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MORE ABOUT GIFTS: ROMANS 12-6-8

THEY HAVE BECOME SYMBOLS OF SPIRITUAL POWER, CAUSING RIVALRIES BECAUSE SOME THOUGH THEY WERE MORE "SPIRITUAL" THAN OTHERS ACCORDING TO THEIR SPECIAL GIFT. THIS IS A TERRIBLE MISUSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS, BECAUSE THEIR PURPOSE IS ALWAYS TO HELP THE CHURCH FUNCTION MORE EFFECTIVELY, NOT TO DIVIDE IT. WE CAN BE DIVISIVE IF WE INSIST ON USING OUR GIFTS OUR OWN WAY WITHOUT BEING SENSITIVE TO OTHERS. WE MUST NEVER USE GIFTS AS A MEANS OF MANIPULATING OTHERS OR SERVING OUR OWN SELF-ESTEEM.

ALL CHRISTIAN HAVE FAITH, BUT SOME ARE ENDOWED WITH A SPIRITUAL GIFT OF FAITH WHICH IS AN UNUSUAL MEASURE OF TRUST IN THE HOLY'S SPIRITS'S POWER.

"PROPHECY" IS NOT JUST PREDICTING THE FUTURE: IT CAN ALSO MEAN PREACHING GOD'S WORD WITH "POWER". "DISCERNING OF SPIRITS" MEANS THE ABILITY TO DISCERN WHETHER A PERSON WHO CLAIMS TO SPEAK FOR GOD IS DOING SO, OR IS SPEAKING BY AN EVIL SPIRIT. NO MATTER WHAT GIFTS A PERSON HAS, EACH GIFT IS GIVEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. "DIVIDING TO EVERY MAN SEVERALLY" MEANS THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DECIDES WHICH GIFTS EACH ONE OF US SHOULD HAVE. WE ARE RESPONSIBLE TO SHARPEN AND USE OUR GIFTS, BUT WE CAN TAKE NO CREDIT FOR WHAT GOD HAS FREELY GIVEN US.

CHRISTIANS MUST AVOID TO COMMON ERRORS: (1) BEING TO PROUD OF THEIR ABILITIES, OR (2) THINKING THEY HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE TO THE BODY OF BELIEVERS. INSTEAD OF COMPARING OUR SELVES TO ONE ANOTHER, WE MUST USE OUR DIFFERENT GIFTS, TOGETHER, TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS.