

IHOPers, this is a second copy of this lesson but includes new material as an attachment at the bottom listing the scripture references for each of the 20 major gifts of the Holy Spirit. Enjoy.

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

IHOP BIBLE STUDY

20 -- Romans 12A: 1 – 8, “The Living Sacrifices” -- study page

The purpose of the Letter to the Romans is to develop a “Model for Living the Awakened/Transformed Life.” **Today’s study is the 20th of 27 lessons.**

STARTING A NEW SECTION OF THE ROMAN’S CHART TODAY: According to our **Study Chart** we are studying the 4th section of “Become The Work of The Church.” Our previous sessions cover Paul presentations on God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. This new section covers the Work of the Church. This is one of seven sessions under the rubric of “Ethics.” This is the **first** session in this series. Remember, the focus of the Book of Romans is to provide us “The Model For Living The Awakened/Transformed Life.”

BACKGROUND: You’ll sense a change in mood as we shift from the hard, detailed, theological work of the previous three sections. It is almost as if we have passed Paul’s course in theology and now he is ready to treat us as colleagues rather than students. I’ll admit that this is refreshing.

Now, our work shifts to applying what we’ve learned in order to **become the work of The Church**. Observe, this is more than just doing the work of The Church. Paul wants us to embody The Church, to embrace it and morph ourselves in the shape of “little Christs;” you’ll remember this is Luther’s expression for Christians who live their lives fulfilling their intended purpose of being humane people and communities.

The way this work gets done becomes Christian Ethics; the way we treat others, and the way in which we view ourselves. It may be helpful to remember the short hand offered by Gut Trip Analysis. Christian Ethics always is WWJD?

Define:

1. **God’s mercy** – (Hint: God’s wrath) **An Awakening event.**
2. **Act of worship** – (Hint: How does God want us to live with God?) **A time and place to practice the sacrifice of myself in surrender to God and neighbor.**
3. **Pattern of this world** – (Hint: What is our “isness?") **Physical and Natural; this is what usually is known as being human; this is only a part of our “isness.”**
4. **God’s will** – (Hint: What does God want us to do?) **To live At-One with neighbor, self and God as Perfect At-One-Ment is to fulfill our intended purpose.**
5. **Our mercy** (How does this differ from God’s mercy?) **To live humanely.**
6. **Holy** – (Hint: Wholeness) **Wholeness. Also health.**
7. **Spiritual** – (Hint: What is our human “essence?") **Since our human nature is both physical and spiritual, then our spiritual nature is the completion of ourselves. This is the other part of our “isness;” this is our human essence; this is what makes us human and different from the “isness” of cows, birds, trees, seeds, earth, etc.**

The problem we face is that our physical/natural selves are so present with us that we overlook the significance of our spiritual selves. This leaves us in a crippled state of being. Our awakening to the reality of our spiritual selves is experienced as health and a deep sense of satisfaction.

The solution to this problem is repentance. That is, instead of looking only to the physical/natural side of ourselves, the need is to look in the other direction

that includes our spiritual side as well. Note that we need both sides to be whole, humane individuals.

Also it is observed that we look more often that we realize at the fullness of ourselves. We have great difficulty in naming this experience and associating it with the Christian theological experience of being the fullness of Christ.

Read the assignment in one reading.

A. Vs. 1, What is your experience of “God’s mercy?”

WS: When we overlook our spiritual essence, then we are subject to being rudely re-awakened. This supports the axiom that “The reward for the deed is found in the deed itself.” However, the experience of this re-awakening always is an event that slaps our faces and yells, “Wake up.” This event is as common as a patrolmen’s red light, or being called into accountability by a teacher.

B. If God’s mercy becomes our operating context, then what are the experiences of the following? (Remember the context is “God’s mercy.”)

1. The experience of offering our bodies as living sacrifices?

WS: In the context of “God’s mercy” (an awakening event = also known as a Christ Event) offering ourselves as living sacrifices is that we are called to demonstrate the living of humane lives. This is our signal purpose in life to which we cut away all other extraneous activities. This is our sacrifice. At first glance, this seems to be self-denial, but on second reflection we experience this as wholeness, the peace that passes understanding, and at-one-ment.

2. The experience of holiness?

WS: In the context of “God’s mercy”, the experience of Wholeness is the emotion or feeling of deep satisfaction.

3. The experience of being spiritual?

WS: In the context of “God’s mercy” this is a profound sense of well-being.

4. The experience of all of this being an “act of spiritual worship?”

WS: We human/humane beings are called to live only for God’s purposes. In this way we fulfill our intended purpose of being humane—this achieves our human essence. We know we are doing this because of the emotion of wellbeing and the sense of peace about ourselves. When we experience these things, then we are being worship not just doing worship. The formal worshipping experience, for instance on Sunday morning, actually is the practice of living to meet these purposes. (Can we do a better job of worshipping when we understand this is the goal of worship?)

C. Vs. 2, What is your experience of conforming your life to “the pattern of the world?”

WS: As we experience being narcissistic and greedy we are living in our human/natural state of being. The pattern of the world makes me the focus rather than God as Perfect At-One-Ment.

D. What is your experience of transformation? (Hint: From what and to what?)

WS: The fundamental transformation is from living only with our human/natural selves to fulfilling our spiritual essence.

E. How do you go about “the renewal of your mind?” (Hint: From what are you renewing it, and to what?)

WS: The renewal of our minds is accomplished as we move from demonstrating the antithesis of At-One-Ment, and move to demonstrating life lived in the context of At-One-Ment.

F. Paul tells us that when we have accomplished the above then we are in a position to – Test God’s will and Approve God’s will. If I was walking down the street and saw you testing God’s will, or approving God’s will, what would I see you engaged in?

WS: God’s will is for us to fulfill our intended purpose of living on behalf of others. It was suggested that “Testing God’s Will” can be applied to the decisions of the Federal Government to do away with government programs supporting the poor and then giving tax breaks to the wealthy. One IHOPer suggested, however, that maybe taking the long view of how to help the poor is to help the wealthy be better able to invest in jobs etc.

You decide. The application of WWJD always is appropriate. What do you suppose the Christ would support?

G. Vs. 3 – 4, Paul tells us that it is by the grace given to us. What is your experience of this grace?

WS: Grace always is experienced as a wake-up call. When we are prepared to see it, we experience this wake up call many times a day.

H. Vs. 3B, In light of this grace, Paul reminds us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. OK, then, how much are we allowed to think of ourselves?

WS: Well, we are the Children of God! There is nothing any better, any where, or at any time!

I. In light of “sober judgment” how much are we to think of ourselves?

WS: In light of “sober judgment,” we see ourselves as only one part of God’s creation. In this way we are brothers or sisters to everyone else and everything else, including the snakes, bats and spiders. (Shades of St. Francis?)

J. In light of “the measure of faith (watch out!) God’s given you,” how much are we to think of ourselves?

WS: Our "measure of faith" is the measure of our surrender. The more we surrender, to give up to live in God's context, the more we can think of ourselves. Interestingly, the more we think of ourselves, the more we think of others as being more important.

K. Vs. 4, In light of this grace, Paul reminds us that we are all one body with many members, and all not having the same functions. How does this grace make a difference?

WS: When "grace" is considered a wake up call, then our particular gifts become an endowment of our spiritual essence. Our "gifts" can be considered our human assignment. Our "talent" can be considered our human ability.

L. Vs. 5 – 6, If I was walking down the street and I observed you living IN CHRIST, how would I know? How do you know when you are living IN CHRIST?

WS: We will see people promoting the causes of the widows and the orphans; i.e., the poor. In this way, we'll see people promoting those things that result in At-One-Ment. We know when we are "living in Christ" when we experience a deep sense of satisfaction.

M. How does living IN CHRIST change us from many members into one body?

WS: Our unity is not in ourselves but in our relationship to the Christ who is the focus of our common relationship.

N. Vs. 7- 8, What is necessary for us to claim our "different gifts?"

WS: We claim our different gifts in the proportion in which we surrender to Christ as our context. As the author of this IHOP Bible Study, my spiritual gift is prophesying through the message of Gut-Trip Analysis.

One IHOPer observed there may be 21 "gifts" that Paul lists in various places. This is the only place in which 7 of these are enumerated: Prophesying, teaching, encouraging, generosity, leadership and mercy. Each of these are to be used in proportion to our surrender to Christ.

Alright folks, talk to me.

The following chart of The Major Gifts of the Holy Spirit is a gift of the work of Pastor Robert Winters, an active member of the Salina IHOP Bible Study. This work is associated with this lesson, and it provides a list of the 20 major gifts of the Holy Spirit. Enjoy.

The MAJOR GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

ROMANS 12: 6 – 8	1 COR. 12: 14 – 7	1 COR. 12: 28	EPHESIANS 4: 11
Prophecy Teaching Serving Exhortation Giving Giving Aid Compassion	Prophecy Healing Working Miracles Tongues Tongues Interpretation Wisdom Knowledge fails Discernment	Prophecy Teaching Healing Working Miracles Tongues Tongues Interpretation Apostleship Helps Administration	Prophecy Teaching Apostleship Evangelism Shepherding

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