

XI. The New Man – Service – Body Life (Rom 12)



In Romans 1 – 8 we saw how man was evil from the inside out and incapable of using Law or any other means to attain righteousness or avoid God’s wrath. God revealed his righteousness by both his wrath against ungodliness and by his ability to be just and the justifier. God was able to show mercy on us by rewarding our faith with the following mercies:

5:1	Justification
5:1	Peace with God
5:3	Ability to rejoice in sufferings
6:3	Identification with Christ’s Death
6:4	Identification with Christ’s Burial
6:5	Identification with Christ’s Resurrection
6:14, 22	Freedom from Sin’s Dominion
6:14	Freedom from Law’s Dominion
6:22	Freedom to be Slave’s to God
8:1	Freedom from Condemnation
8:4	Freedom to fulfill the Righteous Requirements of the Law
8:15	Spirit of Adoption
8:26	Interceding of the Spirit
8:29	Predestined to be conformed to Christ’s Image
8:30	Glorification
8:37	To be more than conquerors

11:17	Grafted into the Olive Tree
11:30	Mercy in Disobedience

Now in Chapter 12 – Paul will turn the attention on “HOW WE SHOULD LIVE” in light of these mercies. The stage has been well set. We have:

- Ability in the life of Christ, indwelling, interceding Spirit of Adoption
- Obligation as Slaves to God and Future rewards(hope) yet to be received.
- Nothing to take personal pride in.

Therefore Paul will personally beg us to pursue a new lifestyle.

A. New MAN living is founded in the renewing of our minds (vs 1-2)

1. Living Sacrifices

We are to be living sacrifices. It has been rightly said that only a living sacrifice can get up and climb off of the altar. But Paul does not actually ask us to “become” living sacrifices. Rather he asks us to present ourselves as living sacrifices. In other words – I don’t need to try and become something I don’t believe I am. I am to believe I am a living sacrifice and live as such.

2. THE LIVING SACRIFICE!

If I have been united with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection than I am united with THE LIVING SACRIFICE. He was holy and blameless and He is my life! I am indissolubly united to CHRIST.

Thus it is only reasonable that I should Worship God by believing Him. Live out that belief.

If you have never grabbed hold of this concept – than it’s time you radically accepted this as true! TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION! To be experienced in this life. Anything else is unbelief and not true worship. It would be disobedience.

3. Conformity vs. Transformation

The problem is not with it being true. The problem is with me recognizing this on a continuous basis. I may claim it today but then get caught up in something tomorrow where I have never considered how Christ’s life may relate. I have lived so much of my life from a corrupted mindset under the influence of the World system and Satan himself.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy,
Eph 2:1-4 (ESV)

Conformity = Dressing in outer garments to look like something you are not.

Transformation = Unveiling the true you. Outward revealing of an inner reality.

CONFORMITY = When I dress myself up like the world (Present myself) then I am lying. I’m saying that I am not holy and full of blame. I’m saying that I should fall under God’s wrath as an unbeliever.

TRANSFORMATION = However, when I believe the truth of who I am in Christ and apply that to my actions then I reveal the truth.

My mind needs to be renewed!

(See Appendix C – Battle for the mind)

B. New Man is gifted as a member of the Body of Christ (3-8)

Each one of us is indwelt with the life of Christ. But we are not fully Christ. We are only “partakers” of the divine nature. We need other “partakers” to make up the WHOLE BODY of CHRIST.

Paul uses the terms “Grace” and “Faith” as a title for our part in the Body of Christ.

Vs. 3 – Paul refers to the “grace given to me” as the basis for what he provides to the body.

Vs. 3 – Paul tells us to recognize our limits and only operate according to our measure (better translated “portion”) of the Faith God has assigned to us.

Vs. 6 – Paul says that each of us have different gifts according to the grace given to us.

I don’t believe that Paul is saying that God has given us only so much faith. One reason, from a logical standpoint, is how odd it would make it for God to hold men accountable for not believing if He didn’t give them the faith. But a greater reason is when we consider this passage in its context it becomes clear that God is not talking about making us believe but on how our gifts are exercised when we believe (faith).

Paul is not using this section to explain the doctrine of Spiritual Gifts. He refers to the spiritual gifts as a means to discuss how we function as a body. He talks about them as if everyone pretty much understands. To be specific Paul is not:

- Giving us the specific list of gifts. This list overlaps with the other great “Spiritual Gift” passages, Eph 4 and 1 Cor 12-14, but it does not exactly match. There may be more gifts than are listed in these 3 passages.
- Tell us exactly how many gifts each person must have.
- Telling us that whatever gift we have – we will have our whole lives.
- Saying that every church must have each of these gifts to be complete.
- That all these gifts will always be available to the church throughout history.

(Be careful that you do not read too much into these “Spiritual Gifts” passages. We usually assume way more than Paul is actually meaning to present.)

Paul is telling us:

- That we should not be conceited because of our position in Christ. We are only one part.
- That we need each other and are actually connected to one another.
- That we need to be faithful in exercising whatever gift we find ourselves functioning in.
- That we should recognize that our gifts are given to us by God for the good of the body.

C. The New Man is to live in harmony (vs. 9 – 21)

In this last section of Chapter 12 we find Paul throwing a lot of thoughts out. The list includes:

- Genuine Love for one another
- Reject Evil
- Cling to Good
- Show Honor, Zeal and Fervency
- Rejoice and Don’t stress in troubles
- Show kindness and help other believers
- Don’t fight against physical enemies.
- Don’t be Conceited
- Live at peace with all
- Do not seek vengeance.
- And much more...

All of these have something in common – seeking peace and betterment of others. We are not to live for our own entertainment, ease, glory or safety. Instead – we are to recognize our position:

- In The Body of Christ.
- Under the authority of God.
- Responsible to minister in God's Kingdom.

When we ignore this or don't know this we seek to serve ourselves or attempt to gain this position (which we already have) using our own self effort.

Whenever someone challenges us we desire to defend ourselves, protect ourselves and to attack them. However, it is clear that God would have us recognize that our position will never change and leave it all in God's hands.

Instead – we should look to be a peaceful member of the Body and work to encourage and meet the needs of others. We need to serve the Body and help the Body serve the kingdom.