To the Servants of the Most High God at Topeka, Kansas September 5, 2021

Romans 12 (4-8), Part Three

Good morning beloved. The Lord is on the move! This has been a very eventful week, so there is a lot to talk about regarding this week's events. But, I have a preliminary matter to cover first. The Summer Olympics had not started at the time of my last sermon, so I want to begin with that.

I was running recently and I kept thinking about this verse. 1 Cor. 9:24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. How interesting is temperate used here. They are temperate for a reason, but not a heavenly one. We must be temperate because the Lord requires that we add that to ourselves, seeking Him for that help for the glory of God. 2Pe 1:6 <i>And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;* Temperance is also one of the fruits of the spirit. Strong: Temperance includes the duty of self-discipline, self-control, and self-restraint generally and lists speech, conduct, eating, drinking, appetites to be restrained, warnings against drunkenness, excess, etc.



Where was Corinth (letter to Corinthians)? It was in Greece. Where was Athens (Acts 17 and 18)? It was in Greece. Where was Thessalonica (1st and 2nd letter to the Thessalonians)? It was in Greece. Paul preached all over Greece. And look just below Thessalonica and you will see Mt. Olympus. This is where Olympics gets its name. Mt. Olympus was the site of the ancient Olympic games. The ancient Olympic games started in

776 BC and went until roughly 393 AD (roughly 600 years – across 8 centuries). When did



Paul live? Paul lived from roughly 5 AD to 65 AD. This was clearly during the times of the Olympic games, and they were probably at their zenith during this time. The games were held every four years. This was called an Olympiad. It became a unit of time in historical chronologies. Said another way, the Olympics were so important in Greek life that they were used as the basis for their calendar. Mt. Olympus was not just a random mountain. It was in fact a sacred place for the Grecians. They said that Mt. Olympus was the home of the gods. The Olympic games was a religious festival in honor of the Greek god Zeus, the father of all Greek gods and goddesses. They tied the Olympic games to the gods and to their religion and to their mythology. Halfway through every Olympic games the priests would sacrifice hundreds of cows to Zeus! It was a big pagan worship festival! The priests also sacrificed animals to the gods in the hope it would bring them victory.

There were only 2 things on Mt. Olympus, sanctuaries to Zeus and the stadiums and pavilions for the Olympics. Now the Olympics travel around the world every four year. It did not do that then. One of the 7 Wonders of the Ancient World was the statue of Zeus at Mt. Olympus. All of the athletes were male and they competed naked. This was a filthy

thing. The Olympics was an excuse every four years for riotous parties, barbeque, excess, drinking and debauchery. 40,000 people attended the ancient Olympics at the height of its popularity.



The prize for victors at the Olympics was not a gold medal. It was an olive wreath crown. That is the corruptible crown that Paul references in 1 Cor. 9:24. Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things (in a race you are

focused on the finish line, on moving forward, you are not turning to the left hand or the right, you are not focused on food and drinking). **Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown**; but we an incorruptible. Mt. Olympus was covered with groves of olive trees. That is why the winners received olive tree crowns. Again, it was tied to their religion. Brother Paul was using the events of the day to preach! He was preaching about current events and contrasting earthly, fleshly endeavors with heavenly ones.

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I would like to give you a 30,000-foot view of the sermon today so you can see where I am headed. Romans 12:4-8 speaks to there being many members in one body in Christ and every member being of one another and having differing gifts. This speaks to Christ and the New Testament church. The context of Christ and His church is that it is in the church militant phase. The church is surrounded by the power of darkness that currently reigns in the earth. It is a time of great war between Christ and Satan. And God is fighting for us. We rely on God and to a lesser extent each other to travail from the City of Destruction to heaven.

The Power of Darkness I

Every sermon I have preached since April 2020, I have given a little update on the plague from God called COVID-19. The people of the earth are tired of this plague. That is to say; they desperately want to move on and call "combat operations over." They are done with it - but only in their minds. God on the other hand, is not done with it.





I will tell you why we have COVID-19 at all and why we have a 4th surge in the U.S. It is because we deserve it. Equity from God requires and demands it.

This week the Supreme Court of the United States refused to overturn a Texas law that is said to be the most restrictive abortion law in the country. It bans abortions after 6 weeks of pregnancy (as soon as cardiac activity is detectable — a heartbeat). The law allows private citizens to sue abortion providers and anyone else who helps a woman obtain an abortion. President Biden and his supports are coming unglued over this (don't tread on me.")

So, can the future children of Texas sleep a little safer tonight? No! No! No! No! Not with, the pill (contraception), Plan B (the morning after pill – that you can get without a prescription), and abortion by mail. Planned Parenthood lists 18 methods for birth control. I look at my grandchildren the ones just born, the ones nearly grown and the ones in between and I wonder how in this world can anyone kill them. Kill babies just like them.



Here is a headline from the New York Times (August 2021) - How the Pandemic Changed Abortion. A growing number of people (call them women) seeking abortions in the U.S. — almost 40% in 2017, according to the Guttmacher Institute — took F.D.A. approved pills. This is typically called abortion by mail or for my British friends abortion by post. The regimen includes one drug to stop the pregnancy (say, kill the baby), and another that

causes cramping and bleeding, like a miscarriage (to expel the baby). For years, research has shown that this method is safe and more than 95% effective (at ending the life of another human being – a helpless little baby). The increasing use of abortion pills is raising an important question for people (say, women) in places with a dearth of providers (this does not count Plan B – the so-called morning after pill): Do women need to go to a clinic or a doctor to examine them, or to get an ultrasound beforehand, as the U.S. has long required? Because of Covid, researchers now have a clearer answer. In spring 2020, Britain began allowing health care providers to administer medication abortions via telemedicine, with pills mailed to the patient's home. A recent study compared thousands of medication abortions in Britain for two months before and after the new protocol went into effect. The groups had equally high success rate for completing their abortions (above 98%) and similarly low rates of significant complications... and yet telemedicine-only abortions are available temporarily in the U.S. When the F.D.A. approved Mifepristone, one abortion drug, in 2000, the agency imposed significant restrictions, requiring providers to obtain a special certification to stock the drug and to give it out in a clinic, doctor's office or hospital. For the moment, Covid has changed these rules. In response to a lawsuit by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and other groups, the F.D.A. said in April that Mifepristone could be mailed to patients for the duration of the pandemic.... Those who want to expand abortion access are fighting to make the pandemic rules permanent. "We're on the cusp of revolutionizing the provision of care," (let me translate – on the cusp of even more abortion on demand) said Destiny Lope, co-president of the activist group All Above All. ... Court rulings and state laws can't stop people (women) from taking abortion pills at home, because the medication is easily available online. Abortion is not "healthcare" it is murder. The women of Texas have lots of options for getting abortions even now.

Babies can be resilient – if you give them a fighting chance. Shirl and I watched a show this week called Body Cam. It shows body cam footage from two police officers. Last year a woman was headed to the hospital in Atlanta at about 5:00 am, during a horrible rain

storm, to deliver her baby. Her mother (Grandma) was driving the SUV in a horrible rain storm and she hydroplaned. The woman (mom) was delivering her baby in the back seat. But, as she was delivering the baby, Grandma wrecked the car, hitting an electrical pole so the roadway is now alive with electrical wires, in the dark, as morning traffic was about to start flowing. Two police officers were driving by and saw all this and stopped. The women were hysterical because they could not find the baby that the mom had delivered as they wrecked. The conversation between the hysterical women and the officers was amazing. They could not find the baby, and the front and back windows were knocked out. Grandma says "we can't find the baby." Officer asks "where was the baby?" Grandma says - "In her womb!" After a few minutes the police got everyone out of the car and searched it and they first found blood, and then saw the umbilical cord and followed it and then found the baby that had been flung under the back seat when Grandma hit the power pole. The Lord tucked that baby into a little indention under that seat. The baby weighed 3 pounds, 9 ounces. The police officers pulled that baby out alive. The baby stayed only 10 days in the hospital, mostly because it was premature. The baby is a year old now and fine. If you give the babies a fighting chance they can survive – but not if the mother has them murdered in the womb. YES Kathleen Sebelius, THEY ARE ALL Gerber babies if you leave them alone!

Romans 1:25-32 comes to mind. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient (proper); 29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness..., maliciousness (intending to do harm to others); murder, haters of God, despiteful (expressing malice or hate), inventors of evil things (evil schemes of morality and philosophy and evil practices)... 31 understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection (to their parents, children relations and friends - who in their right mind could kill a baby?), implacable (impossible to change- relentless -unstoppable), unmerciful (cruel, harsh, extreme)32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. [There is a caveat - if a child of God is given repentance for such a thing Psalm 130:3-4 guarantees that there is forgiveness from

God for it and all other sins (see John Owen, *The Forgiveness of Sin.*)} Aside from that caveat here are the verses. There is a so-called "unpardonable" sin and that is not it.

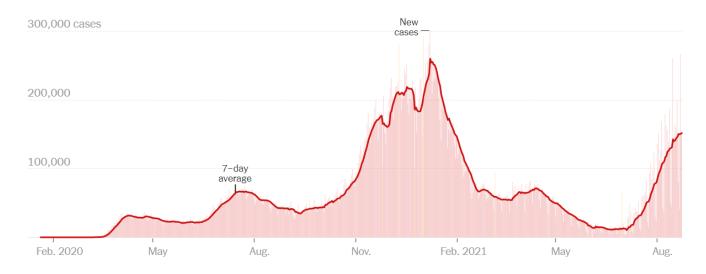
The Retribution of God

Jer 5:3-31 O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, **but they have refused to receive correction:** they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return... 6 Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, ... because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased. 7 How shall I pardon thee for this? [SHAME ON EVERYONE THAT SAYS GOD LOVES EVERYONE – SHAME ON YOU ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH THAT SAYS GOD LOVES EVERYONE – NO EXCEPTIONS] thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods (Zeus! Hippie God Loves Everyone Jesus): when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. 8 They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. 9 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? 10 Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they are not the LORD'S. 11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD. 12 They have belied the LORD, and said, It is not He; neither shall evil come upon us; neither shall we see sword nor famine: 13 And the prophets (false) shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them. 14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. 15 Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say... 17 And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword. (Think Afghanistan! – 20 years of Afghanistan consuming our resources - 20 years of occupation and for what? For what? it has all gone to our enemies – Fred Sr. always said it was an unwinnable war. He was right)...21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not... 23 But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone...29 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? 30 A wonderful (full of wonder – amazement) and horrible thing is committed in the land; 31 The prophets

prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means (St. David's et al.); and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

- God is visiting California in the extreme fires, drought and heat they are having. Here is an update. The Dixie fire has burned 825,000 acres and is 50% contained. 2020 was a record setting fire season for California with 900,000 acres burned. The Dixie fire alone will burn that much this year! The Caldor fire (burning since August 14) has burned 200,000 acres and is only 18% contained and is burning houses and threatening the plush area of Lake Tahoe. Currently, 1.4 million acres of California has burned in 2021 (50% more than least year's record setting year).
- In the Gulf and East coast this week they had Hurricane Ida (Category 4). It is just the opposite there, they had extreme flooding, wind and storm surge. 1,000,000 are without power and they will not have power for weeks or months. It was one of the most powerful hurricanes on record. The remnants of Ida hit the East Coast including New York City. The New York City subway was full of water. They are calling it a 500-year event. The problem is that these 500-year events are happen every couple of years! More then 60 people have perished in the path of this whirlwind from God.
- Here is a plague update. The chart below is as of Aug. 25, 2021. God is not done yet.
 Globally we are around 215,000,000 cases of COVID-19 and 4.6 million deaths. In the
 U.S. we are around 40,000,000 cases and closing in on 650,000 deaths. We are in our
 4th surge in the U.S.

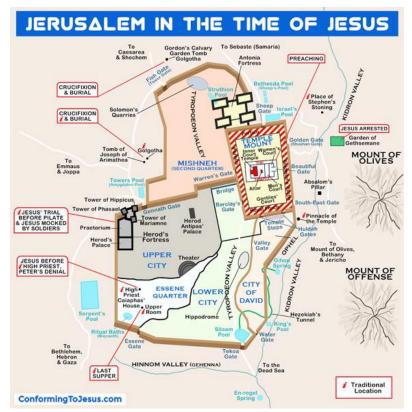
New reported cases



John Owen: The Lord has indeed shown clearly His infinite wisdom in His works of creation, providence, and government of His world. Communion with God, p. 79. God is in charge!

The Power of Darkness II

The night before Christ's brutal crucifixion He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot at Gethsemane (see map). Gethsemane was a garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives.



Luke 22:45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. 47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. 48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? 49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? 50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest,

and cut off his right ear. 51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. 52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? 53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. The Ethiopic version: the power of the lord of darkness. My soul is often vexed with such a feeling of heaviness due to the signs of the times and the power of darkness and the lord of darkness that has blinded men's eyes and that reigns around us.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath **delivered us from the power of darkness**, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

Gill: That is, from the power of Satan; who, though once an angel of light, is now darkness itself, and is reserved in chains of darkness; he is a ruler of the darkness of this world; his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness; and he blinds the minds of them that believe not, keeps them in darkness, and increases the natural darkness of their minds; he delights in works of darkness, and tempts men to them; and his everlasting state and portion will be blackness of darkness: his power over men, in a state of unregeneracy, which he usurps, and is

suffered to exercise, is very great; he works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; and nothing less than the power of God, who is stronger than the strong man armed, can deliver out of his hands.

The power of darkness is the context of our lives. It is the context of this plague. It is the context of abortion. Herod went to kill God - Herod went to kill Jesus Christ in the crib. Herod went to abort Christ. Mat. 2:16 *Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth* (his army – his officers and soldiers), and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof (not just Bethlehem, but also the towns and villages around Bethlehem), from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

A Great Fight of Affliction – This is a War (2 Tim. 1)

We must never forget we are in a war!

Right now, as I speak, there is raging war between the Saint and Satan, and that so bloody a one, that the cruelest which ever was fought by men, will be found but sport and child's play next to this. Alas, what is the killing of bodies to the destroying of everlasting souls? It is a sad meditation indeed, to think how many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late years among us by the sword of man but far more astonishing, to consider how many of those may be sent to hell by the sword of God's wrath (or the plague of God!);. It is a spiritual war we are in, and that not a history of what was fought many ages past and is now over; but of what now is going on; the tragedy is at present acting, and that not at the furthest end of the world, but what concerns thee. The stage wereon this war is fought, is every man's soul. There is no neutral party in this war. The whole world is engaged in this quarrel of the covenant, either for God against Satan or for Satan against God. Who are you for?... O let not the little plunder and spoil of sinful pleasure and pelf (money, gained dishonestly) bewitch you still to follow his (Satan's) camp. Don't be blinded by the gold. What is that soldier better for his booty he gets in a fight, who, before he can get off with it, is himself slain upon the place? So, many have been served in these wars if reports be true. It is that thou must certainly look for. The piece is charged (the gun), and aim taken at thy breast, which will be eternal death if thou persistest. God's threatenings will go off at last, and then where art thou? Where, but in hell, where the wedge of gold and Babylonish garment, thy wages of unrighteousness, will do thee little stead? O neighbors, I am loath to leave you in the way where God's bullets fly.

But I must have a word for you, my Christian friends, who have espoused Christ's quarrel, and are in the field against Satan. Thank you beloved for being on the battlefield! My heart is towards you, who have thus willing offered yourselves among the Lord's people to His help against the mighty. He can destroy him (Satan) without you, but He takes your love as kindly as if he could not. (This is what Mordecai told Esther).... O hold on dear friends, in your Christian warfare, let none take the crown from you. Whet your courage at the throne of grace, from whence all your recruits of soul-strength come. Stand your ground! Send faith oft up the hill of promise, to see and bring you the certain news of Christ's coming to you, yea, and assured victory with him. Read the exploits which Christ's worthies by faith have done, and in their conquests read your own...Be thankful for every victory you get, and let not the howling wilderness, yet before you, put the song of your praises temptations past out of time, yet rejoice with trembling as those who are still in your enemy's country (for a short time we endure behind enemy lines and wrestle with the enemy in the power of their darkness)... Be sure you stand in close order amongst yourselves (your brethren in the fight). These times give us too many sad examples of such, who first fell from communion with their brethren, and then into the devourer's hands; stragglers are soon snapped (up), you will find you are safest in the body. Doth not our own experience speak to this? Take heed of a private spirit. Let not only your particular safety, but the whole army of saints, be in your eye and care, especially that company (congregation I mean) in which you march. That solider who can see an enemy fight with his brethren, and not help them, he makes it but the more easy for the enemy to slay himself at last. Say not therefore, Am I my brother's keeper. Watch over one another, not to play critics on your brother's failings, and triumph when he halts, but to help up if he falls, or if possible, to keep him from falling by a timely rescue... Keep your rank and file. We see what advantage Satan hath got in these loose times, since we have learned to fight him out of order and the private soldier or Christian, hath taken the officer's work out of his hands. Harden yourselves against the scandals which the cowardice and treachery of false brethren hath give you. He is the right soldier that is not discouraged by those the run from, or that are slain in the battle. But still presseth on to victory, though he goes to it over the backs of others that are killed upon the place. ... And, now, my Christian friends, march on, not in the confidence of your armour, but the power of His might, who hath promised shortly to subdue Satan under your feet. William Gurnall, The Christian in Complete Armour, 1616-1679.

Eph 6:10-12 - Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world (THE POWERS OF DARKNESS), against spiritual wickedness in high places.

God Almighty has formed this "company" (congregation) as an army of saints! It is a



perfectly formed spiritual fighting machine with a candlestick (our flag) and the Lord Jesus Christ walking in the midst of us (Rev. 1:13). That is what the church is. God has perfectly arrayed each true church with people with specific skills and abilities. It is an amazing thing. He has taught our hands to war, and our fingers to fight (Psalm 144:1)! These

patches represent the fighting force of the United States.

Romans 12:4 For as we have many members in one body (see last page of sermon), and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Haldane – Rom 12:4 – For as we have many members in one body and all members have not the same office - The Apostle here illustrates the union and connection of believers, by the figure of the wonderful structure of the human body. Every member has its proper place in the body, and its proper function to perform, and every member is valuable according as it is useful in the body. But no member is useless. For the smallest and least honorable is useful. The least honorable is useful, and to be treated with respect.

Barnes – Are united together, constituting one society or one people, mutually dependent, and having the same great interests at heart, though to be prompted by us according to our peculiar talents and opportunities. As the welfare of the same body is to be promoted in one manner by the feet, in another by the eye, etc., so the welfare of the body of Christ is to be promoted by discharging our duties in our appropriate sphere, as God has appointed us.

Haldane – Rom. 12:5 – So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another - The feeblest disciple, even he who of the whole number is least instructed in his Master's will, has still his place in the body, and his use in that place. Whatever church, then, refuse to receive any Christian for want of knowledge of any part of the will of Christ, acts against the spirit of this passage... Being united in Christ, believers become members of one another, that is, they are united to each other, as all the members of the body united... Hence Christians ought to love one another as parts of themselves. ... There is a sectarian partiality, distinct from this, too often found among the professors of Christianity.

Barnes — and every member one of another - That is, we are so fitted as to be mutually dependent; each one is of service to the other; and the existence and office of the one is necessary to the usefulness of the other. Thus the members of the body may be said to be members one of another; as the feet could not, for example, perform their functions, or be of use, if it were not for the eye; the ear, the hand, the teeth, etc., would be useless if it were not for the other members, which go to make up the entire person. Thus in the church, every individual is not only necessary in his place as an individual, but is needful to the proper symmetry and action of the whole. And we may learn here,

- 1. that no member of the church of Christ should esteem himself to be of no importance. In his own place he may be of as much consequence as the man of learning, wealth, and talent may be in his.
- 2. God designed that there should be differences of endowments of nature and of grace in the church; just as it was needful that there should be differences in the members of the human body.
- 3. No one should despise or lightly esteem another. All are necessary. We can no more spare the foot or the hand than we can the eye; though the latter may be much more curious and striking as a proof of Divine skill. We do not despise the hand or the foot any more than we do the eye; and in all we should acknowledge the goodness and wisdom of God. See these thoughts carried out in #1Co 12:21-25.

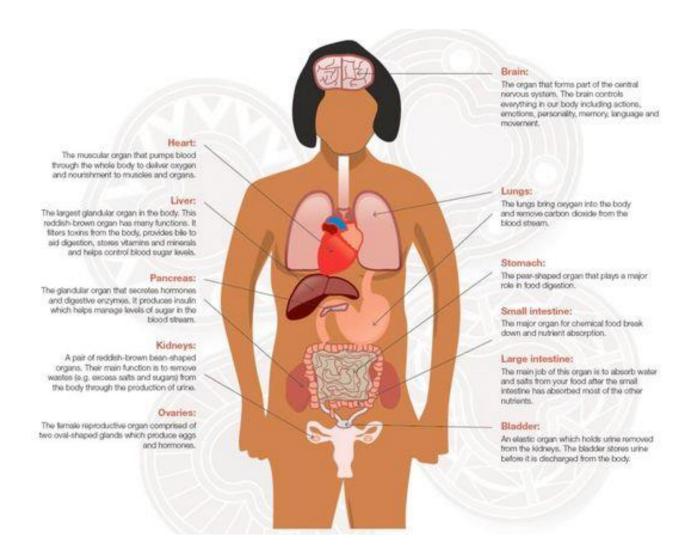
Haldane - 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. — Christians, then, should consider everything they possess as a gift bestowed by God, which they should cultivate and use to His glory, and for which they are accountable. If a Christian

misspend his money, his time, his abilities, his influence, or any talent which God has conferred on him, he is not misspending his own, but is misspending what is intrusted to him by God. He is unfaithful in this trust.

Every single one of you is precious in this Church. There are no accidents or mistakes. I am so thankful for each of you. Each one of you has a particular strength and particular reason for being here. We take no one for granted and we leave no one behind.

Mal. 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. 17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. 18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

I love you all. Amen.



Fingers, toes, hands, arms, legs, eyes, nose, mouth, tongue, teeth ears, eye brows, eye lashes, nose hairs, knuckles, elbows, knees, feet.