

**The Epistle to the Romans**  
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**Righteousness Applied to Daily Living**

**Reading assignment: Romans 12**

**Introduction**

You have arrived at an entirely different section of Romans. In Romans 12-15, we shall see righteousness in its practical applications.

Chapters 1-8 were devoted to Doctrine. Chapters 9-11 were devoted to Dispensation. Chapters 12-16 are devoted to Duty.

Years ago a man said to me, "Don't preach doctrine. Doctrine is not practical." My answer was and is "Every doctrine of Scripture has a practical application when properly taught." The Christian life cannot be lived or understood properly without a thorough grasp of doctrine.

So in this, and in the remaining lessons of our study of Romans, we shall be looking at Paul's penetrating and perceptive view of the practical aspects of Christianity.

**Importance of this Lesson**

- In this lesson, we are going to take a close look at Romans 12:1-8.
- The importance of this section is revealed in two great facts.
  - First, it contains the most tender and most reasonable plea to live a separated, consecrated life to be found in all literature.
  - Second, it sets forth clearly the means and the method for serving the Lord effectively.

**THE LESSON**

**I. PAUL'S PLEA FOR CONSECRATION – Romans 12:1**

- A. Paul's argument has ended. The case is closed! Now he presents the application of doctrine to duty and life. Remember, doctrine should never be cold – never simply objective or isolated or purely speculative. Doctrine, properly and fully understood and presented, always has its practical application.
- B. *I beseech you* – Here is the most tender plea for consecration to be found anywhere. Here the great apostle Paul, who had experienced the meaning of the great doctrines he taught, yearned for his readers to surrender their all to Christ.
  - 1. Paul pleaded. He did not command. Surrender to Christ must always be voluntary.
  - 2. The yearning of Paul is also the yearning of the Holy Spirit. He also pleads for our devotion.
- C. *...therefore, brethren...* – The *therefore* undoubtedly refers back to Romans 1-8 where we have seen God's justifying grace, sanctifying power and promise of future glory.
  - 1. The knowledge of great doctrinal truths imposes upon us an enormous obligation.
  - 2. Sound doctrine, understood and applied, always results in holy living.
- D. *...by the mercies of God...* – Who can count them? The Hebrew word has no singular. God's mercies are limitless. God is called "the Father of mercies" (2 Corinthians 1:3).
  - 1. Here, without a doubt, Paul was referring to the mercies of which he had written in Romans 1-8. In view of our vile sin and guilt, think of His: calling us, clothing us with His righteousness, declaring us justified and free of all condemnation, redeeming us from the curse of the law, empowering us with His Holy Spirit, electing us and predestinating us to be conformed to the image of His Son, making us equal heirs with Christ, promising us future glory and His faithful, inseparable presence with us.
  - 2. If such mercies do not stir and melt your heart, it must be made of stone.

- E. *...that ye present your bodies...* – To this our response should be “Here am I Lord. What will thou have me to do?”
  - 1. Here is the volunteer, presenting himself to willingly serve his country.
  - 2. Grace does not command. Grace implores and looks for volunteers.
  - 3. God not only wants you, He wants and needs your body. Remember Romans 6:13 speaks of the members of our body as being *instruments* (actually, weapons) of righteousness.
- F. *...a living sacrifice ...* – This seems to be a paradox. Animal sacrifices were offered, slain and laid upon an altar. But here we are enjoined to be a living dead thing!
  - 1. When an Israelite offered up a sacrifice to God, he released all claim to it. It was God’s to do with as He would. We should do the same with our bodies!
  - 2. Yet we are to be alive! A living sacrifice! *...DEAD indeed unto sin, but ALIVE unto God through Jesus Christ...* (Romans 6:11). While on the altar of sacrifice I am to be a burning, living testimony of God’s saving grace and power. Truly a living dead man!
- G. *...holy, acceptable unto God...* – The lambs offered to God by the Jews were to be without blemish (Exodus 12:5). We, also, are to offer God our best! Our best years, faculties, talents, mind and time, our youth, our health, and our strength. No Christian can ever give more and should never give less than his best to God. Our whole concern and highest aim should be to please God rather than man.
- H. *...which is your reasonable service...* – The word “reasonable” is best translated “spiritual” and/or “intelligent.” In other words, the service for Christ to which Paul was alluding was spiritual and intelligent as opposed to mere outward and empty rites, ceremonialism and external forms of worship. Refer to Romans 7:25, *...with the mind I myself serve the law of God....* It is right and reasonable to give to God that which we owe.

## II. NON-CONFORMISTS – TRANSFORMED – ROMANS 12:2

- A. *And be not conformed to this world...(or age)* – Where this world is concerned, Christians are non-conformists.
  - 1. Conform means to put on the form, appearance or adopt the living style of another.
  - 2. Jesus said, *ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world...* (John 15:19).  
1 John 2:15 says, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world....*
  - 3. As Christians we are simply “strangers and pilgrims on this earth.” We’re passing through on our way home. Note 1 Peter 2:11.
  - 4. Christians are not to love or conform to the pride, pomp, vanity, sinful pleasures and life style of this sin-loving, Satan-blinded, Christ-rejecting world.
  - 5. Even in Paul’s day, the “world” had a different lifestyle.
- B. *...but be ye transformed...* – The word translated “transformed” is most unusual. It is identical to our word “metamorphosis.” It was used of Christ when He was “transfigured” on the mount and the fashion of His countenance was altered. Christ was transformed before Peter, James, and John and appeared briefly, as He will look when He comes again.
- C. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says “But we all, with open (unveiled) face beholding as in a glass (mirror) the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Rather than being conformed, God’s desire is that we be transformed into the image or likeness of Christ in this present evil world.
- D. But how? *...by the renewing of your mind...* Our minds are completely renewed by the “renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5) and by “thinking on the things” that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praise worthy (Philippians 4:8). The word “mind” relates not simply to the intellect but to the soul, the whole inner man. When God is in control of your mind, He is in control of you.
- E. *...that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God....* Christians have an enormous privilege and responsibility to set before the world that which God approves.
  - 1. We should so live that the world will know that to us the will of God is good, acceptable and perfect.
  - 2. To *prove* is to demonstrate it, manifest it, and reveal it to be so. May God help us to do just that.

### III. PAUL'S PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATION – Romans 12:3

- A. The primary thought here is that all of us should be clothed with humility. No man is *...to think of himself more highly than he ought to think...* All that anyone of us has, we owe to the grace of God. Never condone or assume a more “superior than thou” attitude.
- B. *...I say, through the grace given to me...* – Paul was blessed with a special revelation of the grace of God and was given authority as a chosen apostle to administer that grace. Read Acts 9:15-17 and Ephesians 3:1-12.
- C. *...think soberly...* – Seriously, genuinely, sincerely, as we reflect on the grace measured out to us.
- D. *...God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith...* – Whatever degree of faith we have is a precious gift from God and has been measured out to us. In this regard you should read Ephesians 4:7 and 1 Corinthians 12:11.

### IV. DIVERSITY OF GIFTS – Romans 12:4-6

- A. The main thought in these three verses is diversity. How grateful we should be for the diversity of gifts in the body of Christ today.
- B. Right here, pause long enough to ponder the entire passages of Ephesians 4:7-16 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.
- C. *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.* Here Paul compared our physical body to the church.
  - 1. This was Paul's first mention in Romans of this remarkable doctrine concerning the Body of Christ, a doctrine, he alone, among all the apostles, was chosen to set forth (Colossians 1:24-25). Read also Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:16; 3:6.
  - 2. While our bodies are made up of many members, they function in absolute harmony. No member can say to another, “I have no need of thee.” Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-20. So the church, the true body of Christ, dwells and works together in love and harmony.
  - 3. One must always bear in mind that Paul, when writing of Christ's body, had no denomination or organization in mind. He was writing of those who had truly been born again (John 1:13, 2 Peter 1:4) and had been baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- D. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us...*
  - 1. It is clearly taught in this passage and in Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12 that every member of the body of Christ has some gift from God, given to us “severally as He will” (1 Corinthians 12:11) and “according to the measure of the gift of Christ” (Ephesians 4:7).
  - 2. We are to exercise any gift we have been given *...according to the proportion of faith.* Remember, faith is also “measured” out. No one should worry himself concerning the gifts others have. Everyone should concentrate on making the best use of the gifts God has given him.

### V. MAKING BEST USE OF GIFTS – Romans 12:7-8

- A. The main idea here is utility. Making the best use of our God-given gifts.
- B. Paul listed here seven special gifts.
  - 1. Prophecy – I feel certain that here Paul had in mind prophecy that was forthtelling rather than foretelling. 1 Corinthians 14:3 states that prophesying is “speaking unto men, to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” As for foretelling, the word of God is complete. Everything has been foretold.
  - 2. Ministry – There was trouble in the early church because ministering to the needs of others was neglected. While the Apostles gave themselves to “the ministry of the Word,” others were appointed to minister to the daily needs of the saints (Acts 6:1-4). Some Christians are gifted wonderfully with this grace. Their special gift was to comfort and care for the needy. Too often, this gift is sadly neglected.
  - 3. Teaching – Not everyone is endowed with the unique ability to instruct others in the way of the Lord or to intelligently expound the Scriptures. We should be glad for those in our midst that have such ability.

4. Exhortation – Teaching is directed primarily to the mind. Exhortation is to the heart and will. Titus was instructed by Paul to “exhort and rebuke with all authority” (Titus 2:15). To Timothy, Paul wrote “these things teach and exhort” (Exhortation seeks to persuade saints to obey what they have been taught. 1 Timothy 6:2). Exhortation is the gift of persuasion.
5. Giving – The word “simplicity” is better translated “with liberality.” Another thought is found in Ephesians 6:5, where the same word is translated “singleness,” meaning “singleness of heart, as unto Christ.” In other words, the gift of giving should be exercised with liberality and with singleness of heart toward God. To the Corinthians, Paul wrote that giving should be done cheerfully, not sparingly, grudgingly or of necessity (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).
6. Ruling – Those who manifested the grace and maturity to exercise authority were appointed as elders and bishops to rule in the church. To the Thessalonians, Paul wrote “know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 5:12). To Timothy, he wrote, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor” (1 Timothy 5:17). Deacons and elders were to rule their children and houses well (1 Timothy 3:4,12). Those who had this gift were to employ it with diligence or painstaking attention, with humility, verse 3, and certainly not to lord it over “God’s heritage” (1 Peter 5:3).
7. Mercy – with cheerfulness. Many are of the opinion these words refer to believers who feel called and disposed to give themselves to the visiting of the sick and afflicted. All of us who have experienced God’s mercy should gladly show mercy toward others. Whatever mercy is shown, it should be shown with a cheerful countenance and attitude.

**THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS**  
**EXAM - LESSON 19**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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1. Doctrine must be always be applied to: (Value 6 points)
    - a. life practice.
    - b. the speculation of the mind.
    - c. cold objectivity.
  2. Paul did not command the believers to surrender to Christ, because: (Value 7 points)
    - a. he had no authority to command.
    - b. surrender can come only by persuasion.
    - c. surrender is always voluntary.
  3. The result of sound doctrine that is well understood and properly applied is that: (Value 6 points)
    - a. it promises special rewards for the believer.
    - b. it results in holy living.
    - c. it results in pure thinking.
  4. God wants the believer's body as well as his heart because: (Value 7 points)
    - a. He wants to use it as an instrument of righteousness.
    - b. He wants sacrifices.
    - c. the body is more important than the heart.
  5. The believer can be a living sacrifice by: (Value 7 points)
    - a. dying for the cause of Christ.
    - b. being dead to sin and alive to God.
    - c. inviting suffering into his life.
  6. The meaning of "reasonable" in Romans 12:1 is that: (Open Bible) (Value 7 points)
    - a. there is a reason for such service to God.
    - b. such service is "spiritually intelligent" for the believer.
    - c. this speaks of service with the mind only.
  7. "And be not conformed to this world" means that: (Value 6 points)
    - a. the believer must not adopt the life style of the world.
    - b. the believer must hate this world.
    - c. the believer must harmonize his life with the world.
  8. A believer can be transformed by: (Value 6 points)
    - a. living like the people in the world.
    - b. renewing the mind with the things of the Spirit.
    - c. taking a stand against the devil.

9. Believers are to be transformed into the image of: (Value 6 points)
  - a. the Holy Spirit.
  - b. God.
  - c. Christ.
  
10. According to Romans 12:3, the kind of attitude the believer should have is of: (Open Bible) (Value 7 points)
  - a. faithfulness to God.
  - b. superiority.
  - c. Humility.
  
11. According to Romans 12:3, God has given to every believer: (Open Bible) (Value 7 points)
  - a. assurance.
  - b. faith.
  - c. grace.
  
12. In Romans 12:4-6, Paul likened the Church to: (Open Bible) (Value 7 points)
  - a. a physical body.
  - b. a spiritual body.
  - c. a house.
  
13. The believer's proper concern about gifts that he does not have is to: (Value 7 points)
  - a. ask God to give them to him.
  - b. not be concerned about them, but concentrate on what God has given him.
  - c. try to work on them in his own strength.
  
14. By the "gift of prophecy" in Romans 12:6 Paul meant being able to: (Open Bible) (Value 7 points)
  - a. foretell the future.
  - b. tell forth the Word of God.
  - c. speaking in tongues.
  
15. By the "gift of teaching" in Romans 12:7 Paul meant being able to: (Open Bible) (Value 7 points)
  - a. foretell the future.
  - b. rebuke believers.
  - c. to instruct others in the Word of God.

### Decision Time

Having learned that as a believer God expects me to live a life separated from sin and from the world, I make the decision today to give myself completely to God to use me in any way He wants to use me. I am His to obey.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_