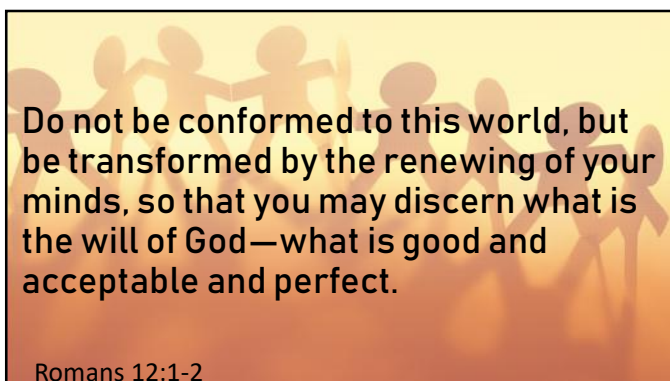


The Church is the body of Christ, the community of the Holy Spirit, the people of God. It is the community of the King and the agent in the world of God's plan for the reconciliation of all things.

Howard A. Snyder



I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.



THE MERCIES OF GOD

- The basis for our transformation
- Everything is gift
- Our new life, acceptance, hope, purpose – all from God

TO GIVE THANKS

- Our appropriate response is gratitude
- To live with open and grateful hands to the gifts of God

TO LOVING SERVICE

- A further 'real time' response is to offer our 'bodies' to God – our tongues, feet, eyes, ears
- A giving of ourselves to God

TO CONFORM OUR MINDS

- "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within," (J. B. Phillip's paraphrase)
- A morphing of our minds – same word as transfiguration

THROUGH SPIRIT & WORD

- 'Be filled with the Spirit'
- Spiritual worship (v1b)
- Being open/receptive to the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)

THROUGH SPIRIT & WORD

- Be shaped by God's word (Colossians 3:1,16)
- "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"

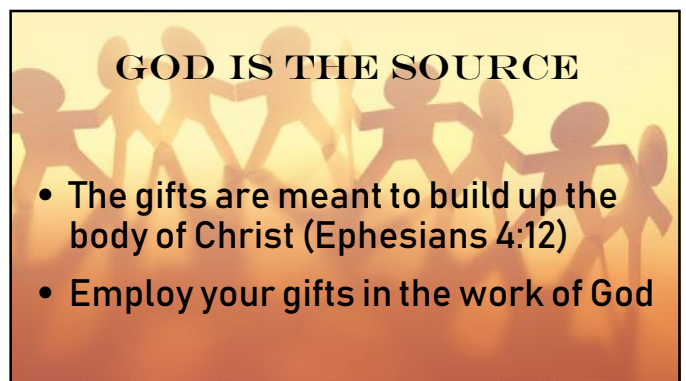
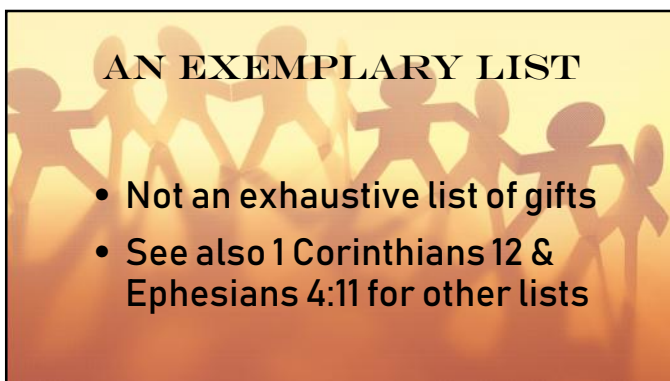
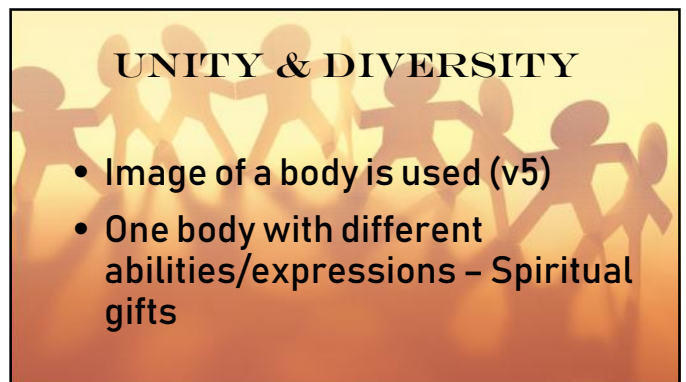
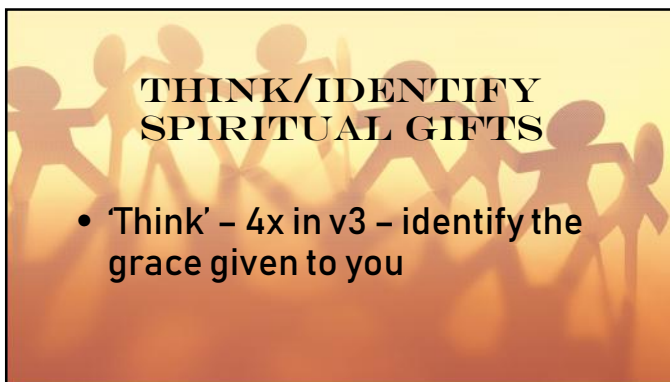
Our present age constitutes **a virtual conspiracy** against the interior life. That is a gentle way of saying that, within our culture, distraction is normal, prayer and solitude are not.

Ronald Rolheiser



... so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Romans 12:5-8



Every Christian does have some gift, and part of one's Christian responsibility is to discover what gift one has and then to use it for the glory of God and the good of one's fellow human beings.

Paul Achtemeier



Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Romans 12:9-11

BE LOVE

- The overarching characteristic of the church is to be love
- Agape and Philadelphia are the cornerstones of the Christian walk

A COMMUNITY SHAPED BY LOVE

- One another language
- To express our affection within the body of Christ

BE ARDENT IN SPIRIT

- To burn or boil in Spirit
- 'To be filled' – ongoing present tense – keep being filled with God's Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)



WITH ARDENCY

- Sincerity (v9)
- Discernment (v9)
- Affection (v10)
- Honour/esteeming others (v10)
- Enthusiasm (v11)
- Patience (v12)
- Generosity (v13)
- Hospitality (v13)



I. Transformation

II. Participation

III. Compassion

“Where there is no love, put love,
and you will find love.”