

Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



This morning our speaker is Philip Wells full-time Elder.
Our theme is deeper exploration of Church Membership -

This evening - Review of church membership studies by Philip Wells

www.calvary-brighton.org.uk

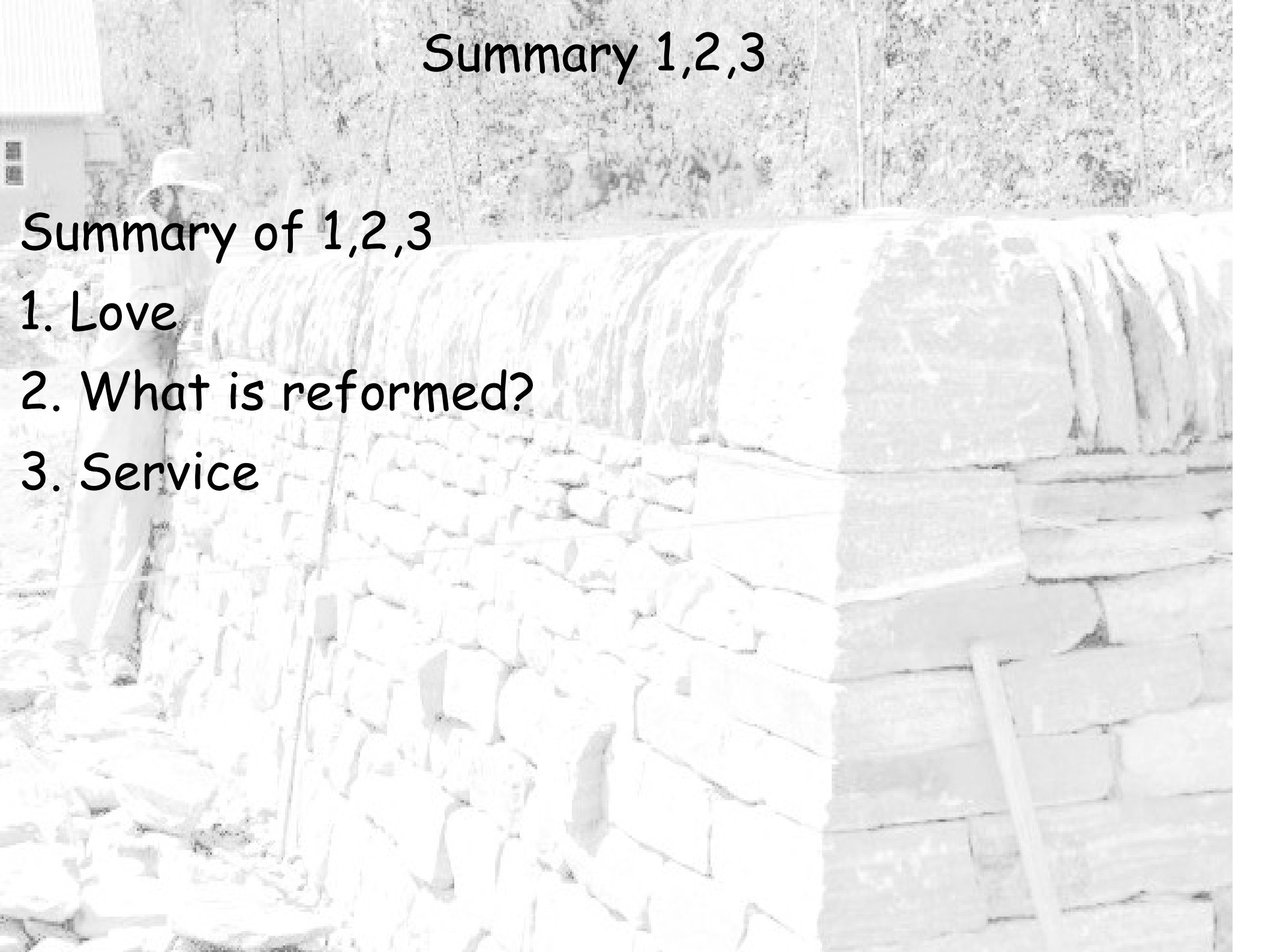
Sermons and talks - calvary-brighton.sermon.net

The background is a picture of a man building a house by fitting stones together

Summary 1,2,3

Summary of 1,2,3

1. Love
2. What is reformed?
3. Service



Repeated aim

This is a series of 6 about the nature and cohesion of the communities of Jesus Christ (i.e. churches)

- *N.B. this is a provision for the church in her IMPERFECT state, before the Lord's coming*
- *basis: if you want to follow Jesus you must also sign up to belonging to his community*
- *if you are not a Christian then this will help you decide whether you really want to follow Jesus or not*
- *if you are a Christian this will - hopefully - encourage us together to join to, and live out, the big vision of God for the communities of his churches until he comes*
- *aim: that we should say "yes" to all that Jesus means by belonging to his people. Here (or somewhere)*

1. Love

What about mentions in the documents of the first generation communities of Jesus?

Answer: it's difficult to mention them all!

Romans 12: [gifts] 9 Love must be sincere ... Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves ..."

Galatians 5:22 "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control "

1 Corinthians 13 "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres ...

=> the New Testament breathes love

=> ...shines love

=> ... lays the ground works in love

=> ... pays the hefty bills in love

2. Evangelical, Reformed

	"free human will"	"God's grace"
Humans and their sin	Are sinful but: can do something that clinches salvation e.g. choose, believe, turn	Are so sinful that they are blind, dead, rebellious – cannot do anything to clinch their salvation.
Christ and his cross	He died for everyone bearing their sin, but is unsure as to whether anyone will choose to benefit from his cross	He is offered to everyone his death causes the salvation of his people and cannot fail.
God and his call	Offers salvation freely to all – but waits to see whether anyone will choose to receive it	Offers his salvation freely to all – but goes even further by opening the hearts of some to sweetly come in faith to Christ
Faith	"believing Jesus died for me" = in a possible fact	"I put my trust in Christ – I need what he did" - in a person, based on his action
Future	Anyone might choose not to believe	Kept for definite by the power of God
Choice / will	It all depends on human choice, human will	People do choose, but only because God first chose them in a secret and mysterious way ("elect" = choose)
==> ministry of the word: building the church and preaching to the unconverted is robust and humble		

3. Service

John 13

- Jesus had a servant mind, heart
- commands us to have servant hand

=> the beauty and loveliness of service

=> which group of Christians am I committed to serving (with)

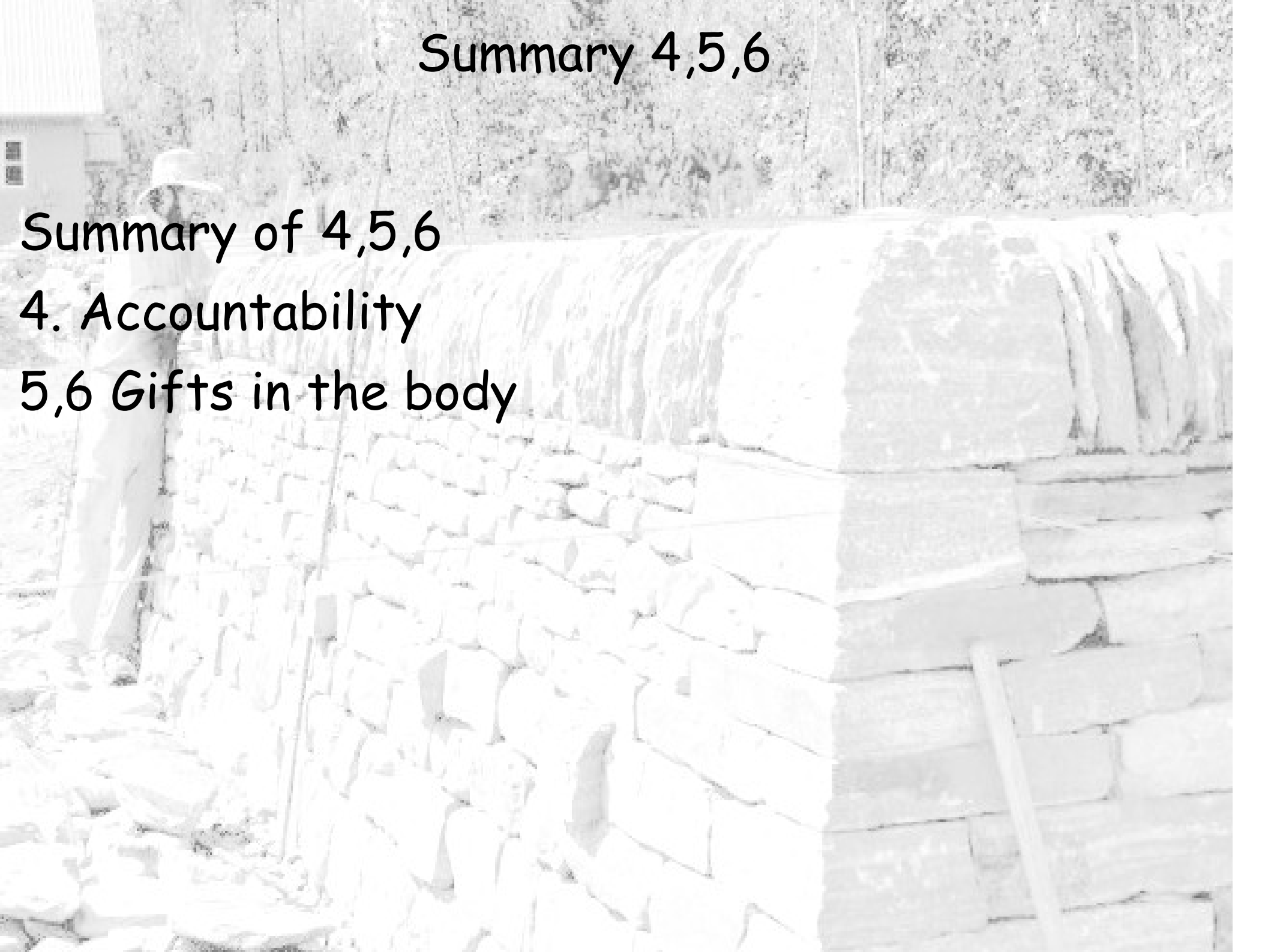
=> let us serve one another

Summary 4,5,6

Summary of 4,5,6

4. Accountability

5,6 Gifts in the body



4. Accountability

Q: What is meant by accountability?
(vs- Western Individualism)

A: that way of living in which I accept that my spiritual life is bound up with the spiritual life of my brothers and sisters

And that I, by my sin, can harm myself and them, and that they have a right to rebuke me

And that I have a duty to seek their best interests by rebuking them for their good.

That I have **no right** to live without concern for my affect on them.
That I have **no right** to live without concern to rebuke them for their good.

= That we live in a community/body whose sinews and ligaments are responsibility and accountability
==> informal discipline, formal discipline

Welcome to this Christian assembly!

- Song Lordship of Jesus 292
- Prayer
- Summary of 1-3
- Song - Servant King 396
- Summary of 4-6
- Song - hearing and being transformed by his word: 548
- Discussion
- Prayer in groups - as time allows

5,6 Gifts

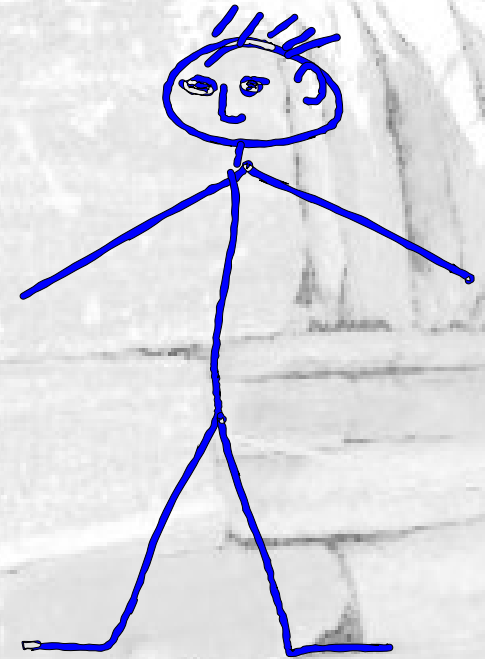
e.g. Romans 12

The Christian church global and local is meant to operate in unity & co-operation ... like a body with many parts

Love is the indispensable key

No part is too weak or humble to belong

Building the body by means of understandable speech is the work of the Spirit



Discussion points

a. clarification:

Not that these are rightly understood to be debatable or controversial points?

b. build one another up (1 Thess 5:11)

What points of upbuilding can we make?

c. "encourage one another"

What points of mutual encouragement can we take? (Heb 3:13) against the sin of falling away