



grow groups



## Week 4: Your GIFTS Are On Loan

### Romans 12:3-8

#### GOAL:

To recognize that our whole lives – spiritual gifts and natural abilities – are for the purpose of building up the body of Christ and extending his kingdom.

#### CHECKLIST

- ☐ Invest in your own spiritual life by participating in the daily Growth Guide readings. (This will also prepare you to lead the question about it in your group again this week.)
- ☐ Reach out individually to anyone who did not attend last week. Let them know that you missed them and would love to see them this week.
- ☐ Prepare for your group meeting by praying for yourself and your group (feel free to use the prayer below) and reading through this Leader's Guide.
- ☐ If you haven't already, plan your Grow Group Pair-Up by connecting with the leaders of your paired group.
- ☐ Take attendance in Planning Center, including guests/new members (please include their names and contact info in the meeting notes section). Help new members register for your group using the QR code in your room or at [vrbc.net/grow](http://vrbc.net/grow).

#### PREPARING THROUGH PRAYER:

*Dear Father, giver and sustainer of life, I humbly approach you with gratitude for your grace and mercy that forgives my sins and grants me new life through Jesus Christ. I offer myself to you in faith, as a living sacrifice that is both pleasing and acceptable. Utilize all my abilities to strengthen the body of Christ, so that collectively we may bring glory to you and benefit others. Amen.*

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*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25*

## CONNECT & COORDINATE

We will maintain the same rhythm each week this semester:

1. Welcome your group. Repeat introductions if there are any new people.
2. Coordinate any logistics (group socials, snacks, Grow Group Pair-Up, etc).
3. Check in with your group and gather prayer requests. Consider using the following questions:
  - Where did you see God at work this week?
  - Where do you need God in the week ahead?
4. Pray for the requests shared and for God to lead your time together today.

## DISCUSS

- What stood out to you from the Growth Guide readings this week?

**Leader's Note:** *This week's reading on spiritual gifts helped set the stage for Pastor Arthur's sermon. Here are the key verses:*

- Monday – “Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7).
- Tuesday – “But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be” (1 Corinthians 12:18).
- Wednesday – “And yet I will show you the most excellent way” (1 Corinthians 12:31b).
- Thursday – “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms” (1 Peter 4:10).

*A summary of these verses could be: The manifestation of the Spirit in the lives of all believers are the grace gifts given as selected by God, intended for use by believers as responsible stewards for the benefit of everyone in the community of Christ. The most effective way of utilizing various spiritual gifts is through loving God and each other.*

### **Read Romans 12:3-6a.**

- What does Paul mean by using “sober judgment” as we think of ourselves? How does the analogy of the body impact how we should view ourselves in relation to others?

**Leader's Note:** *Paul was writing to a church begun by Jewish believers but one which now included all kinds of people from varied backgrounds, languages, and cultural norms. There was great potential for division with so much diversity unless Christ is the one to whom all are drawn.*

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*It is easy to see ourselves as better or less than someone else. How can we move beyond that? Surrender of self is needed. Perhaps this is why Paul penned the opening verses of Romans 12 to urge these followers of Jesus to be "living sacrifices" because he wanted them to dedicate their entire lives – thoughts, actions, and desires – to God, which meant two things: 1) surrendering their own will and priorities to fully serve and worship God, rather than just performing outward religious acts, and 2) wholeheartedly living a life that reflected Christ's teachings and actively serving others, even when it required personal sacrifice.*

*To live in such a way required transformation, beginning with a new way of thinking.*

*This is where "sober judgment" comes in. It means each one sees themselves and other believers as those made in the image of God, one person not better than another, one not more useful than another, one not more necessary than another. Pride and arrogance have no place in sober judgment.*

*Paul uses the physical body as an analogy of the spiritual body of Christ. Psalm 139:13 says our physical bodies were knit together in our mother's womb which was all God's doing. Jeremiah 1:5 reminds us that before we were formed in our mother's womb God knew us and set us apart for his purpose.*

*Even as our physical bodies are formed by God, so does he form his spiritual body called the church. Christ is the head and puts the parts of his body together as he wants them to be (1 Corinthians 12:18). We have no bragging rights because we had nothing to do with this beautifully designed creation. It is all God's idea from start to finish.*

*Even as our individual body parts depend on other parts, so do we depend on one another. God has given us spiritual gifts to use to have a healthy, functioning body of Christ. Even as our toes, elbows, ankles, and noses work together, so does each member of the body of Christ benefit one another. Our grace gifts are not for the advantage of the individual but rather for the benefit of the whole body of Christ.*

### **Read Romans 12:6-8.**

- What is the importance of the spiritual gifts for VRBC that are listed in these verses? What is the difference between abilities and spiritual gifts?

**Leader's Note:** *All the different spiritual gifts are needed to meet the various needs of the body of Christ and are for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). Use your gift; don't keep it to yourself!*

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*As you unpack the meaning of these gifts, discuss the importance of each and how they are experienced at VRBC. Notice that each one is a **spiritual ability**.*

- *Prophecy is the spiritual ability to speak God's words to encourage and instruct us. Prophecy in accordance with your faith.*
- *Serving is the spiritual ability to help others spiritually and materially.*
- *Teaching is the spiritual ability which allows a person to clearly explain and interpret the Word of God to others.*
- *Encouragement is the spiritual ability which allows a person to uplift, motivate, and inspire others through positive words and actions.*
- *Giving is a spiritual ability that enables people to serve God by sharing their material resources with others. Be generous in giving, not stingy.*
- *Leading is the spiritual ability to guide and motivate others toward a common vision and purpose as revealed by God. Be steady and energetic in leading.*
- *Mercy is the spiritual ability to show godly love and compassion toward people who are suffering. Do it cheerfully.*

*When teaching about spiritual gifts, the question often arises about the difference between natural abilities and the grace gifts. Natural abilities are ours by physical birth. Any person can have them. These talents can be the result of genetics and training. They reveal our human ability. Because our bodies are given to us by God, these natural abilities come from him. However, you do not have to be a follower of Jesus to have natural abilities.*

*Spiritual gifts are ours by spiritual birth through the indwelling Holy Spirit. They reveal Christ's supernatural ability to work in us and through us for his glory and the good of his body. As our spiritual life deepens and matures, we learn more and more how God desires to use these grace gifts within the body of Christ to build one another up and further his kingdom.*

- What practical steps can we take to identify and develop our spiritual gifts for the benefit of Valley Ranch Baptist Church?

**Leader's Note:** *Pastor Arthur gave three steps: surrender (which is discussed earlier in this lesson), discover, and use.*

*To aid with discovery, encourage your group to sign up for the Spiritual Gifts Workshop on Wednesday night from 6:00-7:30 p.m., where more definition will be given to the gifts and ways to use them. They can also go online to take the Spiritual Gifts Assessment.*

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## WEEK 4

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*Another way to discover gifts is through what others see in you that you may not see in yourself. Have group members share with one another the gifts they see in each other. For example,*

- *“Joe” quietly serves on Sunday mornings setting up the coffee and snacks, which helps people feel welcome.*
- *“Mary” loves to have people in her home where her Grow Group enjoys times of fellowship and building community.*
- *The administrative and leadership gifts of “Sally” are used to coordinate all the VBS volunteers who are teaching children to love and follow Jesus.*

*If there are those in your group who know their gifts, ask them to share how God has used their gifts to strengthen other believers and our faith community.*

*What other ideas come to mind? Think of ministries at VRBC where your gifting is needed. Affirm again that we are to use our gifts, not let them sit idle.*

## PRAY

**Leader’s Note:** *Create groups of 3-4 to pray together. If they feel comfortable doing this, ask them to hold hands or link arms to demonstrate the parts of the body working together for the common good.*

- *Thank God for his grace and the way he is at work in each person.*
- *Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal more fully what their gifts are.*
- *Seek direction on how to use those gifts in the life of VRBC.*
- *Thank God for the ways specific people have used their gifts to bless them.*

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