

## Pt 41 Romans 12:1-2, A Living Sacrifice

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### Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.  
2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Chapters 9-11 dealt with God's plans for the Jews and the grafting in of the Gentiles. As we begin Chapter 12 of Romans, we see Paul switching gears. Everything up to this point has been about salvation and how to achieve justification before God. But now Paul is focused upon how a saved person is to live now that they have been saved. We sometimes call this our "**Sanctification Process**."

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Paul starts out using one of his favorite statements, "I beseech you." He uses the word "beseech" 23-separate times in his writings. It means "**I urgently implore you or plead with you.**" Paul's message is always an urgent one because he knows how important it is that they act upon what they have heard.

He also uses the word "**therefore**," meaning, "**because of what I just told you.**" In other words, considering everything he has said in this letter thus far concerning salvation and the Gospel but even more so concerning the last verse in **Romans 11:36** For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

If we as Christians keep in mind of everything being of Him, through Him, and to Him, then we should act urgently. Because not only was the Gospel message urgent in Paul's day but it is just as urgent in the day in which we live. You can look around you and realize that the majority of the world is lost and going to hell. I don't want to sound crass, but the world is going to hell with the pedal down. If people are not reached NOW, then it may forever be too late.

I know most people believe the world is going to just keep on going and going and we have all the time in the world, but that's just not the case. There is absolutely nothing left on God's timetable that needs to take place before he raptures the Church out of here. Instead of worrying about the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, high gas prices, and dwindling 401Ks, we should be more concerned with lost and dying souls and bringing glory to God.

Notice he calls them "**brethren**." This is a term which obviously means "**brother**." In the Bible, the word brethren is usually reserved for saved people. Yes, it is sometimes used in the sense that they all belong to the same ethnic group such as the Israelites were Paul's brethren because he too was an Israelite, but more so it is referring to fellow Christians. I say this a lot but at Church we refer to each other as "brothers and sisters," even if we aren't blood related because we are related in Christ.

In the next part of the verse he says, **by the mercies of God**. God's mercies describe his loving, gracious, and extravagant grace. Paul is often described as "The Apostle of Grace." He even declares that God made him so: **Acts 20:24** But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Also in **Ephesians 3:1-2** For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

Paul begins and/or ends all his Epistles with "**Grace be unto you.**" Grace is one of, if not the very most important aspect of God concerning us. Just as Paul writes in **Ephesians 2:8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

He continues in verse one of our opening text...**by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God**

To "**present**" something, means that you "**offer**" it. You put forth some effort to do it. God isn't taking it, you are presenting, giving, or offering it. What is he telling us to present: **your bodies a living sacrifice**

In the Old Testament under the Old Covenant, God required those who worshiped him to offer up a dead animal. That is no longer the case under the New Covenant. Listen to what Paul wrote in **Hebrews 10:1-6**

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Christ was the final sacrifice to be made, the last death to die to pay for the sins of all men for eternity. No longer are dead sacrifices sufficient. Now, God wants us to present our bodies as a "**living sacrifice**." In other words, he wants us to yield ourselves as an instrument of righteousness.

If you remember when we were in Chapter 6, Paul spoke of this:

### **Romans 6:10-14**

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

He expects us to live a holy and righteous life. In fact, he says "**which is your reasonable service**." It's not unreasonable that we should live for God the way He expects us to.

Of course, since we are carnal by nature and fleshly in thinking, we have a tough time living in a way that is pleasing to Him. I know it seems the harder I try to live in a way pleasing to the Lord, the more I stumble and fall. I'm thankful for his grace and mercy!

Turn over to [Colossians 1:7-12](#) and we read where Paul is writing to the Church at Colossae, and he tells them that he has heard good things about them from someone in the Church named Epaphras:

7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Paul lists 7-things that Christians do when they offer themselves as a living sacrifice:

- v9 - Filled with the knowledge of his will
- v9 - all wisdom and spiritual understanding
- v10 - walk worthy of the Lord
- v10 - fruitful in every good work
- v10 - increasing in knowledge of God
- v11 - Strengthened with all might
- v11 - unto all patience, longsuffering with joyfulness

It is not unreasonable that we should live this way for the Lord.

Our problem is knowing how to live this way. Fortunately, Paul also tells us how to do that in verse two of our opening text:

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Paul cautions us not to be “conformed to this world.” To be conformed means that you have allowed yourself to become like something. In other words, you have allowed the culture, habits, and desires of the world around you to become your culture, habits, and desires. You have adopted the world’s ways.

Let me give you some examples:

1. The world says it’s okay for a woman to murder an unborn baby inside of her womb. You would be amazed at how many people that claim to be Christians who also say they believe that. Murdering an innocent baby is one of the most unchristian things you could do. Yet many “so-called” Christians have conformed to that way of thinking.
2. The world says same-sex relationships are normal and accepted. I can give you the names of people that I know who go to Church every time the door is open and claim to be Christian who defend gay marriage and even walk in Pride parades to support their gay friends. This is conforming to the world’s way of thinking – it certainly is NOT God’s way of thinking.
3. The world says “Who needs marriage? We can just shack up and live together and do anything we please and not get married.” There are many people who claim to be Christian that have allowed themselves to be conformed to that way of thinking. Just because everyone else is doing it doesn’t make it right. It goes completely against God’s plan for how men and women are to live.

We must be very careful not to allow the world’s influences to conform us. In Paul’s day the Romans were the dominant world-empire. They were one of the most wicked, perverted, and sinful cultures in all of history. Paul had to deal with this problem his entire ministry. People who lived in those Roman cities and providences lived in this culture and had allowed themselves to be influenced by it.

Paul says don’t be conformed to the world but [be ye transformed](#). To be transformed means turned into something completely different. A transformation must take place. When my son was growing up, there was a popular line of toys called “Transformers.” They were robots that you could move the parts and fold them in, and they would be transformed into cars and trucks. There was Optimus Prime, Megatron, and Bumblebee. There was a little song that went with them that said “Transformers, more than meets the eye, Transformers, robots in disguise.” They made cartoons and movies about them too.

As a Christian, we still must live in the same physical body, but it is our Spirit that must be transformed and the way we do that is by doing what Paul says next: [by the renewing of your mind](#).

We must start thinking a different way. Our thoughts must change from what they once were. You cannot expect to think the same way you used to think and be transformed. You must “renew” your mind, your thoughts, your intentions, and your habits.

I get really irritated whenever I hear some preacher say something like “well, if you are truly saved you won’t think sinful things.” That’s not in the Bible. It’s no wonder so many people get discouraged when they get saved and they can’t figure out why they don’t act holy and righteous like these preachers pretend to be.

Listen, thinking the way you should takes effort. You must transform your thoughts and think a different way. The reason we are to do this is because of what Paul writes in the last part of verse 2: [that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God](#)

It is God’s will that we live a life pleasing to Him. We cannot be pleasing unto God if we allow our minds to be conformed to the world and think the way the world thinks. Listen to what Paul says in [Romans 8:5-8](#)

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

It is His will that we transform our minds into a more Christ-like mind. By doing this we will be bringing forth fruit unto God, as we studied in [Romans 7:4-6](#)

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.