

ROMANS 12 – A GUIDE TO LIVING

I. TOTAL CONSECRATION – vs.1

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

God wants total consecration and total commitment from us. He wants us to offer our lives to Him as a living sacrifice. He wants us to walk in holiness. Our lives should be acceptable to Him. Paul said in 2 Cor. 5:9: "Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him." Total consecration and total commitment is our "reasonable" or rational service. That is the reasonable thing to do. If Christ died for us, the most reasonable thing to do is to give our lives back to Him and to live for Him. Paul said "for the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14-15).

II. DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THE WORLD – vs. 2

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2)

God wants us not to be conformed to the world. We are to be in the world but not of the world (John 17:15-16). The bible says: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 1:15-16). James says: "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4). God does not want us to be "unequally yoked together with unbelievers" but to be separated and consecrated to Him (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

III. USE YOUR GIFT – vs. 3-8, 11

"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, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness." (Romans 12:3-8)

"Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." (Romans 12:11)

God gave every believer a gift to be used for the edification of the body of Christ and for His glory. First we ought not to ever get puffed up because of the gift God has given us. We are to "think soberly." God is the one who gave us the gift and He can take it away anytime He chooses. Paul says in 1 Cor. 4:6-7: "Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?"

Every believer has a gift. The bible says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men" (Eph. 4:8). Every believer has a gift though it might take years sometimes to discover what that gift is. Some have been given the gift of teaching; some the gift of exhortation; some have been given the gift of mercy and of helps, etc. We are to pray for the Lord to show us our gift.

The bible says "having then gifts," then "let us use them." We are not to hide our gifts or talents (Matt. 25:14-30). We are to use them while "it is day" for "the night is coming when no one can work" (John 9:4). God wants us to be "diligent" in our service to Him and "fervent in spirit."

IV. OUR DUTY TO ONE ANOTHER – v.9-10, 13-21

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another." (Romans 12:9-10)

"Distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 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. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 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." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:13-21)

What is our duty to one another? It is love! The bible says: "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law" (Rom. 13:8-10).

Our love should be “without hypocrisy.” We are to not only love “in word and in tongue,” “but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18). We are to “give preference to one another.” In Philippians 2:3-4 we read: "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." We are to be ready to meet the needs of the saints and offer hospitality. The bible says: "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

We are to “rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15) for “if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (1 Cor. 12:26).

Humility should be the mark of the believer. We are to have the “same mind toward one another” (Rom. 12:16) and in lowliness of mind we should “esteem others better than ourselves” (Phil. 2:3). We are to “be clothed with humility for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

Forgiveness also should be a characteristic of the believer. We are to love our enemies and bless those who curse us and do good to those who hate us and pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us (Matt. 5:44). We are not to seek revenge but imitate Christ “who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Peter 2:24). We are to “live peaceably” (Rom. 12:18) and “pursue peace with all people” (Heb. 12:14).

V. HOW TO REACT TO TRIALS – vs. 12

"Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer." (Romans 12:12)

We are to “rejoice in hope” that God will see us through. We are to persevere in adversity and affliction and we are to continue steadfastly in prayer coming boldly to “the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

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