

conceded; don't depreciate yourself. **The measure of faith.** "A measure" is better. Do your utmost for God—clean up to the measure of your abilities and of your faith in him.

4. Many members in one body, etc. Read John 17. 21-23; then 1 Cor. 12. 12-27.

6-8. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do [in all Christian activity], do it with thy might." Grace here stands for God's gift or favor, the special talent each one receives from God.

Prophecy. This word has a broad meaning in the New Testament. It may be defined as the utterance of God's thoughts directly impressed on the human heart.

Ministry. A good practical translation of this word would be "practical work;" that sort of energetic service which the intelligent Christian layman can perform. **Teaching.** This word needs no new definition, but notice its place in the sentence: "He that teacheth, let him wait on his teaching." Now, that phrase "Let us wait on" is in italics, and therefore was supplied by the translators. The Revised Version supplies words which are more in harmony with the original: "Let us give ourselves to." The Sunday school teacher is to give himself wholly up to his holy task of teaching.

Exhortation. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, of the divine Comforter. But God works through human instrumentalities, and Paul here says, "If any of you find that God has given you any talent for exhorting, or comforting, or encouraging anybody, any powers of sympathy, give yourselves over to that: put your whole force into that."

Ruleth. We would say "presides." If you are chairman of a committee, or president of a board, do your duties energetically; give yourself to them. Finally, give your money in a simple, straightforward manner, without bombast; do kind deeds with a smile on your lips and no scowl on your brow. This whole passage certainly does not mean to neglect all graces but one, but it does mean, Do not attempt to put as much energy into efforts which nobody has discovered you have any special ability for, as you do

in the line of duties for which you are specially called by your native talents, the providence of God, and the votes of your brethren. It does not follow that because you have a sweet tenor voice you would make a first-class church trustee; or that because you are the best man in the church to manage a Sunday school excursion you are the best one to reprove the fault of an erring brother. I have seen niggards *keep* with as much simplicity as any generous soul ever gave; and I have seen petty tyrants "show" *hard-heartedness* with great cheerfulness.

9-12. Let love be without dissimulation.

Be affectionate, not merely polite. **Abhor... cleave to.** You cannot find words which more strongly express loathsomeness and energetic loyalty more forcibly than these; and the one command is as strong as the other. **Brotherly love.** This is God's ideal of church membership. Methodists sometimes say "brother" and "sister" to people they care little about. Such love is not without dissimulation. There is nobody in all your church who is not related to you by brotherly or sisterly ties. **In honor preferring one another.** It is to be hoped that everybody who teaches this lesson can look straight into the eyes of his scholars while he emphasizes this truth. Seek to give others the loftiest positions, but never seek honor for yourselves.

Slothful in business. God's church has no room for loafers or tramps, except to turn them into earnest workers. **Fervent in spirit.** Boiling in soul. **Serving the Lord.** This should probably be "serving the opportunity." Ready for the chance to glorify God when it comes. **Rejoicing in hope.** It would be almost funny to hear some Christians urge this duty. It is to be hoped that on this Sunday at least all teachers will carry smiles on their faces. The lesson will fall flat if they don't. Verse 13 commands generosity, benevolence, and hospitality. Verse 14, the returning of good for evil. Verse 15, an intimate sympathy with the joys and sorrows of our fellow-men.

CRITICAL NOTES.

A good sermon always has argument and exhortation. It is a defect in a sermon to be all argument or all exhortation. The first eleven chapters of the letter furnish reason for acting, the remaining chapters a method of acting. In the early portion Paul tells us *why* we should act; in the latter part he tells us *how*. This lesson is the beginning of his exhortation. When he says, "I beseech you therefore," the force of his "therefore" can be measured only by him who has followed with patience and perseverance the whole progress of his argument.

Verse 1. To present your bodies a sacri-

fice. Here again the Christian heaven is moving in material that is Jewish. The figure is priest-like, the thought is Christlike. Paul rests his appeal upon the mercies of God. It is because of God's mercies that the body is to be dedicated and the mind renewed, that life may be one long testing and approving of the good and satisfactory and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace which was given me. More than once, in urging young men looking forward to the ministry to secure for themselves a preparation as finished as possible, I have received a reply: "It may throw light on my