

**The Epistle to the Romans
(Special English Edition)**

Prepared by William S.H. Piper, D.D.

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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 good understanding 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 request to live a separated, devoted life.
 - Second, it clearly explains the method for serving the lord effectively.

THE LESSON

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

- A. Paul ended the argument. The case is closed! Now he presents the application of doctrine to duty and life. Remember, doctrine should never be cold. Doctrine should never be only impersonal or separated from life or only theory. When doctrine is understood in the right way and taught correctly, it always has a meaning for Christian living.
- B. *I beseech you* – Here is the most tender request for devotion to God that we can find anywhere. Here the great apostle Paul desired his readers to surrender their all to Christ. Paul himself had applied the meaning of these great doctrines to his life.
 - 1. Paul requested. He did not command. Surrender to Christ must always be voluntary.
 - 2. The desire of Paul is also the desire of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also requests our devotion.
- C. *...therefore, brethren...* – The *therefore* undoubtedly refers back to Romans 1-8 where we have seen God's grace in justification, His power in sanctification and His promise for future glorification.
 - 1. The knowledge of great doctrinal truths forces on us a tremendous responsibility.
 - 2. Sound doctrine, when we understand it and put it into practice, 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 he wrote about in Romans 1-8. Even in the fact of our sin and guilt, He called us, clothed us with His righteousness, declared us justified and free of all condemnation. He redeemed us from the curse of the law. His Holy Spirit gave us power. He chose us and planned for us to become like His Son. He made us equal inheritors with Christ. He promised us future glory. He said He would never separate from us, but promised that He would always be present with us.
 2. If such mercies do not excite you, you must be made of stone.
- E. ...*that ye present your bodies...* – To this we should say “Here am I Lord. What do you want me to do?”
1. This is the picture of a volunteer, who presents himself willingly to serve his country.
 2. Grace does not command. Grace begs and looks for volunteers.
 3. God not only wants you, He wants and needs your body. Remember Romans 6:13 speaks of the parts of our body as *instruments* (actually, weapons) of righteousness.
- F. ...*a living sacrifice ...* – This seems to be a contradiction. People killed animals and laid them on the altar as sacrifices to God. But here God wants us as a living dead thing!
1. When an Israelite offered up a sacrifice to God, the animal no longer belonged to him. It then belonged to God. God could do with it 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 must be a burning, living testimony of God’s saving grace and power. Truly a living dead man!
- G. ...*holy, acceptable unto God...* – When the Jews offered lambs to God these lambs had to be without defect (Exodus 12:5). We, also, are to offer God our best! Our best years, abilities, 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 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, Paul was talking about service for Christ that was spiritual and intelligent. It was not outward and empty ceremonies. 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 to Him.

II. NOT CONFORMED BUT TRANSFORMED – ROMANS 12:2

- A. *And be not conformed to this world...*(or age) – Christians must not be like the people in the world. Conform means to put on the form of something else, or adopt the living style of another person.
1. 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....*
 2. As Christians we are only “strangers and pilgrims on this earth.” We are passing through on our way home. Note 1 Peter 2:11.
 3. Christians must not love the world. They must not adopt the proud way of living like the world. They must not live empty lives like the world. They must not enjoy the sinful pleasures and life style of this world. This world loves sin. Satan has blinded their spiritual eyes and they have rejected Christ.
 4. Even in Paul’s day, the “world” had a different way of living.
- B. ...*but be ye transformed...* – The word translated “transformed” is most unusual. It is the same as the English word “metamorphosis.” It was used of Christ when He was “transfigured” on the mountain and his face was changed. Christ was changed before Peter, James, and John and for a very short time he appeared as He will look when He comes again.
- C. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says, But we all, without a veil over our faces, will see the glory of the Lord as in a glass (mirror). God will change us into the same image as Christ’s, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Rather than living like the world, God wants to change us to be like 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 only 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 show the world that which God approves.
 - 1. We should so live in such a way that the world will know that to us the will of God is good, acceptable and perfect.
 - 2. To *prove* means to show the world that this is true. May God help us to do just that.

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

- A. The important 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....* What we have or what are, we owe to the grace of God. Never approve of thinking yourself to be better than someone else.
- B. ...*I say, through the grace given to me...* – God blessed Paul with a special revelation of the grace of God. God gave Paul authority as a chosen apostle to manage that grace. Read Acts 9:15-17 and Ephesians 3:1-12.
- C. ...*think soberly...* – Seriously, sincerely, as we reflect on the grace God gave 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. God gave it to us. In this connection you should read Ephesians 4:7 and 1 Corinthians 12:11.

IV. DIFFERENCE IN THE GIFTS – Romans 12:4-6

- A. The main thought in these three verses is the difference in gifts. We should be thankful for the difference in gifts in the body of Christ today.
- B. Right here, stop long enough to think about 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. God chose Paul as the only one, from among all the apostles to teach this doctrine (Colossians 1:24-25). Read also Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:16; 3:6.
 - 2. While our bodies are made up of many parts, they all function together. No part can say to another, “I have no need of thee.” Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-20. In the same way the church, the true body of Christ, lives and works together in love and agreement.
 - 3. One must always remember when Paul wrote about the Body of Christ, he did not mean a denomination or an organization. He meant every person 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. This passage and Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12 clearly teach that every member of the body of Christ has some gift from God. God gives it 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 must use any gift God has given to us ...*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 gave him.

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

- A. The main idea here is usefulness. Making the best use of our God-given gifts.
- B. Paul listed seven special gifts here.
 - 1. Prophecy – I feel certain that here Paul means prophecy or forthtelling (giving out the Word of God) rather than foretelling (telling the future). 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 serving the needs of others was neglected. While the Apostles gave themselves to “the ministry of the Word,” others were appointed to serve to the daily needs of the saints (Acts 6:1-4). Some Christians are gifted wonderfully with this grace. Their special gift is to comfort and care for the needy. Too often, this gift is sadly neglected.
 - 3. Teaching – God has not given everyone the special ability to teach others in the way of the Lord or to intelligently explain the Bible. 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. Paul instructed Titus to “exhort and rebuke with all authority” (Titus 2:15). To Timothy, Paul wrote “these things teach and exhort” (Exhortation tries to persuade believers to obey the teachings. 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 used with generosity and with loyalty in your heart to God. To the Corinthians, Paul wrote that giving should be done cheerfully, not by giving as little as you can or because you are forced to give (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 use it with zeal or careful attention, with humility, verse 3, and certainly not like lords over “God’s heritage” (1 Peter 5:3).
 - 7. Mercy – with cheerfulness. Many people say these words refer to believers who feel called to give themselves to visiting the sick. All of us who have experienced God’s mercy should gladly show mercy toward others. Whatever mercy we show, we should show it with a happy face and a joyful feeling.

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 _____