



## “Think & Live Soberly”<sup>1</sup>

### Romans 12:3-8

As we have turned a corner in the book of Romans, we saw at the end of chapter 11 that a healthy theology leads to a hearty worship. Therefore, we should glory in God’s glory, and then in verses 1-2 of chapter 12, we’re exhorted to present ourselves to God as a sacrifice. To glory in God’s glory isn’t simply something we do when we sing. To glory in God’s glory envelopes our whole being, all of our days, in every way. As we live this way, we grow in discerning and agree with God that he and his ways are superior and good.

I’ve heard it said before that **you know how good of a servant you are when people treat you like one.** I think this is true as it relates to God as well. You see, we hear about giving ourselves to God as a sacrifice, and we can agree with this, but then we can tend to barter with God every day. Or, we can tend to throw out parts of the Bible that we think aren’t as important because we like other things. Sacrifices don’t do this. If you are a sacrifice that is living and holy and acceptable to God, you listen to what the Lord says and turn to him for grace to live how he pleases.

But even as I say this, some people here might think, “Yes! that’s right, Pastor Timothy. Preach to those people who are lazy spiritually. Let them see what sacrifices really look like.” And, you could have an arrogance about yourself. You think you serve God really well – at least better than 80% of the rest of the church family. You wonder why others just don’t get it, and in the back of your mind you judge others who just don’t serve. Subtly, you actually have elevated yourself above others through pride.

Pride is the issue that motivates the lazy and it can also motivate “servants.” The lazy is focused on self and what they want. The “servant” is focused on self and all they do. The 18<sup>th</sup> century theologian, Jonathan Edwards, once wrote of pride: **“Remember that pride is the worst viper that is in the heart, the greatest disturber of the soul's peace and sweet communion with Christ; it was the first sin that ever was, and lies lowest in the foundation of Satan's whole building, and is the most difficultly rooted out, and is the most hidden, secret and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps in, insensibly, into the midst of religion and sometimes under the disguise of humility.”** (as quot. from [http://www.notable-quotes.com/p/pride\\_quotes.html](http://www.notable-quotes.com/p/pride_quotes.html), JONATHAN EDWARDS, "To Deborah Hatheway", *Letters and Personal Writings*).

I can look at my own life and see how I can embrace pride in being purposefully ignorant of God and his Word and also by living out his Word, but for the sake of my name – not his. In all transparency, this has scared me at times because I know the danger of my own pride and the tendency of my heart to elevate me. Some may say, “Oh, Pastor, don’t worry. You’ll be fine.” But the fear increases when I read story

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<sup>1</sup> This manuscript is still in the rough draft phase. I recommend you utilize these notes in conjunction to the sermon to gain greater insight and clarity.

after story of pastors who have fallen prey to sinful control in leadership. Pastors who have taken advantage of their positions and used it to feed their own flesh – all the while, people look up to them and cover sins in the pastor’s life because “of course he loves Jesus!”

All of this greatly burdens my heart because, as a child of God, I want to glorify God in my life, and I also want my church family of Ventura to always love and follow the Lord. And, just as I could (as a leader) let pride in, this can happen within local churches, too. I’ve seen church splits. This church has had its experiences in the past. And, it burdens me because it leaves hurting people in its wake. And yet, the church should be a people who love and serve each other so that we grow to become more and more like Jesus. We shouldn’t be a people who reject, ignore or diminish God.

How do find protection from the dangerous viper of pride? Paul has already told us, but he’s going to expand on his point in verses 3-8 today. Let’s read these verses after I pray for us [Jill Henry, Ben Hernandez @ Calvary, praise re: Carole’s healing].

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*<sup>3</sup> For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup> Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup> if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup> the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. <sup>2</sup>*

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Maybe you can see where Paul is going here in these verses. In verse 3, he starts with the word “For,” which means that he’s connecting us with what he has just said. In verses 1-2, Paul was summoning the Christians to present their whole selves as a sacrifice to God. When we hear this, we could pull up our bootstraps and say, “Well, based on God’s mercy, now I gotta try hard and do a good job. I better not mess up.” I have known many Christians who have seemed to live this way. They have essentially thought that God forgave them of their sins. Now, their growth in godliness is up to them.

If you have any hint of this kind of mindset, you need to hear these verses. And, actually, I think whether we like to admit it or not, we all can embrace this mindset in different ways and at different times. We can begin to trust ourselves instead of depend on the Lord. So, Paul gives another statement of command here. In these verses, the main idea is Paul calling us to **Think with sober judgment**.

This is how we are going to combat the pride of laziness and also the pride of our service. But what does this mean? How does this play out? Well, Paul shows us in these six verses. But what’s beautiful is how Paul prefaces the exhortation: By the grace given to me I say to everyone among you. . . . Paul is an example of the humility he is calling us to. The only reason he can say what he says is because God has given him special grace to do so. He’s an apostle. He has been given this authority, but this authority comes from the Lord. So, listen to Paul not because Paul is Paul. Listen to Paul because God is at work through Paul.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 12:3–8.

But also notice something else quite important. Paul tells us who he is speaking to: I say to everyone among you. Paul doesn't say, "I say to you Gentiles" or "I speak to the Jews." He says that what he's saying here applies to *everyone*. That means that as I'm preaching this message, don't think, "Oh, so-and-so really needs to hear this." Maybe they do, but Paul is saying, "You need to hear this and apply it in your life." Every one of us has the viper of pride in the grass of our life. Every one of us needs to hear the message to think with sober judgment. Now, let's touch on what that phrase means, and then we'll see *why* we should live this way.

**Don't think too highly of yourself (v. 3):** For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. . .<sup>3</sup>

The idea here is that you can overinflate your perception of how important or great you are. The word "think" is highlighted in verse 3 because Paul the Greek word essentially four times in this verse. The reason this is important is because in verse 2, Paul urges us to not be a people conformed to this world, but transformed by renewing our minds. To renew our minds means that we must be a thinking people. Our thinking will affect our actions. Now, in verse 3, Paul says that our thinking must first address how we think of ourselves.

We all think of ourselves. Even when we think we're not thinking about ourselves, we're thinking about ourselves. In the clothing choices for today, food choices, place we sit in the auditorium here. We think about ourselves. That's not always a bad thing, though. The problem is that we can think more highly than we ought to think.

By the way, to Paul he simply assumes that we would embrace the fact that we can think too highly of ourselves. So, I hope that you can see that in your life. Have you ever entered into your house and you think that because of what you did earlier in the day that the others in the house should be serving you? Have you ever tallied up your good deeds in a given week and then made a conclusion that you *deserve* a break because of that? Have you ever taken leadership in certain things because you believe you're the best option, but that role wasn't given to you? Have you ever been angry or feeling frustrated because you feel you aren't heard? In any of these scenarios, there could be real concerns; however, your response may reveal more of a sinful attitude of your own heart – thinking too highly of *yourself*.

But you can't simply be a person who says "Don't think too highly of myself?" What does too highly mean? Some think that this means to solely say things like, "I'm a wretch" about themselves. The apostle Paul does say "Wretched man that I *am*," but that's not all Paul says about himself. And, some Christians seem to only believe their wretchedness, forgetting all the other blessings God has given to them. Christian, if you walk around and only emphasize how horrible and sinful and wretched and worthless you are, you aren't thinking appropriately. Pride has come into your life taking on the form of victimization.

The wording of Paul here makes it seem that there's appropriate way to think of ourselves. We are not to think too highly, which would also mean to not think too lowly. But you could say, "Hold on, Pastor Timothy, are you saying that you're not a sinner?" No! I agree with Paul that in my practice I fall short of the glory of God. However, I also believe what God says of me: I'm beloved by God. I'm righteous. I'm set apart for his glory. I don't think it's either-or. Some say, "It's only 'beloved and righteous.'" Others

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<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 12:3.

say, “It’s only sinful and wretched.” No, like Martin Luther in the 1500’s, I say that I’m simultaneously justified and sinful! It’s both.

If we have this attitude, I think we will live in humble dependence and delight in God. This is where I think Paul is going in verse 3. He goes on and says, “but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”<sup>4</sup> More literally, Paul is saying to **think with sober thinking**.

We are to *think*. Let our renewed minds who have given the ability to discern, come to right conclusions. But the only way we can come to right conclusions is if our thinking is sober. What does sober mean? When I think of the word “sober,” I tend to only know it’s connotation as opposed to being drunk. If you look up the definition of the word, it’ll say “not affected by alcohol.” In addition, another definition means to be serious or solemn. This word in the Greek can have the idea of serious and solemn; however, there’s more to it. The Greek word refers to being sane, sensible and in line with reality.

To think with sober judgment is to think in line with God’s truth. This takes us back again to what Paul said in verse 2. The only way we are going to be transformed is by the renewal of our minds. And the only way we can have sensible judgment is if our thinking submits to and aligns with God’s thinking.

Now, Paul makes more clear how to test the sobriety of our judgment. How do we know if we are really thinking in reality and not going insane? The end of verse 3 says “each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.” There are at least two ways you could interpret these words. You could say, “measure of faith that God has assigned” means that God has given different degrees to different people. This can correct pride in a couple of ways. First, why are you so prideful about your faith when it was a gift. Secondly, why are you putting others down when they’re in a process, too. You’re comparing others to yourself instead of trusting God is fathering his children in his timing.

This could be the idea of the words here; however, I believe there’s a different interpretation. I don’t think of the term measure as God fills some higher than others. Instead, I think of the term measure like a standard. Therefore, I am to view everything according to the ruling stick or measure or standard of faith that God has given. This view highlights that God gives every person faith – including myself. And, it highlights that I am to always live in dependence on him.

If I live by faith that means that I recognize the “simultaneously justified and sinful” mantra. Faith is belief and dependence on Jesus himself. We depend on Jesus because we are absolutely needy for him. We are born sinners – rebels against God – using his gifts for our own selfish purposes. Yet, Jesus came and fulfilled God’s demands. Yet, in his death, he took the rejection from God that we deserved. Many in this room have turned to Jesus for forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. But we also recognize that if we depended on ourselves, we would go back to sin. We are to walk by faith because apart from faith, it is impossible to please God. And, this is glorious because faith means that God accepts us. We can depend on him and he won’t turn us away. He will strengthen us!

We must embrace the mantra “simultaneously justified and sinful.” This is the measuring stick of faith. Faith requires we embrace both because the moment I start making myself the standard, the measuring stick, is the moment I’m trusting me. And, if I trust me, I won’t be transformed. I’ll be conformed to the world. And, if I only embrace one, I could say, “Well, I’m good. Just ask God for forgiveness and I’m fine.” Or, I say, “Well, I’m a wretch, but whatever.” Alone, either viewpoints does not embrace God and his

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<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 12:3.

good and glorious plan. So, do not think of yourself too highly. Think with sober judgment, in accordance with the measurement of faith that God has given to you! You are a sinner who has been saved by grace! And God's grace continues to flow to you day by day.

**Why think with sober thinking?** Now Paul moves into giving the reason why he speaks this way. Why should we think with sober judgment? His answer might sound confusing and out-of-the-blue. He basically says that the reason we must think with sober thinking is because **we were made for unity and service within the church family**. Wait. What? We are to live as sacrifices to God and be humble in our thinking because we are part of Jesus' church? What does this have to do with being humble?

In our western culture, commitment to communities don't seem as important. We are so individualistic, we have a hard time thinking of being a part of a community. A few weeks ago, I was meeting with someone who serves disciples of Jesus in Nepal. He told me that in America, if we come to Christmas, we would have fewer services so that we could gather with our families and spend time celebrating Christmas with our family units. He said that if there is a holiday in Nepal, the Christians would spend more time together. The reason? Their families have rejected them because they're Christian. And these Christians say that their church *is* their family. Historically, this seems to have been the predominant mindset in the world until the last couple hundred years.

Let me try to explain the logic of Paul here. Think of Romans 1 and the state of the human race. Paul says towards the end of chapter 1 that not only does the world know that God will judge them, but they still sin and they give hearty approval of those who do such things. In other words, sinners not only love their sin, but they want others to engage with them. What we love, we want people to participate in with us! So, in Romans 1, we have an undiscerning people who want to gather with undiscerning people – participating in similar practices. Then Paul moves through Romans to show how God rescues people through Jesus. And, as a result of what Jesus has done, we come to Romans 12, and Paul says that God makes a people who are discerning, and these discerning people gather with fellow discerning people – participating in similar practices.

We are a part of a new community. We are part of the people of God. Now, in these verses, the question is whether Paul is saying that the body of Christ refers to all Christians wherever they are or if Paul is talking about the local church. Given the context of this chapter, Paul is talking about the Christians with whom we come into contact, and more probably the local church. So, Paul says that God saves us and makes us a part of his people. As a result, we gather with fellow Christians in a community context.

This confronts a lone ranger mentality to Christianity – and this also should address pride, too. Sometimes people can use church membership as an area of pride. They can think that if they're a member then they're really awesome. But committing with a body of believers is confessing your limits and also your need for others in your life. This is what Paul shows us in these verses. Read verses 4-5 with me: <sup>4</sup>For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.<sup>5</sup>

Let's think of the body illustration here. In one body, there are many members. There are muscles, bones, cartilage, organs. Yet, all of these things make up the body.

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<sup>5</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 12:3–5.

What if a part of my body started thinking it was another part. What if my foot wanted to pick up everything? Well, that'd get awkward and people wouldn't want to shake my foot either. Not all parts of the body have the same function. We get that. But in the church context, we can tend to either think that our body part is superior to others or we can think we need to be every part. This burdens me personally. I've had people comment to me before that they feel so bad that they aren't like me. I study, I read. I can preach and proclaim the truth. And they have such a hard time understanding the Word.

If that's you, please listen up. You're not me. And also know this – what I have here is completely a gift God has chosen to give to me. A month or so ago, Tracy and I were talking about this gifting and as we were talking, my appreciation and gratitude grew in God. Ever since childhood, I thought God had called me to full-time ministry. But, honestly, if you looked at my life, I didn't have great abilities in this regard. While I can talk, I wasn't great in speech class in high school. Then I went to college. In college, I failed English 102 two times. I had to take the same class 3 times! I didn't know how to communicate well.

But through the failures and struggles of school, God grew me and taught me. And, amazingly, I'm pastoring a church. But this isn't because I'm so great. This is because God's so great. Then I say this and some say, "Well, why didn't God make me that way?" I have similar thoughts at times. I see someone who knows how to build and make things and create and even some guys who can state biblical truths in a few words, I think "Why does it take me 45 minutes to declare something that that person said in two minutes?!" Other times I feel like a lesser person because I can't build or fix the car or do this or that thing. Some could say, "Oh, don't feel bad! That's not spiritual." But, hold on. Paul says in all we do, we are being spiritual. Whether you preach or fix a car, it can be a blessing in different ways. And this is where Paul goes in these verses.

**If we think with sober judgment, we realize that 1) our gift isn't the sole gift, and yet 2) our gift is a good gift from God for the benefit of Christ's church, God's children!** Right here, some can think, "But I don't want to use my gifts for the church." The reason some say that is because they've been hurt in churches or because they say they're introverts and have a hard time being around people. There are a myriad of other reasons, but Paul says we are individually members of one another. That phrase gives us the idea that God has made us intertwined with each other. Because of Jesus, we are bound to each other. Our unity isn't based on our preferences and personal desires. Our unity is based on Jesus and what he has given to us! A discerning mind must see their essential connection with the body of believers. You are unified with Christians, live like it. That's why our mission statement is pursuing Jesus together. Jesus has unified us. Now, we must pursue Jesus *together!*

You could say, "But I don't want to serve others." Or, "they don't serve me. Why should I serve them?" You know how great of a servant you are when people treat you like one. What has God called you to do? He's summoned you to serve your family. Will you do it, no defenses, or are you going to require others to do it first? I've been reading a book recently talking about the reality of living in a secular culture and how this mindset has affected the church. In one chapter, an author discusses how secularism has affected people's view of church. I want to read a larger portion because I think it's very worthwhile.

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*We have identified community with a feeling that can be synthesized, rather than a bond of deep mutual commitment and the shared disciplines that powerfully and enduringly unite us. . . . **We take part [in church] because we choose to do so, and we choose to do so because we like it, or it makes us feel good about ourselves, or***

***because we enjoy praying and singing with others. It gives an evanescent experience of togetherness, a passion frission of religious excitement, but it doesn't impose the constraints of discipline and commitment. It merely satisfies some obscurely felt need for the time being but will have to be fresh and different and exciting every time if it is to keep drawing us back*** (bold mine, *Our Secular Age*, ed. by Colin Hansen, p. 68).

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We have made church participation, attendance and service about our desires and likes. We've made church membership more about our church than it is about submitting to the Lord's command and seeking to live out his call to be a sacrifice with other Christians. When we put the emphasis on us and our preferences, we will not give ourselves wholly to sacrificing for the Lord. We won't understand Paul's words to the Corinthians when he says "the more I love you the less I'm loved." We'll say, "If a church is like that, get out." We won't understand actually sacrificing for the church in seasons of busyness of life because after all, our lives are busy! Yet, Paul commends Epaphroditus who served Philippi when he was sick, near to death, and he didn't want the church to know how bad off he was. If we don't understand the idea of being a sacrifice for fellow believers, we will look at missionaries as super-spiritual elite – and we'll let ourselves off the hook.

Also, if we don't see our need to be connected continually with a family of Christians, then we are not going to grow as God intends. You could say, "But I serve other people during the week." That's great. But what if I said to my family, "I'm sorry I don't eat dinner with you ever, but I serve other people"? I should serve my family and others! Some may think this is too much of an inward focus, but actually when Jesus called his disciples to be a light to the world or a city on the hill, he was calling them to live in community together so that they are a light to others. So, part of evangelism is pursuing Jesus together in such ways that the world can see that we have a Savior. We live for Another! But, I tend to think that many times we more-so like our desire for peace and to not be hurt than we love the Lord and want others to know the Lord through our self-sacrifice!

The reality is that Jesus teaches us that through his self-sacrifice, a myriad of people have been rescued. And now we can walk in his footsteps, not just in the world, but with fellow Christians! And remember how this fits with Paul's words in verses 1-2. As we live as a sacrifice to God, we are being transformed into the image of Christ! Without serving the body of believers, we won't learn more about or display the love and grace of Jesus.

So, Paul goes on in verses 6-8 to show how we can sacrificially serve one another. As we glory in God's glory, we sacrifice for each other! Read verses 6-8 with me: <sup>6</sup> Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup> if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup> the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. <sup>6</sup>

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them! We all have different gifts. Now use them. Don't be ashamed of them. Don't say you're lesser. Also, don't think you're better. Think soberly. It's all in accordance with God's grace. God's grace is God's kindness. So, don't treat your gifts like God hates you because he gave you something you didn't want. Instead, believe that the God who

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<sup>6</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 12:6–8.

sent Jesus to rescue you actually loves you and knows what's best for his glory and your eternal good! And, trusting him, sacrifice.

But as I say "sacrifice," that doesn't mean to pursue things you're not gifted in. Sometimes we think sacrifice means to do things that you wouldn't want to do. Obviously that's what God wants, right? He wants us to do things we will eternally hate? No. This should free people to think carefully about their gifts. If you're not gifted in something, it's not a shame. You don't have to do that thing. You can do something else. And maybe discovering you're not gifted is God's way of steering you elsewhere in love!

In all of this, Paul is saying use the gift God has given you! Paul doesn't give an excuse for an out. Some people can become members of churches and never serve within it. That's antithetical to Paul's statements here. He says to every Roman Christian to use the gift with the believers.

This is not an exhaustive list of service. Paul gives other lists in other letters to churches and there are other gifts mentioned. I think Paul is giving examples here to help get our minds thinking. What are your gifts? Now, I want to define these gifts briefly, just to explain them, but again, think, "What might you be gifted in?"

**Prophecy:** In the New Testament, the word prophecy isn't the same as Old Testament prophecy. In the Old Testament, there was an authoritativeness that you were speaking God's Words. However, in the New Testament, Paul says to test all prophecies. And Paul doesn't seem to put them on the level of the authority of Scripture. Some think that prophecying is simply preaching or teaching. Others I've spoken to seem to think that prophecying means to talk harshly to people, and they say, "Well, I'm just a prophet." That's not what prophecy means. I think prophecy was the spontaneous utterance related to a specific circumstance. If someone had that gift, Paul says that those people are to practice it in proportion to their faith. What does the "proportion to their faith" mean? Well, again, faith means to believe and depend on the Lord. So, Paul is saying to them to ensure that in their prophecying that they're doing this because they're dependent on the Lord. Don't prophecying and think "Wow, look at me! I'm so great!"

**Service.** This idea of service encompasses any type of service. And, while all Christians are called to serve one another, there are some who are especially gifted in *servicing*. They perceive and know needs and they reach into those needs, caring for people. So, Paul states the obvious. If you are good at serving, serve! Don't do stuff for acclaim and recognition. Serve to show a living sacrifice unto Christ!

**Teaches.** To teach is different than prophecy. To teach refers to explain information. Some are gifted at explaining things to people. And, within teaching there are many variations. Some can teach a 4 year-old, but struggle with a 14, 24, or 44 year-old. But if you're gifted in teaching, teach!

**One who exhorts.** To exhort is to spur people on to action. There are some people who just know how to apply things in life and can speak in such ways that spur us on to action. If that's the kind of person you are, don't be ashamed of it. Help people. You could be a counselor or a preacher. Exhort!

**One who contributes.** This is a person who is giving. Paul says to give in generosity. Meaning, don't be stingy, but give sacrificially. God has gifted some people not only with the heart of generosity, but with the money to be able to be generous. Yet, in America, the wealthiest nation in the world, we percentage-wise give less. We are like the religious leaders in contrast to the widow's mites. God tells us that with the gift of money should come generosity.

**One who leads.** This would, I believe, refer to any form of leadership within the church. Don't do your work to get people's approval or acclaim. If you do, you'll give up. You'll burn out. Do it because the Lord is so great and good! If you live as a sacrifice for the Lord, knowing your life in Christ, you will have a zeal. If you know your leadership is used by God to draw people closer to him, you'll be passionate! Don't be a lazy leader. Be a zealous, passionate-for-God's-glory leader!

**One who does acts of mercy.** Serve people cheerfully. Acts of mercy can be a painful affair. Many people don't want to be taken advantage of, and acts of mercy are actions towards people who may not be able to repay or actions to people who you know *will* not repay or maybe even say thank you. Do we not do good because they don't say thank you? Will we only serve the thankful?

I hope you see in all of these things how these gifts exemplify the gospel of Jesus. Jesus is the Savior who was the prophet who taught, served, exhorted, led and gave all we needed to be right with God. And he leads us all the way to glory! As a result, let's use these various gifts to magnify our Savior within the church. If we lived this way, we truly would be killing pride because we'd rejoice in God's good gifts towards us individually while also loving one another and valuing the gifts in each other. We would exhort, strengthen, encourage each other – growing more and sacrifices to the Lord in this world until he comes!

**As we magnify Jesus, we are to be thinking and living soberly. May we recognize that we have been saved by grace and that we grow in grace – not alone, but with a new family, the church. As a result, let's serve each other as Christ serves us and strengthens us – transforming us more into his image.**

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