

Williams (pp. 116-117) writes:

There is discussion as to whether here in Romans 12 this word refers to oral ministry or deacon service. Admittedly in some places "ministry" describes the general Christian work of witness and preaching (Cf., Romans 12:7; 2 Corinthians 4:1; 5:18; Ephesians 4:12; etc.). However, Paul seem here to distinguish ministry from the more obviously oral gifts of prophecy, teaching, and exhortation. He is apparently referring to the more mundane, yet nonetheless charismatic ministry of caring for the physical needs of congregations and people. The word DIAKONIA is used several times in the New Testament to describe mercy missions and almoner work (Acts 6:1; Romans 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 9:12).

Interestingly enough Paul describes his own mission to Jerusalem in the following words: "But now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering (DIAKONON) unto the saints." (Romans 15:25 RV cf., verses 26-27)

In support of this interpretation of ministry in Romans 12:7 we note the following comment by Professor Murray: "There does not, therefore, appear to be any conclusive reason for rejecting the view that this reference is to the diaconate. If this is the gift contemplated, there is good reason why deacons should be exhorted to give themselves to this ministry. It is a ministry of mercy to the poor and infirm. Since this office is concerned with material and physical benefits, it is liable to to be underestimated and regarded as unspiritual. . . In the proper sense, the work of this office is intensely spiritual and the evils arising from underesteem have wrought havoc in the witness of the church."

N. Miracle-Working

1 Corinthians 12:7, 8, 10 -- "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit . . . , to another miraculous powers"

Michael Green (pp. 177-180) states:

Miracles were common in the Old Testament, in the life of Jesus, and in the Acts of the Apostles. One thinks of prison doors opening to release a Peter or a Paul; of Elymas the sorcerer being struck with blindness, and so forth. If it is correct to read the plural DUNAMEON after ENERGEMATA in I Corinthians 12:10, then it only means that Paul reckoned the ability to work miracles as one of the gifts of the Spirit. However, the genitive singular (DUNAMEOS) is read by several of the best MSS: the meaning would then be not "the working of miracles" but "the effects of power" -- the outworking in Christian ministry of the divine power as