

ROMANS 12

A LIVING SACRIFICE

Remember that this book we are studying was a letter to the Christian Church that was meeting in Rome. They were trying to live like the scriptures said to live while living in the midst of a perverse culture that embraced homosexuality as if it was a religion. The early church in Rome was hated by the government and eventually it became illegal to meet and to worship.

SOUND FAMILIAR?

God destroyed the Government of Rome for its treatment of His Church. Historians say that Rome fell from within. Its values and morals fell so low that Rome's neighboring enemies were able to march right into it without much fight. The families of Rome were devastated by its lack of ethics and moralities and selfishness gave way to lethargy and perverse lifestyles.

What DID Rome die with? **RIGHTS!** It did them little good in the end.

Paul was speaking of the greatness and mercy of the Lord in chapter 11, ending with this declaration:

Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things,
to whom be glory forever. Amen.

THE APOSTLE THEN DECLARES...

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, *(Because of CH 11)* brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.

- We understand that when someone saves your life... You owe them. Movies and situation comedies have been made for decades about the debt owed to somebody when they step up and save you...
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- A couple of times in my ministry I was between Churches and friends offered me a job. I worked at Northrop for six years and in the Private security business for

22 years because friends like Bob Cornwall and Dave Dalton called me and said, "Let's get you working!" I owe those guys BIG TIME! SO... If Dave or Bob's widow called me today and asked a favor – The answer is YES! Anything... It would be my honor... Name the place and time!

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- SO... The Apostle writes... By the mercies of God to and for you... The LEAST you could do is offer up yourselves as LIVING sacrifices...

WHAT DOES GOD WANT?

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your mind, *(CEV - but let God change the way you think.)* that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- What does God want? A **transformation**.
- Is God willing to help? YES
- HOW does God transform us? **pain**.
- I meet with a Pastor friend every couple of months and did so last Thursday. He is battling a painful fight with cancer. Refusing the pain medications, he is "embracing" the pain and is excited to share Jesus with his surgeons.
 - I share my burdens with him, and he shares his with me. We then pray... Me asking for healing and help... He prays thanking God for our burdens and our pain... Thanking God for making us better through agony.
- My friend is being transformed by his burdens... Am I? Are you?
 - THIS is what God wants! THIS is God's will. **1 Peter 5:10**

GIFTS OF GRACE

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, *(With self-control)* as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

- **GUZIK** explains this somber warning: Paul will soon speak about how we should exercise spiritual gifts in the body of Christ; but a preface warning about humility

is in order, given the inordinate pride that often arises from those who regard themselves as spiritually gifted. We should remember that spiritual *giftedness* does not equal spiritual *maturity*, just because a person has substantial spiritual gifts does not mean that they are necessarily spiritually mature or a worthy example to imitate.

- Those of us chosen by God to stand up front to speak, play music, sing, pray or teach... Beware. We can do nothing without Him.
- Billy Graham warned the future Pastors he taught: #1 – Don't touch the money. #2 – Don't touch the women. #3 – Don't touch the glory. God removes those who do.

WE ARE HIS BODY

4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

- Friends, WE NEED YOU! Your part of being CCSV is just as important as mine is! REALLY. If I croak this week, a committee will be formed to find a new Pastor.
 - BUT... If you don't do your part... No committee will be formed. So, PLEASE do your part. Pray... Give... Serve... Teach... Clean... Make messes... Drive people... Make meals... PRAY! Plan...
- **WHAT IS YOUR GIFT? Listen up...**

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if **prophecy**, (*Speaking forth*) *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; (*Preachers SHOULD have lots of faith!*)

7 or **ministry**, (*Table waiters*) *let us use it* in *our* ministering; he who **teaches**, in teaching; 8 he who **exhorts**, in exhortation; he who **gives**, with liberality; he who **leads**, with diligence; he who shows **mercy**, with cheerfulness.

- Don't have the gift of helps while being a complainer. If you cannot show up and cheer up – CHANGE! Be ye transformed!

MARKS OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN or The Proverbs of Paul

9 *Let love be* without hypocrisy. Abhor (*Hate*) what is evil. (*NOT who is evil*)

Cling to (*Glue yourself to*) what is good.

10 *Be* kindly affectionate to (*Concerned for*) one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; (*Let others go first*)

- Try to earn more thank-you waves than your Spouse, your friends, your family 😊
- See if you can out-NICE them. BTW, You cannot out-nice God!

11 not lagging in diligence, (*In business*) fervent (*Enthusiastic*) in spirit, serving the Lord; (*Doing what you do AS UNTO THE Lord*) 12 rejoicing in (*future*) hope, patient in (*or as a result of*) tribulation, ***continuing*** steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. (*IE, saying, "Come on over."*)

- I know not all of us have this gift – BUT... create ways to be together with others... Call, text, mail, meet up... Join an introvert's club. 😊

THE ADVANCED LIST

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

- Somebody spat all over the back of my car a while back; right where my sticker says Calvary Chapel. SO... I washed my car while praying for them. Praying that God would choke the spit right out of them – NO!!!! Praying that God would soften them and love them and give them peace.

BE REAL

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, (*Baby and wedding showers*) and weep with those who weep. (*Casseroles, flowers, and cards*)

16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of

all men.

HOW TO LOVE THOSE WHO HATE YOU

18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. **DET 32:35**

20 Therefore "IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM; IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP COALS OF FIRE ON HIS HEAD." **PROV 25:21**

- This proverb either means that your good behavior will bring shame to your enemies, or that you might win your enemy with kindness...
- IE, it would be like sharing your hot coals with someone whose oven had gone out.
 - **COURSON** - In Paul's day, when a fire went out in a home, it was difficult to reignite it. Therefore, if someone's fire went out, the women would carry live coals in clay jars upon their heads to share with the person who had no fire. Thus, the implication here was not of burning one's enemy, but of warming him in order to ultimately win him to the kingdom.

21 Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.

Wiersbe - The believer who seeks to obey God is going to have his enemies. When our Lord was ministering on earth, He had enemies. No matter where Paul and the other apostles traveled, there were enemies who opposed their work. Jesus warned His disciples that their worst enemies might be those of their own household ([Mat 10:36](#)). Unfortunately, some believers have enemies because they lack love and patience, and not because they are faithful in their witness. There is a difference between sharing in "the offense of the cross" ([Gal 5:11](#); [Gal 6:12-15](#)) and being an offensive Christian!

CCSV, let us recommit ourselves and this building to bring the Gospel to Simi Valley immersed in His love.