

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 5TH - 6TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

SACRIFICE (ROMANS 12:1-2)

"IN VIEW OF THE MERCIES OF GOD..."

Romans 1-11 present us with solid Christian doctrine (set of beliefs) that comes from the "mercies of God." Chapter 12 is the practical application of those doctrines in our daily lives.

- V1a is so important because we're reminded that **all goodness, blessings, and reasons why we are able to live an honorable life come from the grace and mercy of God.**

"...PRESENT YOUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE."

V1b is also extremely important because it shows us the effect of the Holy Spirit in our lives after we are saved.

- In light of God's grace and mercy **it is only reasonable that we offer ourselves as a "living sacrifice" in service to the One Who saved us from destruction.** Paul "urges" us to live in submission to the Master.

LOGIC IS A HUGE COMPONENT OF CHRISTIANITY

Our faith is often painted as illogical or difficult to believe in, but Paul presents very logical and comprehensible doctrines of Christianity.

- The Bible appeals to reason in many ways, but here it is telling the Christian that any other response than gratitude to God's mercy is irrational. **We are not told to make a sacrifice, but to live as one.**

WE MUST SAY NO TO SAY YES

In order to live as faithful servants for Jesus, we must deliberately not "conform to this age."

- "Not conforming to this age" means **not aligning ourselves with the beliefs, philosophies, methodologies, and strategies of the fallen world/culture that we live in.** Have we seen this creep into the church? What about into us?

BECAUSE OUR BELIEFS SHAPE OUR ACTIONS

Satan is the temporary god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), so that means **we must not conform to the moral, intellectual, or emotional standards of a non-believing society.**

- Conforming to the ways of the world yields the pattern of the world in our lives, that is death, strife, depravity, failure, heartache, and ultimately destruction.

OUR MINDS MUST BE RENEWED BY GOD

If we are to avoid the pitfalls of an anti-Christ culture, we must allow Jesus to renew our minds so we are able to "discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God."

- This is not just our initial contact with Jesus (salvation), but also **a daily renewing that protects and grows us into more of the image of God** (sanctification).

THE GIVER (ROMANS 12:3-8)

FROM LOGIC TO APPLICATION

Paul moves from our reasonable response as saved believers to how we apply our salvation to our daily lives.

- First, Paul reminds us to be humble because there is no place for arrogance in Christianity. **We are "not to think [ourselves] more highly than [we] should" but "instead think sensibly."**

"GOD HAS DISTRIBUTED"

What keeps us humble is the knowledge that every good thing comes from a gracious God and not our own doing (1 Chr. 16).

- Not only has every person failed too many times to count, but **every successful endeavor, talent, our looks, intellect, and spiritual gifts come from a giving God and we are to humbly steward them.**

CHRISTIANITY IS A TEAM EFFORT

Not only should we be humble, but we should look at the **giftings** and roles of other Christians as God appointed positions in a great mission to touch mankind and grow His kingdom.

- We are not to think of ourselves as higher than others, but in a different role for a common purpose. **Competition and condescension have no place in Christianity.**

MANY GIFTS FROM THE SAME GIVER

Paul says, "According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts." This means every follower of Jesus is distributed spiritual, practical, and relational gifts that are used to aid us and glorify God.

- **We are to be submitted to how God wants to use us while constantly praying for wisdom (J.s. 1:5).**

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Romans 12:** Prophecy, service, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy
- **1 Corinthians 12:** Prophecy, teaching, helping others, leadership, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, discernment, tongues, interpreting tongues
- **Ephesians 4 & 1 Peter 4:** Prophecy, pastoring, teaching, serving

AN ACCURATE VIEW OF GOD'S GIFTS

The Gifts of the Spirit are not just character traits, but a miraculous way God uses followers that would otherwise be ill-equipped without His provision.

- **We must not only be submitted, but we're to seek knowledge of how God uses these gifts (1 Cor. 12) so we can be effective and never abusive with our gifts.**

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (GALATIANS 5)

If we submit to God, sacrifice our desires, and step out in faith, we produce fruit that honors God, blesses others, and blesses us.

- Christianity is more than a belief, it is a way of life. **When Christ is the filter by which we view the world, He also becomes the source of all we need, what we do, and who we are.**

PRACTICAL EVIDENCE (ROMANS 12:9-21)

SIMPLE, YET DIFFICULT

The last 13 verses of this chapter are extremely easy to understand, but often hard to execute. We are to display Christ in us through the gifts and fruit of the Spirit, but also in the practical nitty-gritty of our daily lives.

- This is even more difficult when applied to our "enemies" or people that are out of our comfort zone.

THIS ALL STEMS FROM 2 LOVES

We must first have a deep love for God. From our deep love of God comes a love for people, ALL people (Mt. 22)!

- **Since God has shown us a gracious and unconditional love (Rm. 8), we are to extend His love to those around us.** This is only possible by being full of the Holy Spirit.

SIMPLE APPLICATION

- Love without hypocrisy
- Detest evil; cling to what is good
- Outdo one another in showing honor
- Be fervent in Spirit: Stand firm in beliefs
- Be patient in affliction
- **Be persistent in prayer**
- Share with the saints in their needs
- Pursue hospitality
- Bless those that persecute you
- Rejoice and weep with others
- Live in harmony
- **Don't be proud** and associate with the humble
- **Do not be wise in your own estimation**
- **Do not repay evil for evil**
- If possible, live at peace with everyone
- Do not avenge yourself

"YOU WILL BE HEAPING FIERY COALS"

Paul quotes Proverbs 25:21-22 when referring to how we are to treat people that hate us.

- Whether or not this is from an Egyptian ritual is unclear, but the point is that when we treat hostile people with kindness, it brings shame and could bring humility.

"DO NOT BE CONQUERED BY EVIL, BUT CONQUER EVIL WITH GOOD."

Jesus' death and resurrection opened up the path for salvation, forgiveness, and the alleviation of shame and guilt. It also opened up the infilling of the Holy Spirit so we can overcome evil with goodness.

- **Conquering evil is only possible by God's power. We are incapable without Jesus.**

IN VIEW OF GOD'S MERCY

- When we realize that we've sinned, that Jesus saw it all, and He still chose to die on the cross for our rebellion, our only reasonable response is complete surrender and sacrifice to Him.
- Can we honestly say we are humbled, indebted, submitted, and willing to give it all to Jesus?
- Because God is not only merciful, but giving, we have gifts given to us based on His discretion and power that help us navigate life and get us closer to Him and others.
- When we submit we will also produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control) daily.

IN VIEW OF GOD'S COMMANDS

- The Spirit of God in us will produce very practical ethical changes in our daily lives.
- Though it is not always easy to love others and show grace, we are called to respond to others like God has responded to us.
- In a "me-centered" world, can we say our ethics mirror the teachings and heart of scripture?
- The Word of God does not only promise us an eternity with Jesus in perfection, but it promises a present life of victory, joy, and peace IF we will submit and rely on Him.
- Are we living an "overcoming life" or has the world beat us down into submitting to its processes and inevitable outcomes?

WHAT I DO WHAT I'VE HEARD IS MY RESPONSIBILITY.