

Romans 12:6-8

by Keith Price

The sermon emphasizes the importance of using our gifts in the body of Christ, and the role of faith in guiding our actions.

Duration: 1:03:47

Scripture: Romans 12:6

Topics: "Spiritual Gifts", "Christian Service"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of using the gifts that God has given us to serve Him. He references a book called 'The Fate of Empires' and emphasizes that in the last closing decades of every empire, actors, athletes, and musicians become the focus of attention. However, the speaker encourages using these interests as opportunities to serve the Lord. He then goes on to discuss the different gifts mentioned in Romans 12:6 and how they should be used in proportion to one's faith. The speaker emphasizes the importance of treating fellow believers as family and refers to the concept of believers being part of a flock with Jesus as the shepherd.

Transcript

Pray. Yes, Lord, those words are so true. We're such strange creatures, Lord.

One minute telling you here in this building that we want to run after you and serve you, and the next minute forgetting about it and going off running after things that keep us apart from you. Lord, it would be nice for us to say, do something about it, Lord. But the fact is, you've told us to do something about it.

You've made that move in grace. Now the next move on the board is ours, Lord, in response. You've made us in your image.

We're supposed to reflect you. Granted, as we consider what we will today, that the use of the things you've given us, which are your gifts to us, may be such that as they are used to serve your church and the world, people may see you in the use of them. We ask this for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Well, would you turn with me then to Romans 12 that we're going through this week, and we started on Sunday morning with the first two verses, and we yesterday morning continued on to verses three, four, and five. So we're going to take the next three verses today.

There are marvelous picture words that particularly in the epistles and the letters of the New Testament are used of those of us who belong to Jesus Christ. There's that marvelous word, his family. Oh my, how marvelous that is.

And we're supposed to treat one another as the family of God in the same way as we would treat an actual family member of blood and flesh and so on. And we'll see a little bit more of that later in Romans 12. There's another marvelous word, a flock.

If we're the flock, he's the shepherd. And how wonderful it is to take words like this, and if you wake up at night at two o'clock and just take a little walk of 10 yards or whatever it is to that little room, then you get back and you can't go off to sleep. Then if you've intercessorally prayed for those you have been praying for and you're still awake, then take one of these picture words and say, now, I want to think about this word, family, a flock.

You're the shepherd. Or we're the army. You're the commander in chief.

We're your soldiers. My, what tremendous implications there are in that. Because we're not here as a club, where it's nice to come apart for a week, but God didn't call us to live in a cloister.

He called us to go out into the world as his army. Another wonderful one is his bride, that we are the bride of Christ. He's the heavenly bridegroom and we are the bride.

And my, we love him and we run after him and he has run after us. That's the only reason that we respond to him is because he took the initiative to run after us and chase us. And we're the bride and we have those intimate times of fellowship, just alone with him in our quiet times.

And he sows his seed by his spirit into our lives. We're his bride and we produce his fruit, the fruit of the spirit of love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control. But the picture that the Apostle Paul uses mostly, more than any others I think, is this one of the body.

We are a body and we're one body. There is only one body and those who have part with Christ have part with me. We must never allow any secondary matter, though it be biblical, any secondary non-essential to salvation matter, ever to become a divisive issue, because we're one body.

Now we've seen the oneness of the body in verses four and five, and now we move on, six, seven, and eight, to the diversity in the body, the two sides, the oneness, the unity. Not uniformity, we saw, that's in a graveyard, remember? But unity, and the unity is used because it's diverse people with differing gifts, many colored variegated gifts, for God is a God of rich and infinite variety, who gives all kinds of gifts to his body, and he does that, and he wants the world to see that though we're all different, so different, yet he can bind us together in unity. So now we come to that diversity.

In fact, if you wanted to, you could look at Ephesians chapter four, and you see the first six verses all about the unity, just like this was. Then you'll see from verse seven on, you'll see it's until about 12, I guess it is, or 13, you'll find it's all about the diversity, all the different gifts God gives. And then from the last two or three verses, it's as a result of unity and diversity, then there's maturity, and we grow into Christ, grow up in him.

All right, so let's have a look at these verses, six, seven, and eight. We have, and all I'm doing in these mornings, by the way, I'm not sort of preaching homiletically correct. All I'm doing is giving a running

commentary.

We're just going down through these verses. Oh, you know, that is something that I have been greatly helped by. When somebody just simply goes through, there's no funny stuff, and no clever stuff, and you know, James Denny said, you can't magnify God and be clever at the same time.

So we're just going to go through the verses and plagiarize, borrow God's thoughts, and that's it. Verse six, we have different gifts according to the grace given us. If a man or a woman's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

If it is serving, let him serve. If it is teaching, let him teach. If it is encouraging, let him encourage.

If it's contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously. If it's leadership, let him govern diligently. If it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Now, there are words put in there to make up the sense of the English. If we just translated it in the way in which it was written, it probably wouldn't sound too good in English. Sometimes, you know, translations can be so accurate, like for instance, I like the NIV in the Old Testament, and I like the New American Standard Bible in the New Testament, but the NASB is so accurate, it's not good English.

Too accurate to be good English. If I don't have my little Greek Testament, I'll trust that one more than any other, but boy, I don't like to say, and Jesus was beginning to go towards Jerusalem. I mean, it doesn't make sense in English.

We don't need all those 500 forms of the verb. So sometimes in English, we put in little words to make it up. If I were to translate this literally, I wrote it down here.

Here we are. This is what the way I would translate this. Look at your text from verse 6, 7, and 8. This is what it really is saying, specifically if I were to translate it like that, word for word.

Now, as having charismata, differing according to the grace given us, be it prophesying according to the proportion of faith, be it serving in that service, be it the one teaching in that teaching, be it the one encouraging in that encouragement, the one contributing in simplicity, the one leading in diligence, the one showing mercy in cheerfulness. So you can see, that's all it says. It's got basic words.

Let's have a look at some of these. My, there are so many lists of gifts. This is only one of them.

I mean, not so many. There are at least four other. That's five different lists of gifts in the New Testament, and you'll find that together they make up about 30 different gifts.

Sometimes there's overlapping ones. Some words are used, and one like speaking, for instance, which covers prophesying, teaching, encouragement, and things like that. So it's difficult, but there are about 30, and as I said yesterday, that's not an exhaustive list at all.

There's many, many more gifts, and in fact, you'll be sharing with me, I hope, and tell me some of those gifts you've seen in people, or maybe, oh, you didn't think you had any, and suddenly you found you had, but it wasn't in the Bible, so somebody said, that's not a gift, and you, but it is a gift, baby, you see. So you've got lists. Here's a great list, Ephesians 4, and if you want to remember the lists, the five lists, remember the figure four, Ephesians 4, and then 1 Peter 4. Only got two gifts there, but that's a list.

Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4. Then remember the number 12. 1 Corinthians 12 is the third list at the beginning of the chapter. 1 Corinthians 12 is the fourth list at the end of the chapter, and ours, Romans 12, is the fifth list.

So you've got all these different gifts, and as I said yesterday, there are many gifts that people had. Do you remember I mentioned the difference between John and Charles Wesley? You see, John Wesley had this wonderful gift of teaching. He was also an evangelist, a couple hundred and fifty years, a couple hundred years ago now, but here he had that gift of teaching, and of course, that's a biblical gift.

Remember I said, but Charles Wesley, I mean, he didn't have what we know of as a biblical gift. He wrote hymns, but today, which of the brothers ministers more to us, John Wesley or Charles Wesley? Well, Charles Wesley, because we sing those marvelous hymns, and can it be, and all kinds of other wonderful hymns. So there are differing gifts, and you're not limited to these, but let's have a look at this list.

Take seven of them here quickly. We won't exhaustively talk about any one, but give a few hints. The first gift is prophesying.

If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. There are a number of ways in which we use the word prophetic or prophesy, particularly when we say, my, that was a prophetic utterance. We may mean by that, that my, there's an issue around today, we're speaking and thinking of the news and the issues today, and somebody speaks a word, which is a word that generally is backed up by scripture, maybe not a particular scripture, and they come out with a statement.

Somebody says, that was a prophetic utterance. Or we may take, for instance, in the Bible, sometimes the word is used just to mean teaching, although not normally. It is used because, don't forget, they were often teaching with an oral tradition until the New Testament got into written form, and the Spirit of God would come upon people, but they used it in that way.

Perhaps more often, we would see the difference between prophesying and teaching in this way. Prophesying is unpremeditated utterance, and teaching is premeditated utterance. I know, I do it, I have to pre-med-itate such a lot, 70, 80 hours a week of it, so it's premeditated.

But prophesying is unpremeditated. The Spirit of God will come upon your sons and daughters, and they will prophesy. It's unpremeditated.

When I decide on what I'm going to teach, and I premeditate it in this passage, almost every message, at least once if not twice, I find myself starting to say a sentence that I have never thought before. I keep going because it's worked before, and I say, boy, this is interesting. Lord, what are you going to say? And out it comes, and I'm listening.

I say, well, that was interesting. Unpremeditated. Perhaps the Spirit of God broke into a time of teaching, and because I didn't know something that he knew was needed here, then he would cause me to say that.

And indeed, I find it that since I've lost 15, 20 years, when I don't normally make a practice of using notes, I find I'm more open to that kind of thing, because otherwise, I've got to get through all this lot, you know, and I can't have time to do any of this stuff that the Spirit of God gives me. Rosemary and I were in a camp in Caroline, Alberta, about two or three, four years ago now, I guess. It was Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and it was a leadership conference in January there, and during one of the evenings toward the end of the week, I had prepared a message, and I was sitting in the earlier part of the service when they

were singing and sharing testimonies and so on, and I had this increasing feeling that I wasn't to preach the message that I had prepared.

Well, the thing is that another burden came on me, a passage of Scripture. Oh God, no, I can't, I mean, it's been 15 or 20 years since I preached on that passage. I would need a lot of time.

No, no, put that out of my mind. Get back to my message, you know, just get it right. But no, I couldn't feel comfortable, and more of this other burden would come just shortly before I was to get up to speak.

A man in a wheelchair who was, in fact, the administrator of this conference grounds, on the staff he was the administrator, not the director, but the one who did all the hard work of keeping all the business side of it together, he didn't stand up because he was in the wheelchair, and he spoke up an unpremeditated word of prophecy out of the blue, and in this word of prophecy he was saying, what we need here today, Lord, is this, and we believe that you want to tell us this, and this, and this, and I want to, and he started to quote a Scripture, and he started to quote the very Scripture that God had put in my mind, and it was so strong that the Spirit of God needed us to, needed to teach us this. Well, I knew why that prophetic utterance was there. It was that God would say to me, price, eat your pride, don't worry if you don't know what you're going to say, trust me this time, and get up and preach, and I got up and preached on the burden, and indeed it met needs of people right there, and that's the way God will do that sometimes.

Don't think that these gifts automatically ceased. I'm not a prophet by any means. I looked at my calling card this morning, it's not there, and frankly, but you see with any one of these gifts, we don't have to be that particular person with that gift and the big sign outside, you know.

No, any one of these, God can take any one of us, I suppose, and use us in limited ways. I'm not normally the kind of person that could do that kind of thing, but you know, but we all are used by God. Anyway, that's it, prophesying is unpremeditated utterance for the most part.

Anyway, let's look at the next one here. No, we didn't finish it. If a man's gift of prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

There are two ways of interpreting that, and if you've got an NIV, you may have, like I have, an A by the side of his faith, and if you look in the footnote, it says, or in agreement with the faith. So there are two ways. First of all, I can say, well, that may be a subjective understanding or an objective.

I can say, let him use it in proportion to his faith, as he is waiting upon God, and he believes that God, the Holy Spirit, can bring to him something that he needs to say. Well, the degree that faith is, let him just open up and only say what the Spirit of God has said to him in response to his faith. Don't go beyond that.

Let him use it in accordance with his faith, proportion to his faith. But the other way is this. The early Christian teaching, the way, as Christianity was called, the truth they taught was called the faith.

So there it's the body of truth called the faith, which is the scripture put in creed form or in various other ways, and it's called the body of truth called the faith. So now, let him use that gift of prophesying in proportion to, or in agreement with, as the margin says, the faith. In other words, make sure that you don't go off track just because you've got this gift of prophesying.

Listen, God may come to this point where there's no more truth to be revealed, and we know he's reached that point as far as giving new truth. So don't go beyond what the faith says. Incidentally, John Robinson,

the pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, when they came to these coasts, which was two or three years ago now, he was the pastor in England, left from our home city, of course, and in Brussels, in England, and he came out there, and when he came, was it? Or am I muddling him up? Anyway, whatever it was.

Anyway, he came out here, and he put them on board, you know, the Mayflower, and he said to them as they were on board there, he said, now, don't forget, the Calvinists will go no further than Calvin, the Lutherans will go no further than Luther, but he said, don't forget, there is still yet more truth to break out of the word of God. But don't forget that he said to break out of the word of God, not still more truth to be added on to the word of God. This is God's final word to us, but there's still more truth to be broken out, to break out of it, and since the Reformation in particular, there's been a gradual recovery of truth that had been lost for many, many years, and it's wonderful to find that I work in 40 denominations, all kinds of people, and some of which you'd look at me and say, surely you don't.

I say, yes, I do, because God's people happen to be there, and I go there. But it's wonderful, isn't it, how gradually we've recovered truth. But this is the thing, it's where to use it in proportion to the faith, or in agreement with the faith, all right? Look at the second gift, the gift of serving.

Verse 7, if it is serving, let him serve. Now, this is a general word for serving. There are two words used for either a servant or a slave, the main words.

A little later on, down in the next day or two, we will see the one about slaving, but this one is the servant one, and it's just the word that we get our word deacon from, and deaconos, and although there are different ways of looking at it, dia is diameter going through the circle, and some people say, I'm not too sure it's right that conus, dust, you know, going through the dust, so you must go through the dust. I don't know, it may just be a nice little picture that people have picked up. I'm not sure whether that's right or not, but this is the general word for serving in all kinds of ways.

And so, if a person's gift is serving, let him serve. What a wonderful thing it is to see someone with a servant spirit, and how wonderful it is that God has chosen to put this gift of doing, action, where everyone else, the rest of us, like, you know, yak and talk. The one before it, the prophesying, he's talking.

The one after him, this teacher, he's talking. But the one in the middle, he's serving, he's really doing his task. I can think of people now, I can think of great people with servant spirits who, in our church, people like, some of you will know the names, doesn't matter, Doug Wilson, or Janet Rashly, or people I know have got servant spirits.

And wherever you see them, they're always serving. They're making the coffee, or they're opening doors, or they're taking a baby, or helping somebody with their clothes, or whatever it is, they're always serving. Some people seem to be committed to that.

My wife is very much that way. I can sit at a meal at home, we have six or seven people maybe visiting, and I can sit there and I get lost in conversation. I can only do one thing at a time, but whatever I do, I tend to do intensely.

Sort of made that way. Can't see anything else, got the blinkers on, got to give everything to it, you know. So I don't notice if people need something at the table, or the butter's over here, or they run out of drinking something, or they need another.

Funny thing, she just looks and there it, I mean, just notices. She can be actually in a conversation and immediately notice at the same time that this is, I mean, even when we're just eating alone. Before I've noticed that I need something, she's noticed I need it and given it.

I mean, this is amazing that some people have that kind of manner of working. It's a marvelous gift, but you know, I'm not too sure that we just sit back and wait for God to zap us one and say, hey, you've got this gift. We've got to do it.

Price one year, you're going to learn. We've just got to sit, get down, and doing it. And we may find, as we'll see in a moment or two when we discuss, we may find that we have gifts we never knew because we just sit down and do it.

But what a marvelous gift to serve. This is what Jesus was. This is one of his greatest names for himself, the Son of Man.

He said, the Son of Man, his favorite choice of names, the Son of Man has come not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. You can't be a leader until you're a servant, and you're a servant. It's servants that we choose the leaders from.

Don't train leaders, train servants, and then the true leaders will emerge from the servants. Don't find a bunch of people you think have got leadership gifts because they got some horribly strong, aggressive personality or something, and then you think they make good leaders. No, no, you're going to try and find the servants out of them.

They may never serve, but you find people who are servant spirits, and those are the ones that from which the leaders should come, because the way up is down. If it is teaching, the third one, let him teach. As I've said, this is the premeditated utterance, and it's interesting that in the five lists of gifts that we've mentioned just now, one of the lists, which is the Ephesians 4 list, verses 11 and 12, gives these four gifts.

Just a moment, if you can just turn to it. I don't normally like to turn people back and forth, because I'm used to teaching new Christians. That's why I tried to take deep truths and put them in such simple language that a ten-year-old can understand, but so you'll forgive me if I appear to talk down sometimes.

I'm not trying to do that, but just trying to make it simple. So I don't normally turn them back and forth, because when I try to find Romans 12 again, I have to go to the index page and find out where it was. So look at Ephesians 4, and look what it says there about teachers, you see? Verses 11 and 12.

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers. Four gifts, because the structure of pastor and teacher is together there. Although there are people that still feel you can teach in an institution, of course, obviously you may not have a shepherding or pastoring gift.

But the to be isn't there. All it really says, in the language in which it was written, is he gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers in order to do certain things. Here, the only one of the five lists of gifts, the gift is not given to the person.

Here, the gift is the person given to the church. In fact, again, although we talk about gifts of grace, and I talked about talents from birth and so on, there's a sense in which most of the teachers that I have listened to and been helped by had the gift of teaching before they became a Christian, even though we think of it

in terms of this special anointing. So I'm not too sure I've sorted that one out yet.

I'm sure you've got some good ideas on that, and you can come up and help me sort that one out a little later. But here is the gift of a teacher, and where were we? Oh, Romans, that's right, Romans 12. So I've said enough about that in other days, and I will in the next two or three days, so let's leave that alone for a while, except that God gives those gifts.

And incidentally, when God gives any gift to the church, whether it's a person or whether he gives a gift to that person, that person belongs to the whole body, it says at the end of verse 5. Each member belongs to all the others. You say, all the others in my church? No, all the others in the body. How many bodies are there? One body.

That means you belong to the whole Church of Jesus Christ worldwide, and you've no right to restrict. Well, we have to restrict ourselves. We've got to sort of zero in on something, but really, quite honestly, all of the church worldwide needs to use that resource, or you need to be making yourself available for churches wider than your own to use that resource.

It's a wonderful thing in my work as Minister-at-Large, or as my son-in-law, Brent, calls me, Large Minister. I used to have a bigger pot, that. Brent, you haven't said that since I lost that 20 pounds.

It's okay. Anyway, in my work as Minister-at-Large with our Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, which is a working together of 40 denominations where we cross over lines, the purpose is to pool our resources so that we'll make them available to all of those who love the Lord Jesus. And then we are able to draw from other areas, other resources, that we may not have.

Some churches say we don't have any gifts. Well, probably you've got the blinkers on in the wrong way, and you keep yourself only to yourself, and you'll be stunned to find anybody else is in heaven. But frankly, as you use your gifts, you're to use them very, very widely.

Now, I believe, if you can, but we all have specific things we need to... We'll talk a little more about that now, shortly. Look at the next gift. If it is encouraging, let him encourage.

Let me talk about the difference between prophesying, teaching, and encouraging. The word encouraging is a word that is translated in four different ways, as far as I can see, in the New Testament. It's a verb, to encourage, and it's translated either to encourage, to exhort, to admonish, or to comfort.

It's the same word, and it's just a word that means, really, it's to do with the work of the... In fact, it's to do with the word for the Holy Spirit. Listen to one of the words for the Holy Spirit in the Bible, parakletos. Listen to this word, paraklesis.

So, really, this is what the paraklete, the Holy Spirit, is actually doing, and he's causing you to be an encouragement to other people. So, para, kaleo, kal, is from call. We get a word call from that, para, alongside.

Someone called alongside. Someone called alongside someone else to sit down with them. I know some in my family have that gift, it's a gift of sitting down, sensing people's needs, sensing where someone needs encouragement, taking the time.

Somebody like me is rushing off somewhere, oh dear, I wish I could have time, but other people, that's their gift, and they can sense it, and they sit down, and they sit, they're called alongside, like a lawyer, or a legal aid, or somebody, an advocate, you know. In fact, that word advocate, I suppose, is, yes, it would be the same word, only from Latin, because ad, towards, in Latin, and vocare, you're calling, vocal, calling, you know, called towards, the same kind of idea. So, here, some people have that gift, and they encourage people.

Now, the thought here, whether it's exhort, admonish, or encourage, or comfort, is all one of a positive thing, that you come in and make that person feel better at the end of it, because what you're doing is, you're actually taking the prophesying and the teaching, and you're applying it to where it's really needed. There's prophesying, which is then the proclamation, there's teaching, which is explanation, and now there's encouragement, or exhortation, which is application. Application.

Where's Jeff? Jeff, where are you? Yeah, we were chatting on this yesterday, and Jeff's got a ministry of encouragement, not to the other team playing the Seahawks, but he's got a ministry of encouragement to his own team, anyway, I'm sure, and there's a gift that, you know, he wouldn't have time to get into all the detail that's needed, maybe, in the teaching, there are too many other things in his area of work and gift, but here, to encourage, to move on, to take those things, or to take the things we're learning this week, and say, I want to apply that to your life. How wonderful it is to have a ministry of encouragement like that. The next one is, if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously or with simplicity.

Contributing. This word is normally, although it was used in a wider way, normally in the Bible, it's used in a monetary or giving sense, as we give our offerings and things of that nature. So, if it is contributing, let him give, I don't believe generously is the best choice, there are two choices here, but this particular paragraph isn't about the size of people's gifts or things like that, this is about the full utilization.

Because God gives us a gift, and what counts is not the nature of our gift, or the size of our gift, but the full utilization of the gift. That's what God looks at. So, he's saying, if it's contributing to the needs of others, let him do it with simplicity.

That's what I believe the translation says. In other words, let there be no ulterior motives, no wrong reasons for giving. There are wrong reasons we can give, because, well, we want other people to see.

And so, we get along a big band, and we go on the street corner, wear our Pharisees outfit, blow it, and pull the ten dollar bill, and wave it, and give it, and say, I'm giving this gift. Or we can do it to curry favor with somebody, well, we give them a gift. Or we can do it, like I have known many, oh, several wealthy businessmen give a gift, and specifically hand it to the pastor of a church, or the chairman of the deacon's board, or elder's board, and say, there's a gift, but you'd better change the music style in this church.

That's not giving with simplicity, that's giving with a wrong motive. Or there are people say, well, I'll give, because I'll get a good tax break on this. Nothing wrong with getting a tax break.

If you give five hundred dollars, and you get a hundred dollars tax break, you say, well, I can give a hundred dollars, and still get twenty dollars tax break again, or something like that. Whatever it is, I don't know your system here. But you see, there's some people, obviously, we've got to use money wisely, but that must never be our primary motive.

Our primary motive is to give for the sheer joy of giving. And the more you give, the more you'll want to give. I tell you, I can, it's absolutely wonderful.

The more you give, the more God seems to leave there. I mean, it's like Sister Abigail of Buffalo, a hundred years ago, who said, little is much when God is in it. And if you have only one dollar, and somebody comes along, and you need the dollar, but you give them fifty cents, he will make the other fifty cents go further than the dollar would have.

Or if you've only got an hour before you're preaching, you desperately need it to get your thoughts together, and somebody needs your time for half an hour, give them a half an hour, and God will enable you to learn what you needed to learn in that half an hour. I've sure seen that to be true. In fact, I was reading William Barclay, and let me read you what he says on this.

By the way, when I mention William Barclay, be careful on William Barclay. He's loved by Christians who love the Bible, and love the Lord, and he's loved by those who play church, and good liberal ways of doing things. You say, well, if somebody can be loved by both, he must have a little bit of both.

Yes, he's not always, I don't believe, orthodox on his authorship of different books of the Bible, on his denial of certain things like demon possession, and things like that. He's not orthodox on a number of things, but he's the best I've ever read on the new birth. So just be careful when you read.

I warn you that, so that you need to not just swallow everything. But let me read what he says on this giving. There is a giving which pries into the circumstances of another as it gives, which gives a moral lecture along with the gift, which gives not so much to relieve the need of the other as to pander to its own vanity and self-satisfaction, which gives with a grim sense of duty instead of a radiant sense of joy, which gives always with some ulterior motive, and never gives for the sheer joy of giving, for giving's sake.

Now that's exactly it. Oh, may God give us, give us a taste of the joy that comes from the sheer joy of giving. No wonder, have you proved yet it's more blessed to give than to receive? Have you found that Proverbs 11, 24 is right? The old King James that I learned at crossing the Star Ferry from Hong Kong to Kowloon when I learned 500 verses in the first four months of my Christian life, but they're all in the King James, so when I repeat them I usually have to paraphrase them.

But let me tell you what it says in the King James. There is that scattereth and yet increaseth. There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

There, now you didn't understand what I said, did you? Well, there are those that give and give and give, and yet they seem to increase in what they've got. There are others that tightly hold on to any possibility of anybody undoing their tight fist, and what happens? They become poverty stricken. Wonderful verse.

It's more blessed to give than to receive. Oh, may God teach us that. No matter how little, how little, but to start giving from that little, and start giving, then increasing, increasing, increasing.

Read the life of R. G. Latourne and see what happens when you give 90 or 95 percent. Sure, all right for him. What he got left is 99 times as much as I would ever get in all my life, but it doesn't matter.

You read how it started. And so, incidentally, I have on a couple of occasions supervised a hundred telephone operators who would take calls from a television program for a World Vision telethon. I served on World Vision board for 20 years, and sometimes we would help out in different ways, and that was one

of the ways.

So I'd supervise, so you could answer any difficult questions people may have. You knew what the policies were, and so on, whereas the operators were volunteers who'd come to give their time for that evening. Do you know what? Every World Vision telethon that I know of, and all the gifts that come in from a city when you have a program to support orphan children, or whatever the need is in another country, every one that I know of, between 90 and 95 percent of the gifts that come in, come from the lower middle class or the poorer areas of a city.

Only five to ten percent come from the wealthier areas. I won't say any more, but does that tell you something? People who have suffered can identify with people who suffer, and it's often those with a widow's might that will give. Oh God, make us good givers.

Go to that seminar this afternoon, and you'll learn about that, and it's a wonderful, wonderful thing to be able to give, all right? By the way, hoarding isn't right, is it? John Wesley, whom we've mentioned already, you said, used to say, God, no, what about people that leave things in their will? And I remember a number of years ago talking about this here when I was preaching on The Rich Fool, and he said, John Wesley said, God rewards us for deeds done in the body, not out of it. Wow, that's quite something. It's quiet here now.

Laugh at yourself. Come on, laugh at yourself and say, yes, that's right. Oh, how wonderful it is to, I mean, goodness me, everybody leaves the same, exactly the same amount, same, it's three something or other.

It's three words, all of it. That's what they leave, only the same amount, but oh God, I want to trust you. How wonderful.

Give it now, maybe, there's a need, and then trust, trust the Lord to look after you later. Anyway, you say you're crazy. All right, I understand that, but you do what you can then.

Now, if it is leadership, which is the sixth of the seven, let him govern diligently. This word leadership can include any form of leadership, be it a pastor, be it the chairman of a board, be it an elder serving on an elder's board, or a deacon serving, being someone leading a committee in the church, being somebody who's leading a class of young people or children, or you're leading in some way. Now, it says if you are gifted in leadership, I want you to govern or to do this with diligence, with zeal, with diligence.

I don't know what you think a leader is. We've talked about a leader compared with a servant, but let me say this, you cannot be a leader until you're a follower, and once you become a leader, you don't follow like you did before. You follow twice as much as you did before.

I've always been a follower. I've always got people who lead me. I've always been a question asker.

My wife would know. She could see the worn-out nature of the face of the people. I would pump with questions all my life.

I was in... I left school too young to be able to know anything. I left school at 14, and I had to learn all my things as I went along. So, I used to be in the pharmaceutical industry, and I'd get some medical specialist here or there or something else.

I would always share what I had to share as I would go and talk with them in the work I was called to, but in actual fact, I always would say, now, I've got a question. There's nothing to do with that, insomuch that when I would see them later, I must say, okay, what's your question today? I was always the question asker. I wanted to get information.

You've got to be like that. I've always had followers. I've always had leaders.

I followed them. Dr. Tozer was the one that's influenced my life tremendously because, of course, he used to meet with me that morning a week and teach me in my car. How wonderful that was.

My wife's father, Archie Field, a wonderful Bible teacher, had a tremendous general knowledge of the Bible. I would always look to him when he died 24, 25 years ago. I've got others along the way, many of them.

Today, my two mentors are... One is somebody that lived in the same road as us in Bristol, but which we didn't know then. Jim Packer, J. I. Packer, the author of *Knowing God*, was a professor of New Testament theology and systematic theology at Regent College in Vancouver. Well, Jim is my theological mentor, and if I'm stuck somewhere, and I'm in the city of Ottawa 2,500 miles away or something, and I'm going to speak in 20 minutes, and I don't know what this passage means, I'll call Jim, and he'll give me a great Calvinistic answer on what that passage means.

And I know that that's one side of it, but there's another side, but that's the side that counts, he tells me. So that's fine. Or if it's to do with life or behavior or conduct or morality, I will go to another friend of mine, Roy Bell, who was the principal of Carey Hall, another college at Vancouver, and Roy is a Baptist minister and is very highly respected, and I would go to Roy to find out what to do on those matters.

And these are the people that I will go to. There are others, too, who you meet and you ask. I always ask younger ones.

Don't think they have to be older. My word, I learned so much from young... I learned from crying babies. Patience or something, whatever it is, but you can learn from anybody, right? But a leader must be a follower, and he must keep on following.

If somebody wants to lead you and they're not following, don't follow them. You say, unless they're very spiritual, and they say, well, you know, I follow God. Oh, that would be the ultimate? Yeah, the ultimate in pride.

Because really, we must look to older, godly, experienced Christians and say, there's always somebody else must learn from. I want to be accountable. When I'm not at one place like this, it's obvious whom I'm accountable to here.

I don't have to discuss with Heather and say, Heather, would you tell me who I'm accountable... I know, I've got the team here that I'm accountable to. We're living on the grounds. We have to have every meal.

I mean, it's marvellous. We can have it there and we're accountable. But sometimes you're in a city where you go to seven or eight different places in a week.

Well, I try to get three pastors who are part of the group that invited me, and I will invite them to my motel room first night and say, would you please come and pray with me? When I'm there, I say, look, I'm here in

this city. I have four areas of accountability, the areas of morality, of doctrine, of strategic planning, and the area of finance. Now, I said the first two, on morality and doctrine, I am accountable to the leaders of our church in Victoria, British Columbia.

Now, on the matters of strategic planning and finances, I am accountable to the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. But whey, I'm a thousand miles from either of them. Isn't it nice to say, oh, I'm really accountable? But they couldn't see what I do.

I say, I want you, therefore, to be my accountability umbrella this week, and I want to voluntarily ask you to correct me if I say any thin end of the wedge of wrong doctrine. If you see me living in a compromising way in this motel, would you please put them... rebuke me on that, or whatever else it is. If I'm unwisely spending money, or if I'm not planning my time, I want you to tell me.

Will you tell me that? You are my umbrella. I want to be accountable. And so, both in following people in what you learn, and also being accountable to people.

Make sure that the people you follow are followers and are accountable to other people. Be careful of the man that's the kingpin and will only bring people around his team who are yes-men to him and only do what he says. Be extremely careful of that.

I've seen a lot of problems. My work has been working with... Well, I won't get into that. Anyway.

So, and the last one, if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. Showing mercy, what a marvellous, marvellous gift. Oh, just to see the need.

Again, along the line of encouragement, oftentimes the people that have the gift of encouragement have the gift of showing mercy. But other people just see those needs again. You know, somebody's sick in the church or something, they'll cook a meal and take it over.

The only time in all of 40 years was last Wednesday, I think it was, Tuesday or Wednesday, the only time I can remember my wife ever having to try to say, look, if you can't find anybody, do come back. And I'd never heard her say that because always, always ready to cook meals for anybody, anybody sick, anything like that. And it was because of the difficult time we had last week with all visitors during my brother-in-law's crisis.

And so, as a result of that, I actually had to interfere on the phone. And I think I got on the phone, if I remember rightly, I think I took the phone and said, you know, I know she won't tell you, but it's, it's just going to be a very difficult week. But please, maybe if you can't find someone else, get on.

Even I'll cook the meal. I knew if I said that, they'd never get back to us. So, so, you know, so anyway, I just wanted, that's a marvellous gift to show mercy.

People, people have got that gift. What a marvellous gift to show mercy. Anyway, these are some of the gifts.

Now, there are many other gifts. Let me just, let me just, let me ask you, let's take a little time here. Let me ask you, you must know that there would be plenty of other gifts, you know, you may have gifts other than the ones I've said.

And you may know that there are people you are close to or familiar with that have got gifts that are not in Scripture. I'd like to know some of those gifts so that others here can get the sense, hey, wait a minute, I had gifts like that or this and so on. Maybe, maybe I can use that for God after all.

Also, I'd like to know if you didn't think you had a gift and you found that God in some way put you on a spot and you started to cultivate it, how that happened. Now, I'm not going to stay long. I don't want anybody to take more than 60 seconds, if possible, so you can just encapsulate that to get a few people just sharing here.

Yes, oh, here's Stan. To you, sir, I will give the microphone, the only one. Thank you, Stan.

Our teaching pastor at our church has, I believe, the gift of wisdom. He's very quiet. He'll sit through a meeting for an hour, not say a word, and we will be discussing some issue, and then we'll say, Carl, what do you think? And he'll just bring a word right from the word, and it will be exactly the right thing, and it'll be the totally opposite thing of what we've been talking about, and we'll go, you know, why didn't you say that an hour ago? But I just was thanking him the other day for allowing God to use him in this way.

He's a very wise person, and it's obviously a God-given gift. Thank you so much, and indeed, that is included in the Bible, a word of knowledge or a word of wisdom, isn't it? Although, if you're from certain groups of churches, you probably say that finished a hundred years after Christ, but I don't happen to think that. I feel that God hasn't got rid of any of those gifts.

It's just that at certain periods of time, certain ones are more prominent, and that's the way it sort of goes. Now, who's got some area here that you feel is something that really was right on what we've been talking about you'd like to share? We have a fellow in our church that encourages us in prayer, and that seems to be either his ministry or his gift. Encouraging people in prayer.

So, what does he do? Does he tell them? I'll let you talk, but if you will, that's nice. We have a missionary friend that has the real ability to get different missionary groups working together among the same people, and for the Lord, I think there's no fighting. So, that's like on a foreign field? And they come in all different groups, you know, come in, and this is my section, and this is my section, but he has them all working together in the same section.

It's beautiful. Special. Oh, that's special.

That's wonderful. In fact, I recall some years ago when I was in Montreal, we had offices of Christian Direction, and we sublet different offices to Scripture Union, which we helped start them there in the French, the La Ligue pour la Lecture, La Bible, and we started to help other people start the French in diversity and the English in diversity, and then there was Hockey Ministries International, and what happened is each of us leaders all had keys to each of our offices, and each of us had keys to the other person's desks, and we worked together to show the oneness of the body. In fact, a book I wrote on this very thing for the Lausanne Committee, I mentioned that as an illustration, and that, I believe, that's wonderful to see that, to see, where are you? Sorry.

Yeah. Oh, yeah. It was wonderful.

It's wonderful to see that, and it's something very close to my heart. So, it is a gift to bring people together. The old days, they used to have Comity.

Anybody know what C-O-M-I-T-Y is? Comity was in the old missions 100 years ago, where they moved into India, and there were Presbyterians and Baptists and Methodists. They would all be given an area, and that's your area. That's a Presbyterian region.

This is a Baptist region, but then we went beyond that, and we could work together. All right. Another good Comity.

Yes. New gift. New gift.

Transportation. I have a son that takes kids to church, goes all over the place to get them to church. My husband, too.

Now, what, I mean, what would you put that biblically? Helps, servant, all kinds. But here's, within these categories, wonderful gift. Just think, if you feel that you don't know yet where it is, you can always do.

You don't have to have a gift to do that. Have you ever found anybody who said they had a gift of cleaning toilets? I mean, who covets the gift of giving? Who covets some of these gifts? Somebody had a hand up over here. Now, if you stand up, Mrs. Mercer.

The gift of humor. Yeah, I just think it's great if you can make people laugh, and, you know, it may not be, well, I guess it's biblical. Oh, very biblical, I think.

And also sports. You know, the ability, physical ability, and you can reach people through those abilities by getting to know them and stuff. And there may not be people that would come into church or whatever, but that's how you reach them.

It's a link to them. Well, thank you. That's wonderful.

And humor, it certainly is biblical. Jesus had, you know, Herod, that fox, and you take the tree trunk out of your own eye before you get the speck of dust out of someone else. I mean, there's a sense of humor.

I also, in myself, I find I have to watch that. I was born with several punny bones in my body, and I see funny things about almost every word, you know. And also, it's so easy if you're, if you're a person that sees funny things, you're in the middle of a very serious description of something in Gethsemane, and you suddenly think of a word, and out it comes, oh, you've ruined the whole thing.

And, you know, humor can deteriorate into levity and destroy our Christian credibility. So, we have to watch it, but it is a gift that some people seem to have, and appreciate, and sport. Well, that kept me from coming to Christ, so I won't say anything about that, but, but, but you're right.

I'm sorry about that. I didn't tell you that yet, I know, but this is a wonderful, wonderful way of, I mean, today, I, I, let me tell you this. I told somebody, who was it I told, about Glubb Pasher.

You know, that Glubb Pasher, the Commander-in-Chief of the Arab Legion for 15 years, wrote a book before he died 10 years ago, in fact, went up and down Britain, giving a lecture on the fate of empires, and he showed how every empire in the last 3,000 years had lasted about 250 years, 10 generations. It would still go on after, but it had lost its greatness. Every empire, he showed, he was an amateur historian, but one who could see all of history, not limited to one epoch or era, and he showed in every empire, and Rome, by the way, was divided into two, the Republic and the Empire, so it's still about 10 generations each.

So, in every one of them, they all started off, and they all went through the same cycle. Arnold Toynbee, the historian, he picked up his ideas, where he says they would start from, you know, bondage, and then get courage, and then they'd conquer some land, and then you'd move in with, with, with the soldiers, and then the, the merchantmen would go in and get the economy moving, and then you'd start to enter the age of art and luxury, there's plenty of money, and then you'd have universities built more and more, so every empire started with about two or three universities, Oxford and Cambridge, Princeton, Harvard, Yale, this kind of thing, we'll call America an empire, you don't mind that, do you? And they started with those, but every one of them finished with a university in every city, and sometimes two universities. That's the way they all went, because it went from the age of art and luxury to the age of intellect, where now what you knew was more important than what you did, and then at that point, always moral decadence sets in, you get corrupt thing inside, and it's easily conquered from without, because there's very little moral standards left anymore, and he said at the end of every empire, whereas at the beginning, the three people that stood in the spotlight were always pioneers, soldiers, and statesmen, at the end of every empire, thankfully, we've still got people that stand in the spotlight and can do great tasks, and this is our chance, but at the end of every empire, he knew in 3,000 years, the three people that stand in the spotlight in the last closing decades are actors, athletes, and musicians.

Now, if you want to read Glob Pasher, there's a book called The Fate of Empires, and in fact, the publisher asked me to do something with that thing, but I turned that down, but it's a marvelous, marvelous book, so let's use what God has given us now, look at the gifts now, people are interested in music, they're interested in sport, they're interested in these other things, so let's use them as opportunities to serve the Lord. I'm talking too much, I wanted you to. Yes, Guy? I think compassion is the gift that God expects all of us as his children to use.

Do you feel that that is a fruit of the Spirit or a gift of the Spirit? I think I would consider it a gift. So, acts of compassion, and do you know in the language of the New Testament, it's the same word, it's translated mercy or compassion, so in that sense, it is a gift, and yet the compassion, which is love, is a fruit. All of us are to have the fruit in our lives, but not all of us have the same gifts.

Thank you so much, and you have a wonderful gift, as you know. What did I say? What did we all say he has a gift of? Yes, they all know your voice, and if they didn't look around yesterday when you were praying, and Stan asked you to pray, if they didn't look around, they'd have sworn you were 40, and here you are, three times, I'm sorry, twice that age. All right, another comment.

Now, let me ask you, then, let me go on to another thing here, just a moment or two. I started late, so I'm okay. It's all right, Heather, don't worry, I'm going to finish before tonight's meeting is on, but no, just for a few minutes here.

How do you feel if somebody doesn't know what gifts they've got, and they want to know what gifts they have got, specifically now, not so many stories now, but give precise suggestions as to how they can find out what those gifts are, or how you did, and how you can then cultivate those. Anybody got some odd, just give me one thing at a time, somebody throw one thing out, and start at the beginning somewhere, where nobody knows what the gifts are. Try it, try it.

Now, there's a great, try it. Anybody tried something that they didn't think they had a gift for? You can just tell us what happened. Anybody done that? Yes, it's all right, you spoke just now, but you obviously have done something, so.

I don't sing, and yet I find myself very often leaving the singing, but the people are very nicely helpful, and they just will carry the tune, and do it. Sometimes I ask for help, but they fit it, and we get the song. Well, I must admit, that wasn't the thing I was thinking about.

There we are, God can even do wonders in that field. All right, something else here. Somebody at the back here, here we are, don't worry, I can come down here.

We'll even reach Heather one of these days. A willingness to sit back in your gift. Yes, now you're sitting back here, would you stand a moment, and everybody can see you.

A willingness not to operate in your gifts, so others will feel the freedom to come forward, like if you're a teacher, but you always teach, and you know there's others. That's wonderful, that's exactly what Ephesians 4 is about, that God gave the gifts of teachers, and pastors, and evangelists, and so on. Why? So that they could do the work? No, to equip the Christians, that the Christians may do the work of ministry.

Oh, they may still preach, and so on, but the primary thing there, in that passage, is that you may equip others, and I don't know, I, from 35, I started to pour my life into other people, and at 54, I handed over my major life ministry to someone else, and he's done a much better job at it, and all the time now, I'm trying to pour my life into the next generation, getting other people to do things. Now, you still sometimes have to come around, and show that you're still alive, at touching 70, but there we are, that's the way it is. So, something else.

You can ask other people what they feel your gifts are. Okay, thank you, that's a big one. Anybody ever been in a business, where your boss has had you in, and he said, all right, now, I want you to sit down here, and I want you to fill out this form, and tell me where you think your strong points, and weak points are, then I will tell you what I is.

Anybody ever done that in business? Of course, you have, and that's a way, and frankly, that's a good way to do it in the church. You've done it, Andy. Tell us, tell us, if you think that would work, if you ask someone else what your gifts are.

Have you ever done that? My wife tells me what my gifts are all the time. Count your lucky stars. No, no, no.

Be very thankful she doesn't tell you what your weaknesses are. She does that too, but she's very kind about it. So, is that a gift, being very kind about your weaknesses? Asking a pastor, or leaders in the church in that.

Have you ever approached anybody and said, look, I'm not too sure whether this is really from God, but do you feel I have this gift, or what? Have you done anything like that? I can't say that I've done that. I have had pastors and other people I respect in the church affirm my gifts, but as I speak of that, I don't know whether I've been telling them that, or whether they've been telling me that. Right.

Well, that's a wonderful thing. Affirming is a good word, and please differentiate between affirming, affirmation, and flattery. Flattery is manipulation for evil purposes.

Affirmation is recognizing what God has done in somebody else, and telling them that. There's no reason why you can't. Some people, my wife, I said to somebody here, was it here, or was it somewhere I was

speaking last week, or where? But my wife often used to say to me, when we were in England and Britain, she'd say, you know, my, isn't it nice, these American girls, they have so much more confidence than we British girls seem to have.

And, you know, she says, I don't know why. I've come to the realization that American mothers are right in properly evaluating where they think their daughters, or sons' gifts are, and telling them. Whereas, oftentimes, we British parents, or our parents and that, they thought that would give you a swollen head, so you didn't tell them too much about that.

And so, if anybody gave you a compliment in Britain, you say, oh no, oh that's a nice coat you got. Oh no, I got it in Woolworths for Thropp and Sapney, you know, or something. No, no, no, I have to put it down, you see.

Whereas American girls would say, oh well, thank you very much, because that's true. That is true humility, recognizing where things are. Now, of course, you can go way out of line on that, but how important it is to affirm, not flatter, but to affirm other people.

We need to affirm and tell people, look, I sense something about you. For instance, I could tell all you now, you've all got the gift of listening. No, but there's something you can find that people have got.

Affirm them. So, anyway, I think our time is just about, I've got three minutes left to what I said I would take. I mean, I said to myself I would take.

So, let me just tell you this. I'll finish in these three minutes, Heather, promise. They're not going anywhere for three minutes anyway.

You know, there was a book that came out 25 years ago or more, and those of you who are willing to admit it will show us your age, even though you look younger. But it was by a man called Lawrence J. Peters, and the book was called The Peter Principle. Did any of you ever read it? Oh, a good number of you.

All right. I can't remember too much about it except that the main lesson was this. His premise was this, built on this, that in every hierarchy or institution, each person rises to their level of incompetence.

What he means is here's a man working on the shop floor. He's working with metal, and he loves the feel of metal, and he loves the men around him, loves rubbing shoulders with him. He gets on well with them.

The foreman dies. They need a new foreman. They say, he's the man.

Let's promote him. So, they promote him, and, oh, my, production goes up, and he's a wonderful foreman. They all love working for him, and he does so well over two years that then the vice president of production dies, and they say, we need another vice president.

This is the man that's done a great job. Let's take him upstairs. Let's take off his blue collar and put a white collar on him, and we'll put him the other side of a one-way mirror, and he can look down on all those people in true British style, you know.

And he looks down on the shop floor, and he longs to be down there with him. He loves to be where that metal is and those men. He's stuck up there with a bunch of papers and pens, and I don't know what else, and he doesn't enjoy it very much.

There's no fulfillment in his life. His wife is miserable. She threatens to divorce him.

I mean, she can't stand being with him. He's so uncomfortable all the time, and at the end of the year, the company finds they've lost a million and a half dollars. Now, what has happened here? This man has been promoted to his level of incompetence.

He was good touching things, and handling machinery, and things like that, but he's not good up there. So, what do they do? Do we demote him? Wouldn't do that. Do we promote him? No, he did a terrible job here.

So, what do we do? We leave him in the place where he's least effective. That means that if you're in that slot, and many of us will be in that kind of slot. Thankfully, I'm not, but you can be in that slot.

It'll be very, very unfulfilling in life, and you've got to find that correct mosaic between natural talents, spiritual gifts, and personality traits, and put them together in the task that God has called you to. Don't be like a parent who always wants their children whatever they want. You're going to be a lawyer.

You're going to be a physician. You're going to be this, because we want to show you off. Be very careful, because you may have, economy may be okay in that half household, but it may not be very pleasant to live there, and God has given us gifts, and we're happiest when we find the gifts that God has made us for, and we spend most of our energy, and most of our time in those gifts.

Do you know, David was like that. He was told he was going to be king, but he didn't snatch the reins of rulership. In fact, he went and played before Saul, and he was David playing the harp, and Saul playing the harpoon, and you know, he just put up with this whole thing, and it was 15 or 20 years before he got around to doing that, but he looked after the sheep meanwhile, and you know, that can happen.

My father was the most wonderful, honest, God-fearing carpenters I've ever met. All my family were carpenters back there, and he got me out of this thing, because in the war, they took all his men and his wood from him, but anyway, he was a wonderful guy, and he would do things properly. Everything he made was done properly.

He'd get a, had to put a screw in, so he'd find, is it number six, number eight, number ten, and should I get a brad or an awl, and everything was done by hand, you know. He'd get the right hole in there, get the right screw, put it in, and then he'd screw it in with a screwdriver, the last couple of turns, get it right, then he'd feel the slot, it was a little rough, so he gets a memory cloth or something, and rub it off, make sure nobody get cut the finger on that, then he'd grade the little hole around the screw, so that it was indented, and he'd do that, then he'd, this is a crate he's making now, right? Then he'd move on to the next one. He couldn't do anything with, other than with excellence.

I mean, when I came to, went to Canada, 40 years ago, and somebody came into our bathroom in Toronto to do some work on a drawer, and something there, and I saw this guy take a screw, and he got a hammer, and he went, wham, and knocked it in two-thirds of the way. My father jumped up in his grave, and there was thunder and lightning over Toronto. He, dad, loved that work.

He did it with excellence. God had made him to be, he spent 12 years in apprenticeship, as a joiner and cabinet maker. He built houses, and schools, and churches, and I've been to see, and there's not a structural crack in those that I've seen.

How wonderful, this is after many centuries now, since he did it, you know, many decades. Anyway, this is, but you know, let me finish, I've come to the end here. I have, I have a son-in-law, not that one, who's a very earthy man, in a good sense.

He loves earth. He loves the earth. Oh my, he goes, his job is to provide the conditions for God to produce three to six million miniature wasps every week, and he, these wasps can sit on the head of a pin.

They won't stick, sting you, but what they do is, they will be released into the greenhouses of the world to lay their eggs, and the larvae, I think, of the dragon, not the dragonfly, the white fly, and what happens is, they're used for biological, non-pesticidal control of other insects in greenhouses, and so on, and he loves the earth. He loves playing with, he loves examining the tobacco plants they put them on, and oh, he loves all this, and he'll come home in his jalopy, and park it in the driveway. Before he goes in, you see him looking at the cabbage, how it's getting on, digging some of the earth, and putting it around it, loving to get the earth inside his fingernails.

He loves the earth. He's an earthy man, but his father put him into economic geography, and that's what his degree is in. Nothing to do with it.

One of those people sitting right there again in our family. Can you believe it? Loves to go around, and touch people's hair, and set it up nice, and coat it. She didn't bring her scissors with her, it's all right, and oh, she loves to cut hair, and she would go along with these two little boys, and carry cots, and go up, and set their hair.

It was wonderful. She loved, she, she was made for that. God made it just to do that, because she can bring joy into people's lives just by doing that.

Why in the world, Rosemary and I sent her to French secretarial school, I never know. You see, so find out, find out the gift that God has got for you, and you'll be extremely fulfilled in that. But God is a God who gives us all gifts, and there's not one of us here that hasn't got a gift like that.

There, I've called on you already, Jeff, so I'm going to pounce on you again. You just close this session in prayer, would you? Do you want to, do you want to back? Father in heaven, thank you for this wonderful time. We thank you for gifting our friend Keith to us this week, and we thank you most of all for your son, Jesus Christ.

We pray that we would be changed more and more into his image, and that you'd be glorified in our families, and our relationships, and in our lives, back where it's a little more difficult to walk with you, and yet all the more important. We pray these things in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

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