

The Book of Romans

LESSON TWELVE

“A Living Sacrifice to God”

Paul has laid out for us the doctrinal truths of the Gospel in chapters one through eleven. Now, as we come to chapter twelve, Paul turns his focus towards the practical truths of how we are to live out our faith.

1. Looking at **verse 1**, we see Paul making the transition from his doctrinal arguments in his previous chapters to how we are to put these doctrinal truths into practice. Write down the instruction Paul gives us in **verse 1**.
2. The NKJV uses the words “I beseech you.” The NIV and NASB use the words “I urge you” and the NLT uses the words “I plead with you.” The basis for Paul’s beseeching, urging and pleading is **God’s mercy**. The abundant **mercies of God** should motivate our hearts to respond to Him in this way. **David Guzik** gives us a list in his commentary of just some of the mercies the Lord has poured out on us. As you look at each item on the list, look up and jot down a Scripture underneath each one to share with the group that corresponds to the mercy God has shown to us. Use a concordance or go online to help in your search.
 - **Justification from the guilt and penalty of sin.**
 - **Adoption in Jesus and identification with Christ.**
 - **Placed under grace, not law.**
 - **Giving the Holy Spirit to live within.**

- **Promise of help in all affliction.**
- **Assurance of a standing in God's election.**
- **Confidence of coming glory.**
- **Confidence of no separation from the love of God.**
- **Confidence in God's continued faithfulness.**

3. The fact that Paul is beseeching, urging and pleading for us to respond to God's mercy reminds us that we have a **free will choice** in how we choose to live. God's mercy should be our motivation to **present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God**. What reminder do we read in **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** concerning our bodies? Look up and write those verses down below.

4. The **Bible Knowledge Commentary** states: **"The word 'bodies,' is mindful of the Old Testament sacrifices, representing the totality of one's life and activities, of which his body is the vehicle of expression. In contrast with Old Testament sacrifices, this is a 'living' sacrifice."**

How does Paul express this in **Philippians 1:20**? Record his words below.

At the end of **Romans 12:1** Paul states that presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice to God is our **reasonable service** (NKJV). The NASB calls it our **“spiritual service of worship.”** The Greek word used here can be translated, according to **Albert Barnes**, as **“your spiritual ministry.”** He goes on to say: **“It is not forced or constrained. The offering of ourselves should be voluntary. No other can be a true offering, and none other can be acceptable. We are to offer our entire selves, all that we have and are, to God. No other offering can be such as He will approve. The character of God is such as should lead us to that. It is a character of mercy; of long-continued and patient forbearance, and it should influence us to devote ourselves to Him.”**

5. Paul expresses this truth using the example of the Old Testament sacrifices offered by the priests. The priests of the Old Testament were to live a life set apart, totally and completely devoted to God. In the New Testament, we have been made priests unto God as well. What does **1 Peter 2:5 and 2:9** say about this? Record those verses below.

1 Peter 2:5 -

1 Peter 2:9 -

6. Looking at **verse 2** what practical examples does Paul give concerning our spiritual service to God and our response to the mercy and compassion He has shown to us? Write down **verse 2** below.

J.B. Phillips expresses **Romans 12:1-2** this way: **“With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give Him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to Him and acceptable by Him. Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God re-mold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the Plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.”** This is an excellent translation of these verses!

7. The first practical instruction Paul gives us, found in **verse 2**, is to “**be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...**” What does Peter say concerning this in **1 Peter 1:14-15**? Write his words down below.

8. The word **transformed** used here is the Greek word “metamorphoo.” It is where we get the word “metamorphosis” from. It is a transformation that completely changes us from the inside out. The word is also used in the “present tense” giving the idea that it is not a “one and done” thing, but something we do and keep on doing. Paul says this transformation happens by the “**renewing of our minds.**” Look up the following Scriptures and record what they say concerning this “transformation” we are called to make by the “renewing of our minds.”

2 Corinthians 3:18 -

Ephesians 4:21-24 -

9. Looking at the end of **Romans 12:2**, what does Paul say the **result** is when we live this way?

10. David Guzik states, “**As we are transformed on the inside, the *proof* is evident on the outside, as others can see what the good and acceptable and perfect will of God is through our life.**”

In what ways is your mind being renewed, and how has that affected those who have observed this renewal? Share your thoughts and experience.

11. As Paul continues to speak of the practical ways we should live out our faith, he turns to the exercising of the spiritual gifts we have been given. Looking at **Romans 12:3**, what is the first warning Paul gives to us in this verse? Write down the verse below.

12. Record these other verses that speak to us about the attitude of our hearts.

1 Corinthians 4:7 -

Galatians 6:3 -

Philippians 2:3-4 -

1 Peter 5:8 -

13. Read and record **Romans 12:4 & 5**.

14. This is a subject Paul has spoken of often in his letters. Look up and record **1 Corinthians 12:12-14** below.

15. Having this kind of mind-set, what does Paul now tell us to do in **Romans 12:6**?

16. The first instruction Paul gives us in **verse 6** is to use the gifts we have been given. In his letter to the Ephesians Paul clarifies the purpose of the spiritual gifts we have been given. Look up and record his words to the Ephesians in the verses below.

Ephesians 4:7 -

Ephesians 4:12 -

Back to our chapter in **Romans 12**, Paul speaks first of the spiritual gift of prophecy at the end of **verse 6**. Paul states that those with this gift need to use it in proportion to their faith. **David Guzik** has this to say: **“God may give us something to say to an individual or church body that stretches our faith. If we can’t prophecy in faith and trust that God has really spoken to us, we shouldn’t do it at all.”**

Prophecy is a gift that is often misunderstood. We often think of prophecy as a **fore-telling** of a future event, but more often it is a **forth-telling** of the heart and mind of God concerning a particular thing or situation. Those with this gift may sense the Lord putting on their heart something He wants them to share with someone. Guzik’s reminder is that if we exercise this gift, we must do so believing what we share has truly come from the Holy Spirit.

17. Paul continues in **verses 7 and 8**, listing a few other spiritual gifts given to us. Write down these verses below.
18. The first gift listed in **verse 7** is **ministry**. This is a broad term Paul is using here, speaking of serving in practical ways. It is often referred to as the gift of **service** or the gift of **helps**. Rather than being looked at as a lesser gift, Paul emphasizes that it is an important gift given by the Holy Spirit, and he lists it right alongside the **gift of teaching**. What gift does Paul list after the gift of teaching?
19. It could be said that **teaching** is the gift of **instruction** and **exhortation** is the gift of **encouraging** people to **practice what they've been taught**. They go hand in hand. The other gifts listed are the gifts of **giving**, **leadership** and **mercy**. This is not, however, a complete, comprehensive listing of all the spiritual gifts. As you look back over these verses, and what Paul warned his readers of at the end of **verse 3**, what point do you think Paul is trying to make? Look at these verses in a few other translations before sharing your thoughts below.
20. Having the right heart and attitude is more important than anything we “do.” This is especially true of our ministry to God and how we minister to others. Paul continues in **verses 9-21**, giving us practical examples of the right-heart attitudes we are to live by. **Briefly summarize** each of the instructions given in these verses below.

Verse 9 -

Verse 10 -

Verse 11 -

Verse 12 -

Verse 13 -

Verse 14-

Verse 15 -

Verse 16 -

Verse 17 -

Verse 18 -

Verse 19 -

Verse 20 -

Verse 21 -

21. Turn to **1 Corinthians, chapter 12**. Read through **verses 15-31** of this chapter. Then turn to **1 Corinthians 13** and write down **verses 1-3** below.

1 Corinthians 13:1 -

1 Corinthians 13:2 -

1 Corinthians 13:3 -

22. How has **Romans, chapter 12** spoken to your heart? What has been your greatest take-away?

This study was written and prepared by Shawn Van Hook, 2026

LIVING  TRUTH