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**Romans 12** This study has not been posted on facebook yet



By Dan Maines

## **Romans 12**

### **Romans 12:1**

Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

† Paul shifts from doctrine to practice. In light of God's mercies, believers are called to present themselves as living sacrifices.

† This contrasts with Old Covenant animal sacrifices. Now, covenant service is offering our entire lives to God.

† Philo spoke of the soul as a sacrifice of reason. Paul grounds true sacrifice in Christ and Spirit-filled obedience.

### **Romans 12:2**

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

† Transformation is inward, by renewing of the mind. The old covenant age was passing; believers were called not to conform to its patterns.

† Josephus describes how zealots conformed to violence and corruption before Jerusalem's fall. Paul calls believers to the opposite: transformation through Christ.

### **Romans 12:3**

For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

† Humility is commanded. Faith is measured by God's gift, not human pride.

### **Romans 12:4-5**

For just as we have many parts in one body and all the body's parts do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually parts of one another.

† The body metaphor shows unity in diversity. Each believer has a role, yet all belong to one body.

† Clement of Rome used this imagery in 1 Clement 37, urging unity in the church.

## **Romans 12:6-8**

However, since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to use them properly: if prophecy, in proportion to one's faith; if service, in the act of serving; or the one who teaches, in the act of teaching; or the one who exhorts, in the work of exhortation; the one who gives, with generosity; the one who is in leadership, with diligence; the one who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

† The Spirit distributes gifts for service. Each is to use their gift faithfully and joyfully.

† The Didache (ch. 11-13) speaks of proper use of spiritual gifts in the early church. Paul emphasizes humility and grace in their exercise.

## **Romans 12:9**

Love must be free of hypocrisy. Detest what is evil; cling to what is good.

† True love is without pretense. Holiness demands rejecting evil and embracing good.

## **Romans 12:10-11**

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor, not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

† The Christian community must excel in love, honor, and service, modeling a new covenant family.

## **Romans 12:12-13**

rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

† Paul emphasizes endurance, prayer, generosity, and hospitality, critical virtues for the persecuted church.

## **Romans 12:14**

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

† Echoing Jesus in Matthew 5:44, Paul calls for blessing in the face of persecution.

† Tacitus (Annals 15.44) described Roman cruelty to Christians, yet their response of blessing shocked the empire.

## **Romans 12:15-16**

Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

† Christian empathy and humility mark the community. They reject arrogance and embrace unity.

## **Romans 12:17-18**

Never repay evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all people. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all people.

† Retribution belongs to God. Believers are to pursue peace wherever possible.

## **Romans 12:19**

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

† Quoting Deuteronomy 32:35, Paul teaches that vengeance belongs to God. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was God's vengeance on covenant breakers.

## **Romans 12:20-21**

"But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

† Quoting Proverbs 25:21-22, Paul instructs believers to respond to enemies with kindness, leaving judgment to God.

### **How it applies to us today**

† Our lives are living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. Worship is not confined to ritual but encompasses daily obedience.

† Transformation is the ongoing renewal of the mind. We must resist conformity to worldly patterns.

† Humility, service, and love remain the marks of Christ's body.

† Vengeance belongs to God. We are called to overcome evil with good, trusting Him to judge rightly.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

### **Source Index**

† Philo, On the Special Laws – Sacrifice of reason

† Josephus, Wars 6.5.4 – Zealots' corruption before Jerusalem's fall

† Clement of Rome, 1 Clement 37 – Unity in the body

† Didache, chapters 11-13 – Early church teaching on gifts

† Tacitus, Annals 15.44 – Persecution of Christians

† Deuteronomy 32:35 – Vengeance belongs to God

† Proverbs 25:21-22 – Feeding enemies heaps burning coals

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