

# ROMANS

*A Daily Devotional  
Study Guide*



## *Monday*

**Study:** Romans 12:1-2

**Reading:** I Thessalonians 4:1-12, II Corinthians 5:15-21

**Memory:** Matthew 5:22

### What Does the Bible Say?

At the end of chapter 11, Paul's thought of the mercy of God had caused him to break out in praise to God. In chapter 12, he moved from a praise to a challenge. He began by urging the believers to understand the mercies of God and let the mercies of God be their motivation for living their lives. Paul understood that all men were destined to eternity apart from God and that there was nothing they could do to earn salvation. It was only by God's mercy that he and all men could be spared from the punishment that they deserve (Rom. 11:32). The realization of this should cause men to give their lives as a sacrifice to Him in return for what He has done for them. This sacrifice wasn't to be given to appease God, but as a sign of thankfulness for the mercy that He showed all mankind.

Sacrifices were an important part of the Jewish worship system before Christ, and one thing that was made very clear is that sacrifices were to be pure. The people who offered them were to be pure, the animals were to be pure and the priests offering them were to be pure. Purity was obtained not only by the heart attitude, but was also done through ritual cleansing. In order for the sacrifice to be acceptable to God, the sacrifice needed to be what God desired and offered in the way that God desired.

The KJV says that your living sacrifice is "your reasonable service," but the ESV makes it a little more clear as it states that your living sacrifice "is your spiritual worship." In our day and age, we are consumed with worship and worship style which often refers to the way we sing, but God says that our worship is the way we freely offer our lives to Him for His cause and His purpose (vs 1).

Paul didn't just tell us to offer our lives as a sacrifice, but he also explained what it meant to be a sacrifice. Sacrifice includes our choice to continually let God's Word transform our minds to understand the will of God. As we understand the will of God and choose to do what He desires, our lives will not be like those who are without Christ. Our transformed

minds will allow us to discern what God desires and what He doesn't desire (vs 2).

To sum it all up, Paul tells us that understanding the mercies of God should cause us to allow God to work through us. God works through us as we make the choice to spend time in His Word with an open mind and an open heart. This openness allows us to see our faults and allows God the ability to correct our shortcomings as we yield our life to His perfect will.

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Are you giving your life to God as a living sacrifice? Do you read the Word of God for information or out of obligation? Do you read God's Word to allow God to transform your life? Your choice to live as a sacrifice should begin when you realize the love of God for you and the mercy that He has shown you. If you try to live a life of sacrifice without the motivation from God's mercy and love, then it will most likely become a religious act rather than true worship. True worship is not the way we sing and doesn't involve a specific place or time, but true worship is a life of sacrifice that comes from a mind of thankfulness. Your living sacrifice and true worship only comes as you yield to God and His perfect will for your life. All of this is found in His Word which should be a life source for you. Ask God to help you have a desire to know Him more and a desire to read His Word. As you approach His Word, approach it with a desire to know more about God and His perfect will for your life.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for giving you His Word.*
- \* *Ask God to help you understand His mercy towards you.*
- \* *Praise God because He is perfect and holy.*

## **Thought for the day**

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# *Tuesday*

**Study:** Romans 12:1-6

**Reading:** I Corinthians 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:8-16

**Memory:** Matthew 5:22

**W**hen my wife and I started having children, it gave me a whole different perspective on human nature. The way they act and the tendencies they have are the same way adults act, but most adults have learned to disguise it a little better. One of the greatest tendencies that I have seen children display is thinking that their way is right and they do it better than other children. If we are not careful as adults, we can think the same way.

Today, we are going to learn how God has given us gifts. We will see how a gift is just that, a gift—given to us freely by the grace of God.

## **What Does the Bible Say?**

As we present our bodies as living sacrifices (12:1), we must be careful not to fall into the trap of thinking that we are better than others. It is easy to look at all that we are giving up as believers and compare it to the little bit it seems that other people are sacrificing. This could cause us to think that we are just a little bit better than others. Instead of looking at ourselves with pride, we need to honestly evaluate who we are before God. We need to realize that it is only by grace that we have what we have, and need to continue to ask God for the grace to accomplish the tasks that He has called us to do (vs 3).

Paul illustrated this concept by describing the church to the body of Christ. If this simple, yet powerful illustration could be understood by churches everywhere, it would change much of the way that people think and serve. Just as a human body has several different parts with several different functions, so too does a church have a variety of different people with a variety of tasks God has called them to (vs 4). Though we all have different functions, we are still part of the same body (vs 5).

According to His divine grace, God has given believers different gifts to be used for His glory. Paul then listed some of the gifts that God has given to believers. I believe that each believer has at least one gift, and

some have been given more. I also believe that those gifts vary and change with time and circumstances. There are a few places in Scripture that list spiritual gifts and though the lists have some similarities, they are all different. I believe the list given in Scripture are meant to be examples and not meant to be a complete list.

The first gift listed in this passage is the gift of prophecy. This gift involves the speaking and proclaiming of the Word of God. This would have involved both the speaking of the direct revelation of God and proclaiming the Word of God that had already been written. I do not believe the gift of prophecy today gives new revelation since we have the completed Word of God. As a prophet publicly proclaims the Word of God, they are not to give their own revelation or meaning, but their proclamation is supposed to be in tune with what God has already revealed through His Word—the same Word that caused those in the church to believe on Jesus Christ (vs 6).

### **How Does this Apply to Me?**

No matter how hard you try to get around it, if you are honest with yourself, you would admit that you have a tendency in some areas of your life to think that your way of doing things is better than the way others do those things. This is part of our sinful nature because we are naturally selfish. Though each believer has a tendency to think this way, through God's grace, you can understand that there is a far better way. It is vital that you realize how important your gift is to the church, and to realize that other people's gifts are important as well. These gifts will be different, but that doesn't make one person better than the other. You need to make sure that you are focused on how you are using the gift that God has given you rather than to focus on what someone else isn't doing. If each believer focused on themselves and honestly evaluated themselves and the gift that God has given them by His grace, the church would be far better off. Take time today to ask God to reveal to you what your gift is, then find out how He wants you to use that gift for His honor and glory.

### **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* *Thank God for the gift He has given you.*
- \* *Ask God to reveal any pride that is evident in your life.*
- \* *Praise God because He is gracious.*

## ***Wednesday***

**Study:** Romans 12:6-8

**Reading:** I Corinthians 1:1-9, I Peter 4:7-11

**Memory:** Matthew 5:22

**M**any Olympic athletes begin their quest for gold when they are very young. Their parents, teachers or coaches recognize a special gift and ability and they put them in situations to help them develop and mature the gift that they have. Those who win gold, don't do it because of natural talent alone, but because they have worked hard to make the most out of their talent.

Today, we are going to see that spiritual gifts are different than human talents. We aren't to find out what gift we have and then work hard in our own power to perfect that gift. The gifts God has given us are by His grace. Our responsibility is to yield ourselves to the Spirit's leading and let Him perfect the gifts in us and perform the gifts through us.

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

As we continue to read about different spiritual gifts that God gives each believer, we need to realize that this list isn't given so that we can try to determine which gift each person has. Much time and effort has been spent by Christians carefully searching and evaluating what spiritual gift they have, but I don't think that was the purpose for Paul writing about them. I do not believe the lists given are the exhaustive lists of spiritual gifts. I think that the ones listed are just illustrations to help illustrate the fact that we are all different. Most likely, those who love the Lord and are submissive to the leading of the Spirit are already going to be using the gift that God has given them. It is going to be part of the fruit of the Spirit that will be displayed in their lives.

An interesting thing to point out is that verses 6 says, "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us . . ." Then, in the list given in verses 7 and 8, Paul lists some of the gifts that have been given. The word "grace" here refers to a special strength and ability God has chosen to give us. That means that those who have the gift of prophecy, have been given a special ability to have greater faith in God's Word so they can declare it

with boldness. Generally speaking, the gift refers to the outward act, and the grace given is a result of the Holy Spirit working inside of us.

There are believers who are gifted in serving others. They do much of the behind the scenes work that receives very little attention. Others have the ability to teach and have been given a special grace to be patient with students (young and old) to help them grow. Others have the ability to exhort and encourage people to draw closer to God and to experience His love. Some have been given the ability to give of all they have, while others have been given the ability to take charge and lead because of the energy God has given them. The last gift listed is the gift of mercy. It is not a burden for those with this gift to help others, but they have the special ability to help others and do it with a cheerful heart (vs 7-8).

### **How Does this Apply to Me?**

The application of today's study is quite simple. You don't need to spend hours searching for what gift God has given you, but you simply need to offer your life as "a living sacrifice" (vs 1) by yielding your will to the Holy Spirit and letting Him work in you through the Word of God. As you do this, the Spirit will lead you to naturally start displaying your gift. The point to remember is that you are not greater than other believers and your gift(s) aren't greater either. You also need to remember that your gifts aren't less important than others. When each believer is content with the gifts that God has given them and uses those gifts for His glory, the church can function as a complete body for the cause of Christ.

### **Suggestions for Prayer**

- \* Thank God for the gift(s) He has given you.
- \* Ask God to help you daily yield yourself to the Holy Spirit.
- \* Praise God because He is a God of grace.

### **Thought for the day**

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# Thursday

**Study:** Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:17-24, Psalm 119:9-16

**Reading:** I Peter 1:13-25, II Corinthians 5:16-6:1

**Memory:** Matthew 5:22

### **Romans 12:1-2**

Why are the "mercies of God" referring to (vs 1)?

*\*\*\*Look back at what had been previously written in the last several verses of chapter 11.*

What do you think a living sacrifice looks like (vs 1)?

What is true spiritual worship (vs 1)?

How does this reveal that the true worship of God is more than just singing songs at church?

What does it mean to be "conformed to this world" (vs 2)?

*\*\*\*Note that the whole emphasis here is not on what you look like or what you do, but how you think. How you think will affect what you look like and what you do.*

How is your life transformed (vs 2)?

How can you learn what God's will is for your life (vs 2)?

*\*\*\*When you are regularly having your mind renewed and it transforms the way you think, you will understand more and more what God wants. The best way to know what a person desires is to become a student of that person by listening to what they say and observing how they act. The best way to know what God wants is by listening to what He says in His Word and by observing how He interacted with people.*

### **Ephesians 4:17-24**

How do Gentiles walk (vs 17)?

*\*\*\*Unbelievers think with hopelessness and selfishness.*

How are you as a believer supposed to live differently (vs 17)?

What is a non-believer's understanding about God and the things that are important in this life (vs 18)?

What choices do unbelievers often make (vs 19)?

Why should you think and live differently (vs 20-21)?

What actions do you need to take as a believer (vs 22, 24)?

How can you do this (vs 23)?

### **Psalm 119:9-16**

What can you do to help yourself put on the new man (vs 9)?

How should we seek after God (vs 10)? What do you think this means?

What can you do to help transform your mind (vs 11)?

What should your attitude be towards the Word of God (vs 12-13)?

What should be your delight (vs 14)? What do you think this looks like?

What does it mean to meditate on God's precepts (vs 15)?

How can you choose not to forget God's Word (vs 16)?

### **Personal Application**

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday life?

# Friday

**Study:** Romans 12:3-5, I Corinthians 3:1-15, I Corinthians 4:1-7

**Reading:** James 2:1-13, John 21:20-24

**Memory:** Matthew 5:22

### **Romans 12:3-5**

How would Jews think they are better than the Gentiles? How would Gentiles think they were better than the Jews?

What does Paul warn against when it comes to the way you think about yourself and others (vs 3)?

How should you view yourself and others (vs 3)?

*\*\*\*You should not compare yourself with others to see if you are better or worse, but you should view yourself and others as specially gifted and uniquely made by God.*

What does Paul compare believers to (vs 4)?

Why is it important to understand that each individual believer is purposely made differently, just like each body part is made differently (vs 4-5)?

### **I Corinthians 3:1-15**

How was Paul having to talk to the Corinthian believers (vs 1)?

Why did he have to talk to them this way (vs 2-3)?

What were the believers arguing about (vs 4)?

What did Paul want them to realize about the spiritual leaders they had been given (vs 5)?

What was Paul emphasizing when it came to the work of God (vs 6-9)?

Why do you think the comparison game can be such a struggle even when

it comes to what you do for Christ?

How can you combat this?

How was Paul able to do what he did (vs 10)?

How can you do what you are able to do (or not do) when it comes to the work of God (vs 10-11)?

Why should you do what you do (vs 12-14)?

### **I Corinthians 4:1-7**

*\*\*\*Paul continued his argument from chapter 3 because there was division in the Corinthian church based on selfishness and partiality.*

How did Paul want to be looked at (vs 1)?

What is important for you to realize about the gifts you have been given (vs 2)?

*\*\*\*You are not to compare yourself with others, but are to be faithful with the gifts and abilities God has given you.*

What did Paul describe about his view of what others think (vs 3-4)?

What is God going to do (vs 5)?

What did Paul not want the believers to do (vs 6)?

What did Paul emphasize about what each individual believer had been given (vs 7)?

### **Personal Application**

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday?

# Saturday

**Study:** Romans 12:6-8, I Corinthians 12:1-11

**Reading:** Ephesians 4:1-16, I Peter 4:7-11

**Memory:** Matthew 5:22

*\*\*\*We will be looking at different passages today that talk about the gifts that God gives. My personal belief is that the lists aren't given for us to look at each one and find out what gift we have. (I believe we could have multiple gifts or parts of gifts.) There are different places in Scripture where lists are given and none are exactly the same. The reason the lists are given is to show that we are all uniquely gifted.*

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

What does it mean that gifts were given according to God's grace (vs 6)?

The following is a list of the gifts listed here. Take a moment to look at them and describe how you see each gift being used in the body of Christ.

*Prophecy: (this is not necessarily the idea of predicting the future, but deals with speaking the word of truth)*

*Service: (this is ministering and comes from the same word as deacon and deaconess)*

*Teaching: (the ability to make complex truth simple and comprehensible)*

*Exhorting: (this was used of a person who would admonish others or a person who would be gifted at encouraging others)*

*Giving: (seeking to give gifts or give of one's self)*

*Leading: (this is the idea of administration which has the idea of guiding or steering a ship)*

### **I Corinthians 12:1-11**

How are believers led differently once they are believers compared to when

before they became believers (vs 1-3)?

What does verses 4-6 reveal about the gifts that are given?

Why is this emphasized?

Why were the gifts of the Spirit given (vs 7)?

The following is a list of the gifts listed here. Take a moment to look at them and describe how you see each gift being used in the body of Christ.

Word of Wisdom: *(ability to understand God and His will)*

Word of Knowledge: *(the ability to study and learn)*

Faith: *(trusting in God)*

Healing, Miracles: *(These gifts had been given to Christ, the apostles and others to be used as proof to show that the Christ was greater than all other gods. It is believed by many that these gift are not given today.)*

Discernment: *(to know what is right and wrong, good and bad)*

Tongues & Interpreting tongues: *(There is great debate in the Christian community today if God still uses the gift of tongues. We know that speaking in tongues was often used as a sign to others. It should be noted that most of the times that speaking in tongues is referred to in Scripture, those speaking in tongues were speaking in known languages.)*

How does Paul sum up the point that he was making about spiritual gifts (vs 11)?

### **Personal Application**

What can you learn about God from this passage?

How can you apply what you have learned to your everyday life?

# Sunday

## **Reading: Romans 12:1-8**

(Take time to read this passage again, letting the truths you have studied this week sink into your mind. You are encouraged to go online and read it through a few times in different versions.)

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

## **Bible Memory**

*Matthew 5:1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. 17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.*