

A Living Sacrifice – Romans 12:1–13:7



MEMORY VERSE: I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Romans 12:1

DAY 1 ROMANS 12:1-2 — The Transformed Life

1. What “appeal” does Paul make? Why do you think he appeals rather than instructs the believers?
2. Why is each part of ourselves important in our spiritual worship of God?
Body-
Mind-
Will-
3. What does it mean to be “transformed by the renewal of your mind?”

2 Timothy 3:16

LEARN THE TRUTH

Having learned about the doctrinal truths of salvation through faith in Christ, the remaining chapters of Romans explain how to live a life of gratitude, purpose and unity in the body of Christ. May you fully embrace the truths in the remaining chapters and experience God’s blessings as a result.

4. What is the result of a transformed mind? v.2
5. What do you think it looks like to be a Living Sacrifice for God? Can you think of anyone in particular who attempts to live this way?

DAY 2 ROMANS 12:3-8 — Gifts of Grace in Community

6. How does Paul instruct believers to think? What benefit do you see in having this mindset? vv.3-5
7. What does it mean to have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us? v.6a

8. Do any of these gifts seem to describe, motivate or appeal to you? If so, how? vv.6-8
 prophecy- divinely inspired speaking forth God's Word
 service- helping or serving others, meeting immediate physical needs
 teaching- helping others understand God's Word
 exhortation- advising, encouraging, comforting, urging others to spiritual growth and maturity
 contribute/give- sharing generously, often financially
 lead/administrate- organize, unite, direct a body of believers
 acts of mercy- come alongside, understand or share in another's grief or joy
9. What does 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 add to your understanding of God's design for spiritual gifts?
10. What positive results might you expect when the body of Christ takes Romans 12:3-8 to heart?
 What negative results likely result when these verses are overlooked or ignored?

DAY 3 ROMANS 12:9-13: — Genuine Love

11. Verse 9 tells us that love must be "genuine." How does the dictionary define the word, "genuine?"
12. Genuine love abhors what is _____ and holds fast to what is _____. v.9
 How do you think counterfeit love reacts to good and evil?
13. Genuine love loves one another with _____, and outdoes one another in _____. v.10 How do you suppose counterfeit love twists this?
14. What do you think the instructions in verses 11-13 have to do with genuine love?
15. Not everyone has the spiritual gifts of "giving" and "serving," yet all are told to do so. v.13 Why might this be?

DAY 4 ROMANS 12:14-21 — Faith that Overcomes

16. How are we to respond to persecution? Why would this response glorify God? v. 14

Philippians 2:5-11

17. Do you think verses 15-16 come to us naturally? Why are these essential for living in harmony?
18. Why is it wrong to repay evil for evil? What should our goal be instead? vv.17-18
19. What happens when we leave vengeance to God, and instead offer food and water to our enemies? vv.19-21
20. Can you think of a time you loved someone you viewed as an enemy, or received genuine love when you were seen as an enemy?

DAY 5 ROMANS 13:1-7 – Submission to Governing Authorities

21. Why are we instructed to be subject to the governing authorities? v.1 Do you believe this?
22. What is true of the one who resists or rebels against the authority God has appointed? vv.2-4
23. What are the benefits of submitting to the governing authorities? v.5 How have you seen this to be true in your life?
24. Do you think there is a difference between what one owes to an authority and what the authority actually deserves? What is our responsibility in this? vv.6-7
25. What are believers to do when authorities demand sinful obedience? Acts 5:17-29; Acts 24:10-16

LOVE THE TRUTH

Living sacrifices are a lovely witness! People notice when God's children are humble, respectful of others and obedient to authority. Do not use bad authorities as an excuse to rebel. At the same time, we must honor God first and have a clear conscience before Him. This can sometimes be costly.

Romans 12:1–13:7

A Living Sacrifice

Paul has been abundantly clear that salvation and righteousness are a gift of grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. In light of this, he appeals to believers to present themselves to God as living sacrifices, to be transformed to His ways and will. The fact is, humans conform. If we do not deliberately reject the world's ways and conform to God's ways, we will worship self and created things. Our motivation to live sacrificially is not fear, but gratitude for God's love and mercy!

Sober judgment of self is crucial for living sacrifices. We tend to think we are either superior or inferior to others. Both extremes are wrong and neither are based on truth because both deny the power and need for the cross. Humble and honest self evaluation and a habit of regular admission and confession of sins, invites God to reveal the gifts of grace He has given each of us. This attitude enables us to experience joy as we operate out of our spiritual gift rather than our fleshly talents. This benefits the body of Christ, glorifies God and draws unbelievers to Christ. Whether gifted in prophetically speaking forth the Word of God; serving others; studying and explaining the Word of God so people can understand; encouraging and exhorting others to grow in their faith; giving generously to people or ministries; leading and organizing; or showing mercy and compassion, all the gifts are for the whole church. Regarding the gifts, Paul said, "let us use them," so we must endeavor out how God has gifted us. When everyone serves in their gifts, the needs are met, no one person is carrying too large a load and everyone has purpose. The church is then balanced and values all it's members, without bestowing greater honor to particularly gifted people.

Christians are radically different than those who do not know Christ. The ways of God simply do not match the ways of the world. Worldly wisdom tells us to take revenge on people who have wronged us and that we

must look out for #1. But this attitude lacks humility and genuine love. We want to be strong, but often it takes the greatest strength to return good for evil, love for hate. We are called to submit to authorities with whom we might not like or agree because God placed those people in power, even when they do not respect Him. Long ago, God's people begged Him to give them a king so they could be like the other nations. He warned them that having such authority over them would cost them dearly. It did then and still does today. (1 Samuel 8) Regardless, God can and does use those in authority to accomplish His purpose.

WALK IN TRUTH



God has allowed evil people to be in positions of authority all over the world. We are living in a society today that increasingly dishonors God. When we habitually choose to respect and obey those in authority, our behavior gives us a greater voice when and if the time comes to stand firm FOR God and AGAINST evil. We are not called to blindly obey evil laws. In Exodus 1, the king of Egypt commanded the midwives to kill the Hebrew baby boys when they were born, so that the Jewish race might be wiped out. But the midwives feared God and so they disobeyed the king and even lied about it. Because those brave women did what was right, God blessed them with families. We must glorify God as we abhor evil and cling to what is good. The unbelieving world must see that we are not overcome by evil but rather we overcome evil with good. It all starts with choosing to be a living sacrifice, conforming to God's will and trusting Him to guide us through difficult times, no matter the cost.