

LESSON 13: ROMANS 12:1-21 BECOMING A LIVING SACRIFICE

I. Introduction

After an expansive theological discourse on God's plan for salvation; Apostle Paul in chapter 12 transitions and focuses on the believer's response to God's mercy. Paul begins by urging Christians to present their bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1), which is their spiritual act of worship. He emphasizes the importance of a transformed mind to discern God's will (Romans 12:2).

In Jewish culture, sacrifices involved the offering of animals as a means of atonement. Here, Paul redefines sacrifice to mean offering one's entire self in worship. The idea of transformation (Romans 12:2) challenges both Jewish and Gentile believers to reject conformity to the world's values, reflecting the new covenant's emphasis on internal change rather than external rituals.

Rome, being the center of the empire, was a melting pot of philosophies, religions, and practices. Believers were constantly pressured to conform to pagan ideologies or imperial loyalty. Paul's call to transformation would have required radical countercultural living.

The chapter then transitions to discussing the diverse gifts given to believers for the benefit of the body of Christ (Romans 12:6-8). Paul highlights the importance of humility, recognizing that each member has a unique role to play in the body of Christ. Paul concludes with practical guidelines for Christian living, including sincere love (Romans 12:9), blessing enemies (Romans 12:14), and overcoming evil with good (Romans 12:21). The chapter emphasizes love as the core principle guiding Christian behavior.

Key Discussion Questions:

II. Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Romans 12:1-21

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

III. Think Through the Following Questions:

1. What does it mean to present our bodies as living sacrifices?
2. How can believers avoid conforming to the patterns of the world?
3. How do spiritual gifts contribute to the unity of the church?
4. How can you identify and use your spiritual gifts?
5. How can we practically “overcome evil with good” in our daily lives?
6. How does renewing your mind transform the way you live and make decisions?
7. How can we discern God’s will in challenging situations?
8. What are some practical ways to develop genuine love for those who are difficult to love?

IV. Lessons Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?

V. Application: How Do You think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?