



## Pilgrim Home Baptist Church

NT 260 2022 • LIVING SACRIFICE • ROMANS12:1-8 • 6/19/2022

### MAIN POINT

To worship God is to joyfully sacrifice our personal desires for God's glory and the benefit of others.

### INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is the biggest sacrifice you have ever made?**

**What are some sacrifices you make in your everyday life?**

In our day-to-day lives there are moments when we "bite the bullet" and sacrifice ourselves for the good of others. Sacrifice for God will transform us into new people who live out the gospel. Sacrifice is how we worship God and let God transform us into the likeness of Christ.

### UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 12:1.

**What did Paul plead for with his fellow believers? What is the basis of his plea?**

**What did Paul say to give up? What were they to give their bodies up for? How is this worship?**

**What does it look like practically to offer yourselves as a living sacrifice each day?**

Romans 12:1 notes the first effect of salvation is that believers are to present themselves to God. Such presentation pleases God as an act of worship. Paul pleaded to his fellow believers to give

their bodies to God. The reason that Paul gave for this action was that God had done so much for them. Their response should be giving their daily lives to serving Him in all they do.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 12:2-3.

Romans 12:2-3 notes a second effect of salvation in the minds of believers as they are to seek transformation in how they think. Such renewed thinking inevitably will result in believers' knowing and experiencing the will of God as well as worshiping God.

**Why is it so easy to conform to the behavior of the world? In what area of your life do you find it most difficult to fight conformity? Why?**

**Who is responsible for the transformation? How is this accomplished?**

**How did Paul describe God's will for us? Have you experienced a season when God's will did not seem good, pleasing, and perfect, yet turned out to be so?**

It can be easy to try and fit in, people want to be seen as a part of the group. The desire to fit in can pull people away from God and make the world the place of greatest importance. One cannot be a part of a sacrifice to God and be conformed to the world. Paul instead wanted the Roman believers to be transformed by God. His will is that we would become new people who daily sacrifice our lives to follow His will. God's will is good and pleasing and perfect. Many times it does not feel that way, but in the end God wants what is best for us, even if we don't see it at the time. Living transformed comes from God and His changing of our minds and hearts from the old self into a new being who gives everything for Him.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ROMANS 12:4-8.

Romans 12:4-8 considers the effect of salvation within the congregation as believers use their spiritual gifts wisely. As individual Christians use spiritual gifts and recognize the benefit to the church, they will acknowledge this too is worship of God.

**Why does it require a living sacrifice to use our gifts the way Paul instructed? Who benefits when we please God by using the gifts He's given us?**

**How do you see the seven gifts listed in verses 6-8 being used effectively at our church?**

**Which of these spiritual gifts do you have? Or what other gifts do you have?**

Paul's ultimate emphasis in the list of spiritual gifts was to urge believers to use their gifts to benefit their local churches. Just as one's eyes, ears, hands, and feet are designed to benefit the entire physical body, so too are Christians gifted in various ways to serve the body of Christ. We respond to God's grace in our lives by serving Him.

## APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**After studying this passage, how do you answer the question, What is worship? How much of your life involves worship?**

**What evidence can people see that God has transformed you? Why is it important for Christians to stand out from the rest of the world?**

**Are you using your spiritual gifts in a way that is "holy and pleasing to God" (v. 1)? If so, how? What holds you back from using your gifts more fully?**

**How have your attitudes, actions, and thoughts changed since turning your life over to God?**

## PRAYER

Finish your time in prayer, praying that God would be constantly transforming you and your group. Pray that He would reveal places in your lives where you are tempted to conform to the patterns of this world. Pray that God would help each of you use the gifts He has given you to the best of your ability.

## COMMENTARY

| ROMANS 12:1-8

12:1. Paul urged all believers to present themselves as a living sacrifice. Such language must have clashed immediately in the minds of many. The common understanding was that only the first and best animals were fit to be offered as sacrifices. The sacrifice Paul had in mind was radically different. Jesus had given Himself as the once-and-for-all Sacrifice for sin on the cross. Believers thus were to live in light of Jesus' all-sufficient sacrifice, bringing glory to God. The idea of Christians' presenting their bodies as a living sacrifice harked back to the discussion of the body being dead to sin because of the life-giving presence of the Spirit (see 8:10). To live by the Spirit is to offer oneself completely and daily as a holy and pleasing sacrifice.

Paul further explained that living as a holy, pleasing sacrifice was a believer's spiritual worship. The word rendered spiritual also can be understood as meaning logical or reasonable. The Greek word translated worship often was used to refer to carrying out religious duties or services. Thus Paul taught that in light of God's gracious redemption (by the mercies of God), living as a sacrifice was the logical and pleasing way for Christians to serve God.

12:2. As Christians, we're also to please God with our minds. The temptation is to go along with the dominant attitudes of the age, to adopt the prevailing cultural worldview characterized by self-worship (sin). The apostle urged his readers to reject worldliness and to be transformed by the renewing of the mind. The phrase be transformed in the Greek is a present passive imperative form.

This form suggests three important truths. First, the present tense describes a continuing action. Transformation of our thinking and attitudes is an ongoing, lifelong endeavor. Second, the passive voice indicates that the indwelling Spirit is the Source of our transformation. We can't transform ourselves but rather must be transformed. Third, however, is the truth suggested by the imperative that we must consciously place ourselves at the Spirit's disposal for transformation to happen. The Spirit will not transform us against our will.

The result of having our minds renewed by the Spirit is to grow in our ability to discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. The word translated discern literally means to prove by testing. Christian living is not about emptying the mind—as some religions claim—but rather about thinking intelligently and logically in accordance with God's ways. God wants His people to know what pleases Him because by living according to His ways we will experience the most abundant life possible (see John 10:10).

12:3-8. As part of a renewed mind, the Christian is to think wisely about himself and what his function is to be in the body of Christ (the church; see 1Co 12:12-28). Measure of faith may mean a person should measure himself by the gospel. Others see it as different apportionments of faith. Either way, Paul exhorts Christians to be humble and to use what God has given for the good of the body. Christians are given gifts to use for the good of others.

The New Testament lists at least 17 kinds of gifts. Christians are defined not just by their personal faith but also by their inclusion in local faith fellowships that are expressions of the body of Christ (see 1Co 12:12-31). Only some of the gifts are explained in this present passage:

Prophecy in the New Testament churches was direct revelation from God before the canon was completed. This gift was to be used and measured in concert with the objective body of Christian truths.

Service (Gk diakonia) is the origin of the word “deacon.” A deacon here is not a member of a board of directors but a servant. It describes not a title or office but a gift of ministry. Pastors should have this gift.

Teaching is an essential gift. Parents teach children, older believers teach younger believers, vocational pastor-teachers are the primary instructors in a church, and elders should be able to teach also. All believers can teach to some level, but those who have a special facility for teaching are responsible to develop and utilize it.

Exhortation is the gift of motivating and encouraging. This gift is similar to the Holy Spirit’s function.

Giving is to be done with generosity. All can give, but capacities differ. Some delight to give out of very small means (Mk 12:41-44); others give a “reverse tithe”—they give 90 percent and live on 10 percent.

Leading is a gift of vision and direction that is effective but should not be overbearing.

Mercy is helping the sick, the poor, and the sorrowful. This gift is to be exercised with cheerfulness. Practical assistance to needy members was a main emphasis of the early churches. This same emphasis should characterize churches today.