

Decision Making and the Will of God

Lesson 6: Am I Capable? Gifts, Ability, and Stewardship -- Romans 12:3-8

A church needs someone to lead its new outreach, and two members are quietly thinking about it. The first has a gift for organizing people and a heart that comes alive when the lost are reached; he hesitates only because he is afraid of failing. The second has no aptitude for leadership at all and little interest in the work, but he likes the idea of the title. Both are weighing a decision. And tucked inside that decision is a question we do not often think to ask in spiritual terms, though Scripture treats it as deeply spiritual: Am I actually capable of this? Has God equipped me for it, or am I reaching for something He has gifted someone else to do?

We are stewards, not owners. Everything we have, our abilities, our opportunities, our very breath, has been entrusted to us by God, and one day we will give an account of how we used it. That truth quietly reshapes the way a wise believer makes decisions. He does not ask only whether a thing is permitted or whether he wants it; he asks whether God has given him what the task requires, and whether saying yes here would be a faithful use of the gifts he has been handed, or a poor one.

Paul gives us the lens for this in Romans 12. He begins, strikingly, with a warning against thinking too highly of ourselves: "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." Sober judgment. Not the false modesty that buries a real gift in the ground, and not the inflated self-image that grabs at roles God never equipped us for, but a clear-eyed, honest assessment of how God has actually made and gifted us. Then Paul sets us in the body of Christ, where many members with differing gifts, service and teaching, giving and leading and mercy, each do the part grace has fitted them to do.

There is real freedom in this. You do not have to be everything. You do not have to say yes to every need or excel at every task. God has given each of His children a particular shape, a measure of faith and a set of gifts, and a great deal of wise decision making is simply learning to serve where He has equipped you and to release what He has gifted others to carry. At the same time, capability is not the only factor, and "I'm not able" can become a coward's excuse for burying a gift. Moses felt utterly incapable at the burning bush, and God used him anyway. So we hold the question humbly: not as the last word, but as an honest and important one. Am I capable? Has God equipped me for this?

Group Discussion: Why do you think we so rarely ask, in a spiritual sense, whether God has actually equipped us for the things we take on? As a group, talk about the two opposite errors here: thinking too highly of ourselves and grabbing roles we are not gifted for, and thinking too little of ourselves and burying gifts God has given. How do we tell honest self-assessment from false modesty or pride?

Personal Reflection: Consider a responsibility you are carrying or considering. Have you honestly asked whether God has gifted you for it? Be candid about whether you tend more toward overestimating yourself or hiding behind “I can’t.” What would sober judgment, the kind Paul describes, look like for you in that decision this week?

Read Romans 12:3–8

Study Questions

1. Paul writes, “think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned” (v. 3). What is “sober judgment” about ourselves, and why does Paul frame it between thinking too highly and the false humility of thinking too little? How does honest self-assessment help us make wise decisions?
2. Be honest about which direction you tend to lean: do you usually overestimate your abilities, or underestimate them and shrink back? Where has that tendency shaped a recent decision, and what would more sober judgment have looked like?
3. Paul reminds us that “we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (vv. 4–5). How does seeing ourselves as members of a body, rather than as isolated individuals, change the way we think about our gifts and our decisions to serve?
4. Where are you tempted either to try to be a part of the body you are not, or to refuse to be the part you actually are? What would it look like to embrace your real place in the body this week?
5. Paul says we have “gifts that differ according to the grace given to us” (v. 6). What does it mean that our gifts are given by grace rather than earned, and how should that truth keep us from both pride in our strengths and shame over our limits?
6. Name one gift or ability you believe God has genuinely given you. Are you actively using it in His service, or have you been burying it? What is one concrete way you could put it to work?
7. Paul lists differing gifts, serving, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, showing mercy (vv. 6–8), and tells each to use the gift he has. How should an honest sense of how God has gifted you factor into your decisions about where to serve? When is “this is not where I am gifted” a wise word, and when might it be an excuse?
8. Think of a decision where the question of capability really matters, a role, a ministry, a commitment. Have you assessed honestly whether God has equipped you for it, or have you been deciding on other grounds entirely? What does faithful stewardship of your gifts call for here?
9. Paul roots everything in grace-given gifts exercised within the one body, each member using what God supplies (vv. 6–8). What does it mean to be a faithful steward of the gifts and opportunities God has entrusted to you, using them within the order and bounds He has appointed for His church? How does coming accountability for our stewardship shape the way we make decisions?
10. Look back across Romans 12:3–8. Paul calls us to sober self-judgment, a humble place in the body, and faithful use of grace-given gifts. Name one specific way you sense Jesus forming

you through this passage. What is the single truth here that you most need to carry into your next decision?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: 1 Peter 4:10–11, serving one another as good stewards of God's varied grace; Matthew 25:14–30, the parable of the talents and the call to use what we are given; 1 Corinthians 12:4–7, varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, each given for the common good; Exodus 4:10–12, God equipping a reluctant Moses who felt incapable; 2 Timothy 1:6, fanning into flame the gift of God that is in you

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