

Obedience to the Faith

Grace and Apostleship – Rom 12:3

Paul's authority to command (Mt 28:18) was by grace, as with all spiritual gifts. Grace is what makes a person's gifts or abilities spiritual. It is according to the faith one has received from God. Abilities are innate, inherent, in each individual (Mt 25:14-15; 1 Pet 4:10; Rom 12:6). Faith is a gift. Therefore, it is by grace one receives faith to employ each one's gifts and abilities.

Rom 12:4-5; Eph 2:10; 4:12; Rom 12:7 – Let us then use faith to employ our gifts for the works prepared for us to do. These are the works of service we do within the framework of the Body, which is the Community. We do Eph 4:16 as God has dealt to each a measure of faith (Rom 12:3,4-8), serving the Master and being honored by our Father (Jn 12:26; Rom 12:11; Mt 25:29-30). Serving Him takes all diligence to put to use all of our talents (grace and faith, Rom 12:3) in order to employ our gifts to do the works of service in the Body (Eph 4:16; Col 2:19).

Rom 12:9-10 takes community life — “body life” — which is fervent in spirit, serving the Master Yahshua in His Body, the Edah. It takes a community in order to do what Rom 12:3-16 says. It can be done in no other setting, as 1 Jn 2:3-5 says, which takes a community (Acts 2:42,44-45; 4:32-37). Phil 2:1-5 takes a community, as does the rest of the New Testament, the gospels and the letters.

Where else can one live his life with enthusiasm and energetic love? (1 Jn 3:16). 1 Pet 2:12 takes Jn 13:35; Eph 4:1-7; and 1 Cor 1:10,13. 1 Cor 1:13 condemns the divided Christ (“church”) in every place (1 Tim 2:8). Mal 1:5,11 is the prophetic scenario of 1 Tim 2:8. Only in the Body can Rom 12:15-16 be done.

Paul, in Rom 1:5, starts off his letter to the Romans speaking about the *obedience to the faith* (NKJV). It was a church that lived communally, or else he would be commanding them to do what is impossible to do without a community life together. Acts 2:44-45 and 4:32 fulfills Jn 13:34-35 and 17:21-23.

The obedience to the faith is the faith in Rom 12:3-16. It takes *faith* to do this. To try to do this without faith would be sin (Rom 14:23). To be commanded to do so without being in a community would be a tyrannical order. Paul wasn't a tyrant. Obedience to the faith (as in the NKJV) is, as the Living Bible says, “to believe and to obey Him.”

Therefore, 1 Jn 2:4 is written to show one whether he is actually saved or not (1 Jn 5:13; 3:14,23; Jn 13:34-35). Jn 13:35 takes a corporate witness of the truth (Jn 18:37) from those who have heard His voice (Jn 10:27-29) and still hear it (Jn 10:14). So, one must be granted grace through faith, then he can believe and obey Him (Rom 12:3-16; Acts 5:32; Jn 3:36). Otherwise, he will end up as 2 Ths 1:8-9.

So as Mt 6:31-33 and Eph 4:17 say, we are to live no longer as the Gentiles do, but serve one another in a Body, the Community of the Redeemed of Yahshua. God has given to each one of us in the Body a measure of faith to employ our gifts and to perform our works (Eph 2:10; 4:12,16), and to carry them out we serve one another daily in the Body, as each member does his part. This is the only way a person can serve his Master Yahshua according to Jn 12:26.

Try to list all the ways each we serve one another in the community life of the Body of Messiah.

The progression in Eph 2:8,9,10 is grace to faith to belief and then works (Jms 2:14). These works are only done in the framework of the Body of Messiah, which is the Community where Messiah is preeminent (Col 1:18). The Church is the Body. If the Church is the Body of Messiah, how does a Body function? Going to meetings once or twice a week is not the Body of Messiah, and can't be the church Paul is talking about here, nor in Eph 1:22-23.

For What Cause?

The Church is a community – the abundant life in Jn 10:10 – or it is from another source, since Messiah came for one cause and Satan came for another cause. The thief came early on in the second century and did what his cause was, so Jn 18:37 is the cause we all must participate in daily. This is what *koinonia*, joint participation and joint ownership in the community means (Acts 2:44-45, etc.).

Jn 18:37; Mt 16:16-18 — We must continue to hear His voice from start to finish. Jn 10:27 is the start and Jn

18:37 is the only way to finish the Race. And those who are of the truth will be able to continue to hear His voice and direction, lest the gates of the underworld prevail against the church (as it did to bring about the transformation of the First Church to what we see so prevalently today). Mt 16:16-18
– This is continual revelation from the Father and insight into His word.