

# Your Ministry

## Lesson #10

# Service To the Body

### Scripture: Romans 12:4-13

### Juniata Baptist Sunday School

The gifts of the Holy Spirit have to do with each individual Christian's ministry in the Body of Christ. Christ's Body, mentioned in verses 4 and 5 of Romans 12, is the church, the congregation we joined after we were saved and baptized (Acts 2:41). When we let the Holy Spirit fill us and control our lives, we function in the Body with a ministry to the rest of the Body (Read again Ephesians 4:4-16, and review Lessons #1 and 2). So our gifts have to do with our ministry *in* the Body of Christ and *to* the Body! As we have seen in the past several weeks, each one of us has different functions in the Body (the word "*office*" in Romans 12:4 means "function"). A Christian's function in the church is a ministry to the rest of the church. Just as the organs of our physical body work to meet the needs of the rest of the body, the members of the church are called to meet the needs of the rest of the church. This is what the seven function gifts of Romans 12 are about. The "*manifestation*" gifts of I Corinthians 12 are supernatural things that happen as God empowers us to minister. The "*perfecting*" gifts of Ephesians 4 are men that God uses to help us function according to our gifts. You have gifts; you have a ministry in and to the church. Yield to the control of the Holy Spirit, and you will minister in His power. This is very exciting! Look now at Romans 12:9-13 and see 5 elements that must be present for the church to function well as a unit. We minister together to meet every need!

#### 1. Pure Love (v. 9).

We know that Christians ought to love one another (John 13:34-35), but Romans 12 emphasizes that this love should be *real*. Real Christian love is "*without dissimulation*" or hypocrisy. It is to be "*unfeigned love*" according to I Peter 1:22-23 (Look up this passage), not faked. Unfeigned or true love is pure. I Corinthians 13 says that godly love

*"...rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." (verse 6)*

It causes us to "*abhor*" evil and "*cleave to*" what is good. Much that passes as Christian love today is as phoney as a 3-dollar bill! Pure love hates what's wrong and upholds what is right. It is not true Christian love that bids "*God speed*" to false teachers (See II John 10-11). There is nothing real about a love that approves of everything anybody does. Sickly sweet sentimentality is not love. At least it is not God-given love. A church energized with pure love will experience both holiness and usefulness in the membership!

#### 2. Brotherly Affection (v. 10).

Jealousy and strife have no place in church work. As we minister to one another, we need to prefer one another. Remember what I Corinthians 12:24-27 says,

*"For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."*

Admire the way God uses the other person. Love everybody in the church!

#### 3. Fervent Service (v. 11)

We need to be fired up about our ministries in the church. Look again at the comments made in verses 6-8 about *how* our ministries are to be performed: with "*faith*," with "*simplicity*," with "*diligence*," with "*cheerfulness*." Remember that you are "*serving the Lord*"!

*“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”*  
(Colossians 3:23-24)

#### **4. Joyful Outlook (v. 12).**

*“Hope”* is an attitude of *faith in God concerning the future!* Rejoice in *“hope;”* be *“patient”* in tribulation; continue to pray. Expect God to work out everything for good. A happy, hopeful, joyful spirit in the hearts of people who are ministering for the Lord makes the church thrive. Don’t get *under the circumstances!* Negative attitudes are contagious and can ruin a church, but positive attitudes are catching, too, and can keep everybody going!

#### **5. Ministry Approach (v. 13).**

Everybody ought to be involved in *“distributing to the necessity of saints.”* For this reason we must have an approach to church work that is drenched in

*“hospitality.”* The word translated *“hospitality”* has the idea in Greek of loving strangers or guests. We all know some members of the church better than we know others. But if we are going to minister to others in the church, we need to have an attitude of helpfulness toward everybody. Our individual ministries have the purpose of *“distributing to the necessity of saints”*—meeting the needs of the believers. If we all got a ministry approach to our work in the church, the church would be better! Instead of taking jobs just because we enjoy them, let’s get excited about meeting needs, helping people, and furthering the Cause of Christ. Fewer people would quit working in the church if they did their jobs with the motivation of ministry! More people would love their work in the church if they fulfilled their duties for the purpose of fulfilling needs, and of fulfilling God’s will for their lives!