

A Living Sacrifice

Lesson 10
December 15
Romans 12

With the beginning of **Romans 12**, we've reached the turning point in Paul's letter to the Romans. "I appeal to you therefore" is the link between the deep doctrinal foundation of **Romans 1-11** and the description of what it looks like to live as "sacrifices" to God in **Romans 12-16**. God is the potter and we are the clay, shaped according to his good will. So what form will that shaping take in everyday life?

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (12:1-2)

Living as a sacrifice to God involves a "renewal" of my mind, a "transformation" in my thinking—about myself, the people around me, and the opportunities God continues to give me.

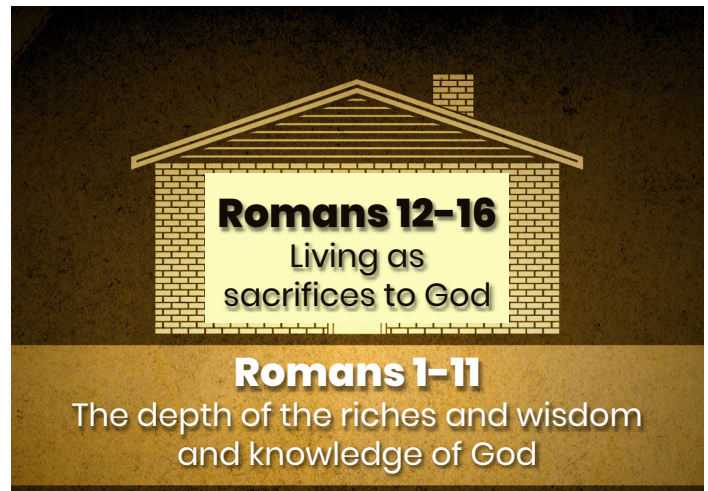
For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (12:3-5)

What will it look like as God shapes us to think and treat others and serve as living sacrifices?

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (12:6-8)

At this point, Paul launches into a bullet-point sort of rapid-fire description of what this renewal and shaping and transformation looks like in the lives of his redeemed sons and daughters (12:9-21). These are straightforward instructions, meeting us at the level of real everyday life.

So for the rest of our class time, let's work our way through and discuss these bullet points together. Let's make them personal. How can these God-breathed phrases shape us into disciples of Jesus who are yielding the obedience of faith as living sacrifices to God? Let's talk about it...



For Class & Family Discussion:

- Let love be genuine.
- Abhor what is evil.
- Hold fast to what is good.
- Love one another with brotherly affection.
- Outdo one another in showing honor.
- Do not be slothful in zeal.
- Be fervent in spirit.
- Serve the Lord.
- Rejoice in hope.
- Be patient in tribulation.
- Be constant in prayer.
- Contribute to the needs of the saints.
- Seek to show hospitality.
- Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
- Rejoice with those who rejoice.
- Weep with those who weep.
- Live in harmony with one another.
- Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.
- Never be wise in your own sight.
- Repay no one evil for evil.
- Give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.
- If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
- Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”
- To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”
- Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.