have been given gifts. It's not a matter of age, not a matter of maturity - every born again person has gifts.

But every person does not have all the gifts. They are distributed by the Sovereign Lord, according to His own wisdom. We don't choose them, we don't see them, they are given to us at the time of the New Birth. So, having stated in V. 7, that to each ONE a gift is given; in V. 8, 9 & 10, Paul points out the individuality of the gift. For instance, in V. 8, he says 'for to one is given by the Spirit (that is by the Holy Spirit) the Word (or the utterance) of wisdom. This gift is exercised through speaking. If you were to translate it, it would say 'the utterance (or the speaking) of the Word of Wisdom and a related gift - the utterance (or the speaking) of the Word of Knowledge by the same H. S.

These are very important gifts he's mentioning there in V. 8. The Word of Knowledge is that God-given ability to understand the Truth, to understand, say the teaching of the Scrip. The Word of Wisdom is the ability to apply that Truth to our lives. Now these gifts are manifested and expressed in various ways. Sometimes a S. S. teacher will have these gifts, a pastor, an exhorter but these gifts are very important in the church. Sometimes these gifts are exercised in prayer meeting. But notice he says 'to one is given the utterance of the Word of Wisdom and to another the utterance of the Word of Knowledge, by the same H. S.'

V. 9 - he says 'to another faith by the same H. S.' Now faith is a gift of the Spirit and yet, every person who's ever been saved, has faith. But there is a special ability that is bestowed on some people to have an extra-ordinary faith; to believe God for extra-ordinary things. There are a few people - I don't think too many; I think we have some in our congregation - who

see the greatness of God rather than the greatness of the problem. And they're able to believe in the miraculous and they're able to believe that God can accomplish the impossible. That is a great gift. And then it says

'to another the gifts of 'healings' really. It's in the plural. 'By the same Spirit,' which would indicate that there are various kinds of healings needed. This certainly is a gift. Maybe an emotional healing as well as physical healing. When we call for the elders to anoint with oil and to pray over this sick, nowhere does the Bible say those elders have to have this gift. But there IS a gift that's given to individuals whereby through prayer and their own ministry, there can be a healing. And it's mentioned there in V. 9.

V. 10 (read) 'to another the working of miracles (or the working of powers. It's the word 'powers' in Greek) and that would not be the gifts of healing because it's listed there as a distinct gift other or in addition to the gifts of healing. You'd ask 'well, what would be an example of that?' I think exorcism would be or the God-given ability to say - to dispel demons, from someone. I think this is a needed gift in the church today. As needed probably as healing. 'To another prophesy' (the forth-telling of the Word of God, or inspired preaching)

To another discerning or ~~distinguishing between the~~ distinguishing of spirits. The ability to distinguish between false spirit and true spirit. And to another divers - divers is a italized but the teaching is to another. Various kinds of tongues and there are any number or kind of tongues. We know from the N. T. that the Pentecostal tongue was a known language. Matter of fact, 17 of them (we were studying it in our Staff Meeting Monday) but then the Corinthian tongue is a different tongue. This was a gift and then the 'to another, the interpretation' or the translation of the tongues spoken. When we get to Chap. 14, we'll have an entire chapter on ~~this~~ this and we'll say more about it when we get there.

Now here are nine gifts. At the end of this chapter, beginning in V. 28, we have a listing of additional gifts. In Rom. 12: 6 through 8, Paul lists seven gifts and in Eph. 4: 12 Paul lists five gifts and in 1 Cor. 7: 7 he lists a gift. Paul is the one who talks about the gifts.

It does seem the apostle Peter mentions the gift of hospitality in 1 Pet. 4: 9. So V. 8, 9 and 10 is not an exhaustive list of the gifts. For instance, you look at these nine Spiritual gifts. And what is a gift or can anyone think, immediately, of a gift that would be missing here, that's very, very vital to the life of the church? Well, Evangelism is not even listed here. O.K., what's another? What? Speak up, I can't hear you. What's some other gifts that's not listed in these nine? Just anybody. Giving is not mentioned. Where is giving mentioned? It's in Rom. 12 and that's a very important gift in the church.

What's another gift that's not mentioned here? What? That's not a gift; that's a grace. We're talking about ministering ability. Anybody. Mercy. Teaching. Helps. O.K. leadership, So there are many other gifts that's not listed here that's very vital to the life of the body. Now it says 'to one is given one gift; to another, another gift. Now we need to be careful here. We dare not teach legalism. For instance, suppose you don't have the gift of teaching. But your church needs you to teach and you can teach, Does that mean that you should not teach? Not at all.

The greatest error we could ever make is say 'well, I don't have the gift of Evangelism, so I shouldn't be in Evangelism Explosion' or I shouldn't witness'. Never! EVERY Xtn is to witness. And to win people and we're not to have rigid rules and put ourselves in little categories to keep us from serving. While there's a dominant gift that is given to us, the H. S. is able to give us any gift at a given time, if it's needed in ministry. I really believe this. So, we ought not be too rigid and certainly ought not to set up legalistic categories here that will keep the Spirit from using us.

Now the ideal thing: if a person has a gift of teaching is to exercise that gift but it's not always the ideal thing we can do, in the Lord's church. We need to be available and flexible to be used of God, where we're needed, in the Body of Jes. Now, having said this, he goes on to talk about the Body in which these gifts operate. He says in

V. 11 (read) 'worketh that' (or 'by') 'Severally' (or individually). This is a very important

verse: 'The Sovereign God bestows these gifts, dividing to every man, individually, as He will'. Now you can take the list that I passed out and you could say - a look at that list and choose you - choose what might appeal to you. It isn't that way'. The H. S. places these gifts in our lives.

V. 11 says this: 'as He will'. No person who's ever preached has sought to preach or called himself to preach. God gives this and it's our responsibility to discover the gifts but not to look at a list and try to have something that God did not intend for us to have and He knows and we don't know! What we might think we would like to have might just be an ego trip for us or something that we could not handle at all.

V. 12 (read) 'so also is Christ (or the Body of Christ)'.

V. 13 (read) 'are we all baptized' but really it is 'were we all baptized' - it's a past tense. Now here is the way we get into the Body - through the baptism of the Spirit. Paul is writing the church at Corinth and he says 'we were all baptized'. When we are saved, we are baptized into the Body of Christ by the H. S. Now many evangelical writers say that the N. Birth and the baptism of the H. S. are the same. I think a distinction ought to be made. The N. Birth is when Jes. enters us through the H. S. and gives us a new life.

The baptism is the act whereby the H. S. places us into the living Body of Christ and joins us to Him. This happens to every believer. EVERY ONE of us here tonight, who's a true believe is a kpart of the Body of Jesus. This is the basis of all Xtn unity. Doesn't matter WHO a man is - he might be a Methodist, he could even be a Roman Catholic, but if he's truly been Born again, He's placed into the Body of Christ. It says here that - it lists here 'Jews and Gentiles, bond and free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit'. This is our position

Everything that Christ has is ours, through the baptism of the Spirit. We're in Him and all He has purchased in Calvary and in His resurrection, is ours through Him and through the Spirit

baptism. This is once and for all. It says 'we WERE baptized (and the form of the verb is once and for all - this is our position; it's unchangeable!) Now the infilling of the H. S. is different. The infilling of the H. S. is according to our surrender and we can lose the infilling and there can be many infillings. The disciples were filled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts. 4: 8 says they were filled again). But you're not baptized but once. You're placed into Christ and this is our position. This makes us a part of the Body and indeed, a functioning part of the Body, if we will be; and a vital part of the Body, an indispensable part of the Body of Jes.

V. 14 (read). Then in V. 15 (read) he illustrates this. If your foot were to say 'well, I'm not a hand and therefore, I don't belong to the Body' would that mean the foot would cease to be a part of the Body? Why, no. The answer is obvious. In

V. 16(read) why no! All of these are indispensable parts of the Body and no Xtn should ever say that he's not a part of the Body, and, indeed, a very vital part of the Body. But now

V. 18 (read) just like our physical body, the Lord has made us like He wanted us. He's given us the parts of our body; He has also constituted His church and He's placed us in the Body EXACTLY as He wanted it and it is His marvelous work, which we don't always understand, but which marvel at and rejoice in. It says 'He has placed every member in the Body, as it hath please HIM'. ~~XXXXXX~~

V. 19 (read) for instance, taking the physical; suppose you just had one - the Body was an ear, just an ear. Can you imagine? How about you young people, if some of you were just a big ear! How do you think that would look? How would you boys like for your girl friend to be just one big ear? How do you think that would look? How would you boys like to have a girl friend that was just one big ear? Or suppose you were just an eye? What would you call that? Is that 'gross' - is that what you call that? Indeed.

Just like the Body of Christ, suppose everybody in the Body of Christ just say was a teacher. You'd have but gift a teacher. Be impossible. You wouldn't have a body, you wouldn't have a Body of Christ.

V. 20 (read) and V. 21: no member of the Body can say to another member 'we don't need you. My gift is more important than yours'. Not at all. Everybody is needed in the body and everybody has a special place in the Body that the Lord Himself has assigned to that person.

V. 22 (read) 'more feeble'(or seem to be weaker) are necessary.

V. 23 (read) 'uncomely' (unpresentable parts) are treated with special modesty - speaking of the physical body. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

V. 24 (read) and V. 25(read) 'schism' is the word 'division' in the Body.

V. 26 (read) so the Body is so inter-dependent and inter-related that for one member of our physical body to suffer means that the entire body suffers. I remember one time I had a sore throat and you know what? My body sat up all night to keep company with my throat. Because it affected my entire body. You see? You see how inter-related we are? One member of the church suffers, the entire church suffers. One member rejoices (or prospers) and the entire church prospers. When we realize how inter-dependent we are in the light of our individualism and trying to go it alone.

We've taught that we're saved as individuals and we actually have taught the heresy that you don't have to have the church. But that's not the Scrip. Our whole denomination would have been revolutionized if it had really taught 1 Cor. 12. Individualism and isolationism and trying to go it alone, without an understanding of this Truth has brought great poverty and great sorrow to us. There should NEVER be the thought that I don't need ~~the~~ ^a to be/ part of the church and that anyone would ever think of not being a part - a functioning part of the

church. If the Catholics have taught in error in teaching you're saved through the church; we have taught in error in saying 'you can live the Xtn life and be a part of the kingdom without being a functioning part of the church.' It's impossible! The Bible teaches that. We see this here. It is a much neglected Truth. Our individualism has robbed us of some of these great Truths and the great Blessings that God has for us, through His Body. You know, I would not be, I would not FAIL to be a member of a local church long - at all.

Because of the protection of that Body. I said to some people last summer, who were really disconnected with the church, who were gonna travel in Europe and I said 'I would not go to Europe without a relationship to the church'. You say 'but you're in that whether you ever join the local church'. No, it's never finalized until you come out and make it a part of the local fellowship. This idea of the mystical Body; this idea of the Church Universal - you do not find this in the Scrip. You find that the people are in Christ and they express it, visibly, by belonging to a local body.

The other is devastating; the other is devilish and it always brings great harm to people. I run up with people all the time, who say 'well, you know I don't need to be a part of the church I was visiting a lady the other day and she said she'd received Christ and we were just talking and I said 'did you join a church?' 'Well, no, I haven't joined a church'. 'Have you been baptized?' 'No I haven't been baptized. I was baptized in the H. S. and I don't need water baptism'. Man, that's devastating! That destroys the teaching of the N. T. Oh, it sounds Spiritual; sounds pious and wonderful but that destroys more people. There are hundreds of people in Ft. Smith who are deceived.

Living in a false world of mysticism. No responsibility at a local Body. No understanding that they are to be loyal to a church, loyal to a pastor, related to responsible people and that's destroyed many, many people. All right, now he says

V. 27 (read) 'now ye are the Body of Christ, each in his own place' is the way I would translate that. Now, in V. 28, 29 and 30, he comes back to this matter of gifts. And he lists the three

most important gifts. He says in

V. 28 (read) 'has set some' (or appointed some) and then he lists the first three. He uses the ordinals(??) and this is very significant. He says

FIRST: The Apostles. Now that is a primary gift. The apostles were really the teachers of the Truth upon which the church is founded. Now you'll notice that all three of these primary gifts relate to the Word of God.

SECOND: The Prophets. The inspired preachers of that Word and

THIRD: The Teachers. Now it's very significant that he points these three out and says 'here are their order': First: Apostles; Secondly: Prophets and Thirdly; teachers. When we get to 1 Cor. 14, he will not forbid the Corinthians to ~~XXXX~~ speak tongues. He does not tell they they cannot speak in tongues or he does not deny that ~~XXXX~~ that is a gift! What he DOES do is to say 'you have magnified tongues when you ought to have magnified prophesy and teaching.' This is always to be magnified in the church of the Lord - is that which puts forth the Word of God.

Because unless you have the Word of God, you're gonna eventually be in trouble. That Word is the thing that guides us and that Word is what people are saved by and sanctified by and no matter what we want to believe, we MUST - we MUST believe this teaching of the Word of God. So he mentions these three. Then he goes on to say: after that- miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments (or administration), diversities of tongues, But he asks some questions in

29 (read) not all are apostles, are they (the way it reads in the Greek). Well, of course, they're not. Not all are prophets; not all are teachers, are they? Not all are workers of miracles. The way it's stated in the Greek - the New American Standard Version brings it out well. It's pointing out that not everybody's an apostle, not everybody's a prophet; not

everybody's a teacher; not everybody's a worker of miracles. Not all have the gifts of healing. Not all speak with tongues. Not all interpret. You see, one of the greatest errors that we can ever make and which brings great problems in the teaching of the gifts of the Spirit is to teach that you're supposed to have a certain gift because I have it and try to force that on somebody.

You see, it's individual and he's plainly pointing it out here that it is individual and not everyone has the same gift. Tonight I'm talking to, I suspect, in this room here there is every gift. And that's wonderful, but the moment we come along and try to put everybody together and say 'you're to have this gift' we, indeed, are destroying the meaning of the Body and of the individuality and of the beauty of these gifts.

V. 31 (read) 'covet earnestly the best' - why did he put that in there? The church at Corinth was not coveting earnestly the best gifts. Or desired it. Now that's not a teaching for seeking the gifts. But the church at Corinth had got caught up in the sign gift, especially tongues, maybe healing, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ I don't know, but CERTAINLY tongues! These primary gifts up here, they had bypassed them basically. So what he's saying here in V. 31 that we are to desire the best gifts. ~~no gift~~

Latter part of V. 31(read) of course, this is the 13th Chap. of i Cor. Now in closing, just let me try to make this very simple. We're trying to understand the church in relation to our physical bodies. Now just suppose - and I think we can suppose this in decency- just suppose that your physical body is exposed and suppose you're looking at your physical body. Now if you look at your physical body and study it, you will get a pretty good picture of the beauty of the Lords church, with the members and with the gifts.

So you see the body - say, you see it in a mirror, exposed and the first thing you note is you see ONE body. There's your body, not two and not three, but one body. You can see it in the mirror, you can see the body. Then you see it has ONE head - and that's JESUS - but your

body has one head. Doesn't have two, doesn't have three. But as you look at the body, and you begin to study it and understand it, you see that while it's one body, that it has many parts to it. Many different organs, is in that one body. Without which, you could not have a body. But you notice something else. You see the ONE body, you see the ONE head, you see the individual parts of the body: eyes, the ears, the hands. You're looking at the body and you see it's made up of all these things. God gave the body that.

You see that each one of these parts perform a function that no other part can perform. And without which, you would not really have a healthy body, at least. Maybe you could do without some of the parts, but if there is one part of that body missing, or suppose it's there but not functioning. You see the whole body is affected and is imperfect and defective. Then, as you look more closely and study it, you will note the inter-relationships of the parts of that body and how they are dependent upon one another and serve one another.

Now that's the church. The church is ONE; JESUS is the head. It's one. We're placed INTO that body through the baptism of the Spirit. The Lord placed us exactly where He wanted us. It's One and yet, as we study the Body, we see there are various members. Young people, middle age, older people but we also notice that every one of these members perform a different function, according to the gift that God has placed within us. Paul says that every member is absolutely important and if one member there is not functioning, the whole Body suffers.

Because there is such inter-relationship between the members. But take them all functioning and all related, as God intended, you have ~~xxxxxxx~~ the most powerful organism in all the world. You've got really, the life of Christ and the ministry of Jesus projected through the individual members, of that Body. Yet, you know what statistics show and not just in our church. It shows that ten percent of the members of a local church are the functioning members and ~~that~~ twenty percent of the members of a local church (and this has been proven throughout the nation) give eighty percent of the money.

I think we're doing pretty well for what's working, don't you? It's a sad thing and many

people in this Body do not recognize that they have wonderful gifts. Because you see, we could divide the gifts ~~XXX~~ into Speaking Gifts; Serving Gifts and Sign Gifts and many people think if they don't have a Speaking gift, that they're really not (tape fades) _____. If they can't teach, if they can't absorb(?) they don't have a word of witness. Well, that isn't true at all. Your gift may never be seen by the great group, but which serves such a fine place in the Body. The most widespread gift, you couldn't run a church without it, is Helps.

Somebody asked me one day 'what is the most important part of your body in preaching'? I said 'well, my voice'. This person 'oh no, not your voice'. I said 'well, what is the most important thing?' He said 'your big toe'. I said 'what do you mean?' Said 'you could never even get up and stand if you didn't have your big toes'. Our big toes tremendously important to the physical body. And so many people in the church just look at themselves and say 'well, I'm just a big toe and I don't amount to anything'.

And yet, the Body can't operate without Big Toes. And THIS Body can't operate without you. Not like it ought to. Because the Lord has placed ^{each of} ~~XXXXX~~ in His Body to perform a service(?) ~~XXXX~~ that no one else can ever perform. And when we do it, the end results will be the reaching and developing of people for JC. It's a beautiful thing. Do you young people know your gifts? Stacey, do you know what your gift is? What is your gift, stand up and tell us. You have the gift of teaching. Wonderful! Are you teaching now, exercising that gift? You recognize any other gift in your life?

Well, that's a great gift. Thank you. How about the rest of you young people; what is your gift? In the Body? Anybody? Well, the most important thing is to know that gift - right? And to exercise it. You might say 'well, I'm young'. That doesn't matter and doesn't mean that you don't have a gift, and God is going to hold you responsible for using it.

The revelation of all these gifts must be under the power of Gods love and we will study that next time.

Let's stand and sing a song.