

# Romans 12:3-8

Romans 12:3 begins a list of examples where the principle of 12:1-2 (the renewed mind being able to “test and approve” what God’s will is) should be practiced:

1. 12:3-8 - **Spiritual gifts** within the eschatological church gathering which is the NT equivalent to the assembly of Israel
2. 12:9-21 - Love, Good, Unity in situations within **social situations** in this fallen world of rebellion towards God’s will
3. 13:1-7 - The believer/church living under the authority of **God’s institution of government** (pagan rule)...obey it!
4. 13:8-14 - **Individual lifestyle of love and purity** in this fallen age lived among each other (believers) and the pagans (unbelievers)
5. 14:1-15:13 - Living and interacting with other believers who are developing and experiencing their **Christian growth at a wide variety of levels** from a wide variety of personal backgrounds...love, do not be judgmental...”accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgment on disputable matters.”

**Romans 12:3 - “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, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”**

## ◀ Romans 12:3 ▶

### Romans 12 Interlinear

3004 [e]	1063 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	5485 [e]	3588 [e]	1325 [e]	1473 [e]	3956 [e]	3588 [e]	1510 [e]	1722 [e]	4771 [e]	3361 [e]	5252 [e]
Legō	gar	dia	tēs	charitos	tēs	dotheisēs	moi	panti	tō	onti	en	hymin	mē	hyperphronein
3 λέγω	γάρ	διὰ	τῆς	χάριτος	τῆς	δοθείσης	μοι	, παντὶ	τῷ	ὄντι	ἐν	ὑμῖν	, μὴ	ὑπερφρονεῖν
I say	indeed	through	the	grace	-	having been given	to me	to everyone	-	being	among	you	not	to be high-minded
V-PIA-1S	Conj	Prep	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Art-GFS	V-APP-GFS	PPro-D1S	Adj-DMS	Art-DMS	V-PPA-DMS	Prep	PPro-D2P	Adv	V-PNA

3844 [e]	3739 [e]	1163 [e]	5426 [e]	235 [e]	5426 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	4993 [e]	1538 [e]	5613 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3307 [e]
par'	ho	dei	phronein	alla	phronein	eis	to	sōphronein	hekastō	hōs	ho	Theos	emerisen
παρ'	ὁ	δεῖ	φρονεῖν ;	ἀλλὰ	φρονεῖν	εἰς	τὸ	σωφρονεῖν	, ἐκάστῳ	ὡς	ὁ	Θεὸς	ἐμέρισε
above	what	it behoves [you]	to be minded	but	to be minded	so as	-	to be sober-minded	to each	as	-	God	has allotted
Prep	RelPro-ANS	V-PIA-3S	V-PNA	Conj	V-PNA	Prep	Art-ANS	V-PNA	Adj-DMS	Adv	Art-NMS	N-NMS	V-AIA-3S

3358 [e]	4102 [e]
metron	pisteōs
μέτρον	πίστεως .
a measure	of faith
N-ANS	N-GFS

### “Grace given me”

- Paul is speaking of the grace given him for his spiritual gift of apostle
  - See Romans 1:5, the basis of Paul’s entire letter is that he is an apostle sent to the Gentiles
  - Paul is speaking emphatically with the voice of apostolic authority or prophetic revelation
  - “Grace given me is also used:
    - Romans 15:15
    - 1 Cor. 3:10
    - Gal. 2:9
    - Eph. 3:2-7
  - Paul will soon use “grace given us” in Romans 12:6.

- Here we see the grace given the Roman believers is the same quality (only different) as Paul's.
- This matches his attitude at the opening of the letter in Romans 1:11-12
- The word "panti" or "to everyone" indicates Paul is talking about "grace gifts" to people who have these "grace gifts", or he is talking to charismatics with charisma.
- It appears either there is a developing faction (as in Corinth) among the variety of gifts, or Paul anticipates that when mere humans are supernaturally empowered they will (until their minds are renewed and they have gained some experience) think of themselves:

- with undo pride and arrogance,
- with over rated potential,
- while expecting unsustainable admiration from other people.

- The word **phronein** "to be minded" means "to think, form or hold an opinion, have an understanding"

- Phronein is used in Romans 8:5 - "have their minds set"
- Romans 11:20 - "do not be arrogant"
- Romans 12:16 - **phronountes** = "minding" and **hypseia phronountes** = haughty minding"

1519 [e]	240 [e]	5426 [e]	3361 [e]	3588 [e]	5308 [e]	5426 [e]
eis	allēlous	phronountes	mē	ta	hypselā	phronountes
εἰς	ἀλλήλους	φρονοῦντες	, μὴ	τὰ	ὑψηλὰ	φρονοῦντες
toward	one another	minding	not	the things	haughty	minding
Prep	RecPro-AMP	V-PPA-NMP	Adv	Art-ANP	Adj-ANP	V-PPA-NMP

- Romans 14:6 - "He who regards one day..."
- Romans 15:5 - "may give you the same **to be of mind** with one another according to Christ Jesus
- "As God has measured to each a measure of faith."
  - The **metron** "a measure" is unlikely to refer to a standard of measurement or the means of measurement, for example, it is not saying one inch is one inch and everyone has the one inch measurement.
  - **Metron** "a measure" is in context more naturally understood as an apportioning of different measures:
    - This is seen in 1 Corinthians 7:17 -
    - 2 Corinthians 10:13 - apostles have been apportioned different spheres of service
    - Metron is given to "each" does not mean "each" has the same measurement. This is seen in these verses:
      - 1 Corinthians 12:7 -
      - Also, 1 Corinthians 12:3 and 12:6 -
      - 1 Peter 4:10
    - The self assessment of your individual spiritual gift needs to be done with a renewed mind that has the ability to "test and approve" what God's will is.
    - Paul is warning them to avoid the chaos of 1 Corinthians 12, but yet maintain the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit's work of service to the body of believers.
  - The use of the word "Faith", or **pistis**, maintains the same meaning it has throughout Paul's letter to Rome - Faith is the human response of believing through which God effectively works. Our proper response to God's gift of service empowerment is the same as our response to God's gift of salvation.

**Romans 12:4 - “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function,”**

◀ Romans 12:4 ▶

Romans 12 Interlinear

2509 [e]	1063 [e]	1722 [e]	1520 [e]	4983 [e]	4183 [e]	3196 [e]	2192 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	3196 [e]	3956 [e]	3756 [e]	3588 [e]	846 [e]
kathaper	gar	en	heni	sōmati	polla	melē	echomen	ta	de	melē	panta	ou	tēn	autēn
4 καθάπερ	γὰρ	, ἐν	ἐνὶ	σώματι	πολλὰ	μέλη	ἔχομεν	, τὰ	δὲ	μέλη	πάντα	οὐ	τὴν	αὐτὴν
just as	indeed	in	one	body	many	members	we have	-	moreover	[the] members	all	not	the	same
Adv	Conj	Prep	Adj-DNS	N-DNS	Adj-ANP	N-ANP	V-PIA-1P	Art-NNP	Conj	N-NNP	Adj-NNP	Adv	Art-AFS	Pro-AF3S

2192 [e] 4234 [e]  
 echei praxin  
 ἔχει πράξιν ;  
 have function  
 V-PIA-3S N-AFS

- 1 Corinthians 12:27 - the same
- Colossians 1:15-20 and Ephesians 4:1-16 - the church is the body and the head is Christ.

**Romans 12:5 - “so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”**

◀ Romans 12:5 ▶

Romans 12 Interlinear

Romans 12:6

3779 [e]	3588 [e]	4183 [e]	1520 [e]	4983 [e]	1510 [e]	1722 [e]	5547 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	2596 [e]	1520 [e]	240 [e]	3196 [e]
houtos	hoi	polloi	hen	sōma	esmen	en	Christō	to	de	kath'	heis	allēlōn	melē
5 οὕτως	οἱ	πολλοὶ	, ἐν	σῶμά	ἐσμεν	ἐν	Χριστῷ	; τὸ	δὲ	καθ'	, εἷς	ἀλλήλων	μέλη
so	the	many	one	body	we are	in	Christ	-	moreover	individually	one	of another	members
Adv	Art-NMP	Adj-NMP	Adj-NNS	N-NNS	V-PIA-1P	Prep	N-DMS	Art-ANS	Conj	Prep	Adj-NMS	RecPro-GMP	N-NNP

**Romans 12:6 - “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;”**

◀ Romans 12:6 ▶

Romans 12 Interlinear

2192 [e]	1161 [e]	5486 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	5485 [e]	3588 [e]	1325 [e]	1473 [e]	1313 [e]	1535 [e]	4394 [e]	2596 [e]
echontes	de	charismata	kata	tēn	charin	tēn	dotheisan	hēmin	diaphora	eite	prophēteian	kata
6 ἔχοντες	δὲ	χαρίσματα	κατὰ	τὴν	χάριν	τὴν	δοθεῖσαν	ἡμῖν	διάφορα	: εἴτε	προφητεῖαν	, κατὰ
having	but	gifts	according to	the	grace	-	having been given	to us	different	if	prophecy	according to
V-PPA-NMP	Conj	N-ANP	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Art-AFS	V-APP-AFS	Pro-D1P	Adj-ANP	Conj	N-AFS	Prep

3588 [e] 356 [e] 3588 [e] 4102 [e]  
 tēn analogian tēs pisteōs ;  
 τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως ;  
 the proportion of the faith  
 Art-AFS N-AFS Art-GFS N-GFS

- “Gifts that differ” -
  - NOT referring to natural talents, skills, training, personalities, etc.
  - These “gifts” are the manifestation of the Holy Spirit
  - Supernatural spiritual “gifts” may likely work along with natural talents, but they are not the same.
  - Variety of the gifts most often depend on the needs of the local Christian church, or, potentially, the universal church.
  - The list(s) that Paul and the NT give us is never exhaustive, or categorized, but a sampling of examples of some common gifts
- “According to the grace given to us” -
  - Paul always makes it clear these are “grace” gifts for us to use to benefit others, not for us to be prideful over:
    - 1 Corinthians 12:6 -
    - Ephesians 4:7 -
    - 1 Peter 4:10 -
- “Let us use them” -

## 1. “Prophecy” -

- a. “Proportion to our faith” -
  - i. “Proportion” is analogia which is a term from the world of mathematics and logic. It means “the correct proportion” or “the right relationship”
  - ii. This refers back to verse 3 where it “measure of faith” was given to each of us for our gifts. This means that our use of our gifts is bordered and established by our faith (trust, expectancy, understanding, belief, etc.) that is also provided to us by God.
  - iii. Proportion of our faith could be referred to our realistic expectation of what we understand/believe our role is in the church.
  - iv. Emphasis is on “sober judgment” not fanciful expectations or lofty personal goal setting. Instead, honestly, what does God expect of you?
    1. Emotional motivational speeches can ship wreck believers direction. (See 1 Cor. 14:32 “emotions” and 1 Cor. 14:30 “love of speaking”)
    2. Self-help ideology that teaches “you can do anything your mind sets itself on” is NOT sober. Consider Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”
  - v. It could be understood that “proportion” to faith means “in relationship to the faith”. In other words, the prophet could speak revelation, but his words would have to line up with the Truth of the Word of God.
- b. NT prophecy was the proclamation to the local community information God had revealed for the church’s edification (1 Cor. 14:3, 24-25, 30).
- c. Prophetic speech was not the same as Apostolic revelation (writing, teaching, etc.) since 1 Cor. 14:29-32 expects that the words of the prophet would be evaluated by the other prophets. Paul’s Apostolic doctrine was NOT to be scrutinized.

**Romans 12:7 - “if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;”**

◀ **Romans 12:7** ▶

Romans 12 Interlinear

1535 [e]	1248 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	1248 [e]	1535 [e]	3588 [e]	1321 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	1319 [e]			
eite	diakonian	en	tē	diakonia	eite	ho	didaskōn	en	tē	didaskalia			
7	εἴτε	διακονίαν	, ἐν	τῇ	διακονίᾳ	;	εἴτε	ὁ	διδάσκων	, ἐν	τῇ	διδασκαλίᾳ	;
	or	service	in	the	service		or	the [one]	teaching	in	the	teaching	
	Conj	N-AFS	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS		Conj	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS	

1. “Service” - “serving” or “ministering” are words from the root **diak** which originally meant “waiting at table” as in serving others as a servant while having no social status.
  - a. This is the word Jesus used in Mark 10:45 to explain to his disciples how they would act and how they could be like him.
  - b. Christian ministry in the NT is referred to as “service”
  - c. This word “service” never appears in another list of gifts, so it may be a heading for a variety of ministry gifts that place the believer in a position of service to others in the church.
  - d. The warning or admonition that comes along with this gift is “let him serve”. So, if your gift is serving keep serving and do not let it become a source of power, authority, pride or a high position among the believers. If you are empowered to serve, you should remain a servant and nothing greater
2. “Teaches” - is different than prophecy because it is not characterized by ecstatic utterances or driven by the Spirit of God.
  - 1 Corinthians 14:6 combines teaching with knowledge. (Prophecy is coupled with revelation.)
  - a. Teaching is likely at two levels:
    - i. Doctrine, such as Bible teaching
    - ii. Application, such as life application of Bible teaching/doctrine  
(This is supported by the very structure of Paul’s letter of Romans, and others letters, because they are clearly doctrinal information followed by life application of that doctrinal material.)

**Romans 12:8 - “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.”**

◀ **Romans 12:8** ▶

Romans 12 Interlinear

1535 [e]	3588 [e]	3870 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	3874 [e]	3588 [e]	3330 [e]	1722 [e]	572 [e]	3588 [e]	4291 [e]				
eite	ho	parakalōn	en	tē	paraklēsei	ho	metadidous	en	haplotēti	ho	proistamenos				
8	εἴτε	ὁ	παρακαλῶν	, ἐν	τῇ	παρακλήσει	;	ὁ	μεταδιδούς	, ἐν	ἀπλότῃ	;	ὁ	προϊστάμενος	,
	or	the [one]	exhorting	in	the	exhortation		the [one]	giving	in	generosity		the [one]	leading	
	Conj	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS		Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	N-DFS		Art-NMS	V-PPM-NMS	

  

1722 [e]	4710 [e]	3588 [e]	1653 [e]	1722 [e]	2432 [e]				
en	spoudē	ho	eleōn	en	hilarotēti				
	ἐν	σπουδῇ	;	ὁ	ἐλεῶν	,	ἐν	ἡλαρότῃ	.
	with	zeal		the [one]	showing mercy		with	cheerfulness	
	Prep	N-DFS		Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS		Prep	N-DFS	

1. "Exhorts" - also translated "comforter" or "encourager"
  - a. Likely a gift (following teaching) that encourages the believer to live out the Truth and apply Christianity in their lives.
2. "Contributes" - (*metadidous*) "one who shares"
  - . This could refer to the one sharing/distributing the church's resources, but unlikely
  - a. In context it would refer to an individual giving of their own private resources
  - b. "Give generously" is the word for "singleness" of purpose (as in 2 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 6:5; Col 3:22) or "simplicity". In context it means "generosity" as in 2 Cor. 8:2; 9:11, 13)
  - c. The word would indicate "simple" as without "strings attached" and "generous" as without thinking about the giving as an investment for yourself.
3. "Leads" - (*ho proistamenos*)
  - . This word indicates a person who:
    - i. presides over something
    - ii. who comes to the aid of others
      - a. "*ho proistamenos*" is "he who gives aid". Translated in NEB as "if you are a leader" which matches 1 Thessalonians 5:12, "those who...are over you."
      - b. Romans 16:2 is the related noun *prostatis* translated "helper"
      - c. "Presides over" at this time would refer to leadership position in a house church in the city of Rome.
      - d. The word is used to clearly refer to leaders in the local house church in 1 Thes. 5:12 and 1 Tim 5:17 and is likely applied to elders and overseers
4. "Acts of mercy" -
  - . This is the only place Paul uses the verb "show mercy" to refer to mankind doing the act of showing mercy.
    - a. An example, but NOT a limitation of the meaning of the word or gift, is in Matthew 6:3 where the word is used to refer to almsgiving or giving to the poor.
    - b. This gift likely refers to the personal ministry of meeting the needs of those less fortunate: the sick, the elderly, the poor, to brokenhearted, etc.
    - c. Interestingly, this gift is warned to use their gift cheerfully which would indicate there may be a tendency while ministering to this group to become "uncheerful" or to begin to "look down" on these people or to become bitter or judgmental since many depressing situations could have been avoided by some people if they had avoided sinful behavior or had not made unwise decisions.