

Series Title- Time, Talents & Treasures-

Sermon Title- Gifts of Grace

Romans 12:4-8 (NLT)

⁴ Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function,⁵ so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. ⁶ In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Introduction- It's all about the talent.....It's all about the people

- The Mantra of successful businesses, sports franchises, entertainment empires.....it's all about the people....talent wins
- Recruiting, hiring, training, retaining- entire industries built around these
- The coach interviewed after the victory...."it's all about the players"
 - Bill Belichick- 5 Keys to Success- #1 is "Choose your Team wisely"
- It's the business differentiator, our competitive advantage- it all about our people
 - Blake Mycoskie, Founder, TOMS Shoes-"I'm a large believer in hiring the right people and giving them unbelievable amounts of power and autonomy."
- Organizations make big investments to get and retain talent.....
 - AirBnb- free vacations, Starbucks- free tuition reimbursement, Google- free gourmet b-l-d, Zynga- Pet Ins, Rooftop Dog Park, All you can eat treats, In and Out- free burgers, Patagonia- mid day surf breaks
 - Stef Curry- 5 year \$201 million contract, Ray Mayweather- \$275 m, George Clooney- \$237m

- **What's the point-** to achieve the goal, to win the prize.....it has to be done through the people & the talent.....it's important...a winning strategy

God's has a Design for People & Talent that we see in scripture! He was the originator

- **In God's design** to accomplish His mission on earth, it's abt the people & the talent.....
 - **He uses His Sons & Daughters....those adopted into His Family by faith in Jesus Christ powered by the Holy Spirit. He describes us a The Body of Christ.**
- **BODY-** How is the Body described: Many members w/ different functions-
 - The physical Body, USC Football
 - Players, coaches, trainers, managers, field maintenance
 - All different, all w/ one goal in mind
 - Look around this theater- this is the BODY OF CHRIST
 - Jesus is the Head- (Lord)- We are the BODY-Diverse & Connected
 - The people structure God has designed to carry out His mission on earth....**is the Body of Christ....Think about the power RSB, Calvary, SBCC, IVC....Cali, US, Globe**
- **In God's design** He gives us **Gifts (supernatural talents)**
- **GIFTS-** Greek- *Charisma(ta)* (gift of grace)-
 - This Gift is different than human talent (natural aptitude or skill)....
 - Different in both power & purpose, not for our own glory
 - **What is Grace?**- not earned or deserved, unmerited favor (Salvation)
 - **Great variety-** manifestation of the breadth of God (the Spirit)...
 - Not exhaustively listed in scripture (**show SG graphic**)
 - 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Romans, 1 Peter....More than 20 listed
 - 1 Peter 4 breaks into 2 broad categories
 - **Speaking**
 - Like- exhortation, prophesy, teaching, tongues
 - **Serving**
 - Like- mercy, helps, administration, hospitality

*Supernatural Talents to serve the Body & glorify God

- **Empowered by God-** (activated, enabled)

1 Corinthians 12:6b

it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

1 Corinthians 12:11

¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

- **In God's design** we are told to **USE Them**

- **USE them-**

- How- With the Right Heart
 - Zeal- great energy, enthusiasm, gusto, vigor
- Why- To Serve each other & Build up the Church & To Give God Glory

We are each given different gifts and talents by our Master. The thing that matters most is how we use what we've been given, not how much we make or do compared to someone else. What matters is that we spend ourselves.

Francis Chan

We just finished celebrating Christmas....

- Grandson got a Hover board- out of the box, used it w/ zeal
- God's plan is for us to use our gifts like my Grandson Noah used his Hover board
- Don't leave your gift under the tree unopened, opened and set aside
- Think about the implications of parts of the body not working properly-
- **Join me in a little exercise-**
 - Fold your thumb back- (little member in the grand scheme of things)
 - Try to undo a button on your shirt, pick up your cup of coffee or water bottle, gracefully turn a page in your bible
 - Thumb is like you or I, See how critical each member is to the functioning of the Body....

God's Design-

- We are the Body of Christ (Diverse & United)
- He has given us Spiritual Gifts (Supernatural Talents)
- We are to be good stewards of the Gifts & USE them
- To serve & build up the body and glorify God

God has a design and we, as the Body are charged with the responsibility to execute-

Perhaps you are saying to yourself....I'm willing but I have no idea my gift is:

- First- Ask God- he's the gift giver, doesn't want you to be stuck
- Then ask others- God designed spiritual gifts to work w/in the context of community. What are your passions & experiences?
- Ask the Question-
 - **What am I most likely doing when you see God working through me?**
- Observe others using their gifts- see firsthand how God uses His gifts to us to serve the body & glorify Himself:

As I look around on a Weds am or pm at MG/HG or on Sunday.....here's what I see:

- I see the server jumping in with joy to meet practical needs.....dishes washed, chair moved, carpets vacuumed, coffee picked up....that builds up my faith, that glorifies God & spurs me on
- I see the one with the gift of mercy discerning the hurts of others and caring for them, praying with them, giving them a hug.....that builds up my faith, that glorifies God & spurs me on
- I see the exhorter encouraging someone who is believing lies and covering them in God's Truth..... that builds up my faith, that glorifies God & spurs me on

See how you using the Gift God has given you has a domino effect (svg, bldg, glorifying)

If you are still stumped- just serve

- Phil 2- count others more significant than yourself
- John 13- wash some feet

Here is our challenge as the Body of Christ-

Ephesians 4:15b-16

we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

What's the step forward?

1. Embrace being part of the Body of Christ
2. Readily accept His Gift of Grace
3. Use it

As I call up Robert & the band-

- During the second set of worship- take this to God
 - Later today- engage with your community
 - This week- daily pray about Using your Gift
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- Carpets
 - Bread & Juice
 - Prayer Teams

Benediction

1 Peter 4:10-11 (NLT)

¹⁰ God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts.

Use them well to serve one another.

¹¹ Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies.

Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

*put up during Gift section

