

“Excel in Every Good Work” (Part 2)

1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 9:8

The Apostle Paul told his fellow believers in the City of Corinth that God was able through His grace to supply their needs so that they would ***“excel in every good work”*** (2 Cor. 9:8b). During this extraordinary time in our nation, ask God to let you ***“excel in every good work.”***

As President Trump called for a national day of prayer on Sunday, March 15, 2020, churches and Christian organizations all over the country were ***“excel[ing] in every good work.”*** Crossroads Church in Cincinnati, Ohio partnered with local schools to get food, cleaning supplies, and activity packets to children who relied on school lunches for their meals. In Marietta, Georgia a Christian relief organization partnered with local schools to provide a sack lunch to children in need. Samaritan’s Purse loaded a cargo plane with relief supplies and a 68-bed emergency field hospital to northern Italy, where thousands have died from the Corona virus.

In our church family, our prayer teams have been faithful to pray for and to send cards to those who are sick or troubled. Our deacons have helped some of our families with various needs. Some have given rides and others have shared meals to those who needed it. The Zion Hill Church family will continue to help those who need help during this unusual time. We will continue to live-stream our worship service so that anyone who watches can be

encouraged by God’s Word. Let us continue to ***“excel in every good work.”***

Paul, writing about the various spiritual gifts or God-abilities, said: ***“...There are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord. And there are different activities, but the same God activates each gift in each person”*** (vs. 4-6). You as a follower of Christ can ***“excel in every good work”*** when you are submissive to God’s Spirit. What can we learn from this scripture passage, especially in these unusual times?

1. Use the gift that God gave you to help others (12:7)

“A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person to produce what is beneficial...”

- A spiritual gift is an ability that God gives you to help or benefit other believers. We do not earn these gifts, and we do not learn these gifts. These supernatural abilities come from God’s Spirit to be used in the body of Christ, the Church. Paul said: ***“But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as He wills”*** (v. 11). These gifts are not to profit our lives, but to help and benefit others.
- Some of these spiritual gifts are listed by Paul. He said if you have one of these gifts, use it to encourage or benefit other believers. The gifts he mentioned are: ***“wisdom”*** (v. 8a), using your

knowledge in a godly way; *“knowledge”* (v. 8b), a spiritual insight into a relationship or a ministry; *“faith”* (v. 9a), unusual reliance on God; *“healing”* (v. 9b), the ability to pray over a person to be restored; *“miracles”* (v. 10a), the supernatural ability to do extraordinary acts; *“prophecy”* (v. 10b), a special word or message from God; *“distinguishing between spirits”* (v. 10c), discerning what is of God and what is not; *“different languages”* and *“interpretation of languages”* (vs.10d,e), the ability to speak and interpret other languages other than your native language; and could be a prayer language and the ability to interpret it. Your brothers and sisters in the church needs these gifts as well as others.

2. Use the gift that God gave you to honor Him (12:6; 27)

“And there are different activities, but the same God activates each gift in each person.”

“Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. And God has placed these in the church.”

- When you use your spiritual gift to minister to others, you not only bless them, but you honor the One who gave you that gift. It is God who *“activates each gift in each person”* (v. 6b). Just as we have asked you not to hoard various items

during this pandemic, don't hoard your spiritual gifts. Use them to honor Him.

- What is your gift? What do you enjoy doing in the church as a ministry? In what ministry do you seem to be a “natural”? Read over the list of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 to see which one jumps out at you. Look over that list to see which one identifies with you. Ask a mature believer what they think your spiritual gift(s) is. If you know your gift, or if you discover your gift, use it to honor God who gave it to you, and to benefit others.

During this pandemic, *“excel in every good work.”* Ask God to give you opportunities to pray for and to help others. Honor God with the spiritual gifts that He has graciously given you.