



ZOOM BIBLE STUDY *led by Mary Lowman*

Remarkable Truths From Romans

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led by Mary Lowman

Introduction

Now we come to an amazing passage in Romans 12, a chapter which acts as a transition in Paul's letter from understanding theological doctrine to the practical daily acts and disciplines needed to truly become more like Jesus.

The Word of God is like no other book ever written.

Hebrews 4:12: *For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

It is alive! That means, it opens up new truth to you every time you read it.

Romans 12:1 – 2 (NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Paul's Appeal

He begins with "I appeal to you, therefore, brethren. . ." *What he is about to say is super important.*

Then there's that word *therefore*. What is it there for? It is there to tell us that Paul's appeal to us is based on everything Paul has said up till that point.

So, this is in essence Paul's "sit up and take notice" appeal.

Living Sacrifices

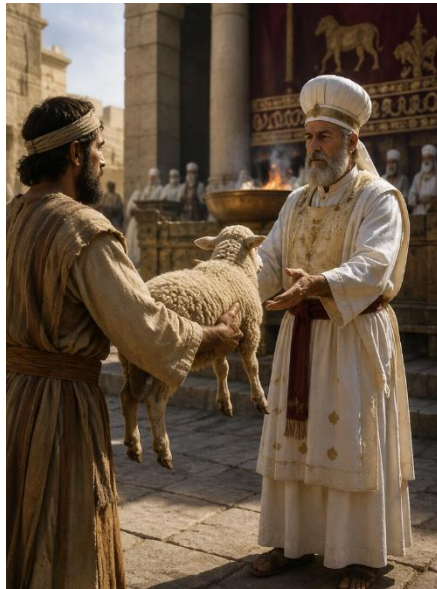
He says, "to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice."

Paul is redefining what a sacrifice is now under the New Covenant. Hebrews makes it clear that there is no longer a need for those perpetual sacrifices required by the Old Covenant.

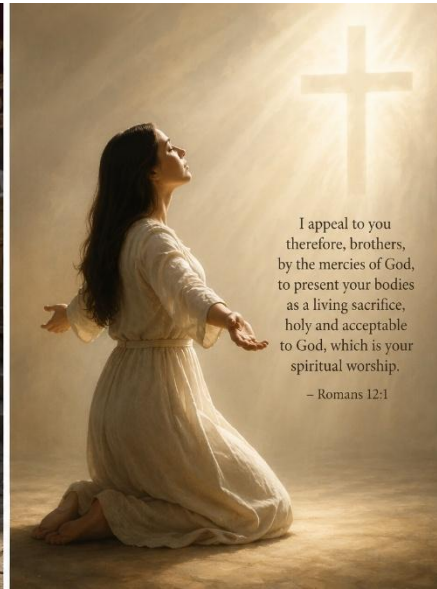
Hebrews 7:26 – 27: *For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. 27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.*

When sacrifices were made under the Old Covenant, an animal had to be offered. In the same way, we as followers of Jesus Christ, must decide if we will offer our bodies as a living sacrifice. It is not a once-for-all decision. It is often a daily, sometimes an hourly decision—will we sacrifice ourselves, not by dying, but by living differently.

The Old Covenant Sacrifice



The New Covenant Sacrifice



Practical examples:

- **Carefully watching the words you speak**, that they are always truthful, that they are encouraging, not discouraging, that you never participate in gossip, you choose gentle rather than harsh words.
- **Carefully guarding your thoughts**, making your thoughts captive to Jesus, filling your mind with Scripture, eliminating negative and sinful influences on your thought life.
- **Serving others in need**, which often means sacrificing time for yourself to do for others.
- **Living by Biblical standards**, refusing to partake in impure activities which the world declares to be perfectly fine, but you know they are wrong.
- **Avoiding harmful addictions**, such as drugs or alcohol, but also food, shopping, laziness, internet, etc.

And then Paul says that we must present our bodies as “holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” It is that moment when you acknowledge again—and again—that you choose to be conformed to the image of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 6:19 – 20: *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*

Not Conforming

Next, Paul says, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world.” This means refusing to let this culture cause you to conform to its beliefs, its practices, its attitudes. Where is the world and its culture invading your life? Have you recognized the conforming influences of the culture on you?

A Transformed Mind

Paul then says, “but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This should read “Keep on not conforming” and “Keep on being transformed.” This transformation has to begin in our minds.

Have you thought about where your mental energy is going? Are you really careful with what you allow into your mind? Do you spend thought time on foolishness, things that don’t matter?

Knowing God’s Will

Paul completes this appeal by telling us what will be the result: “Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” You will have discernment. What is discernment and how important is it?

God’s will is not some mystery we need to unlock. We do God’s will one day at a time, and that’s why we need to daily present our bodies as a sacrifice.

Praying Romans 12:1-2

I strongly encourage you to pray Romans 12:1-2 into your life.

“Lord, today I present my body to you as a living sacrifice. May it be holy and acceptable to you. It is my worship today, and I pray that I will not be conformed to this world and its evil, but please transform me by renewing my mind. I want to think your thoughts and do your will today.”



The Result

When you make it a daily practice to offer yourself as a living sacrifice, you are opening the door to the abundant life Jesus came to give you.

John 10:10: *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

Galatians 2:20: *I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Are you willing to be a living sacrifice? I promise you will NEVER regret that decision.