

Study 7 Romans 12 Living Sacrifices and Loving the Body of Christ

So far in the letter of Romans we have read that in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed (1:17). This righteousness comes through faith in Jesus Christ (3:22). We are reminded that all have sinned; all have fallen short of the glory God created us for (3:23). But we can be freely justified by God's grace through the redemption found in Christ (3:24). What is our response to the good news of salvation by grace through faith? In Romans chapter 12 the apostle Paul explains that our response to God's mercy is to become a living sacrifice, to live a life in service to God and not for self.

Read Romans 12

1. What do you think are the major themes of the chapter?
2. Chapter 12 begins with the word "therefore". In a sense all that has been written in the letter to this point is referred to in this "therefore". In view of God's mercy, in view of our being saved by His grace through faith, we are to live as a sacrifice. What do you think this kind of life may look like?
3. Why do you think Paul uses the imagery of continuously living as a sacrifice when at his time animal sacrifices were offered only once? Why do you think this kind of LIVING sacrifice is pleasing to God?
4. In verse 2 we are told, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world" The J.B. Phillips paraphrase has, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould." How do you feel squeezed or forced to follow the world? How do we resist the pressures of this world?
5. According to Romans 12:3-21 how should we live life as a living sacrifice?

Paul uses the imagery of a human body to describe the importance of being involved in and serving the Christian community in order to bless others.

6. In both Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 the context for using Spiritual gifts is love (Romans 12:9-10; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13). Why do you think Paul uses the imagery of a human body and then stresses the importance of love for others when he teaches about Spiritual gifts?

So much in the gospel is counter to the way many people think and live in our culture. For many in our world today power gives people the right to do as they please, boasting in self is the norm, lying masquerades as truth, repaying evil with evil and seeking revenge are common. God challenges us to live differently, to not be overcome by evil, but to overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:21)