

ROMANS 12:1-5

Introduction:

1. We now come to the last foundation pillar of Romans in Chapters 12-16, dealing with how to live a practical life - that Paul has given us a rock solid doctrine to live by in this Age of Grace. It is about faith alone, without works, and our new position that we have in Christ - being justified through grace by the cross work of Christ.
2. Chapters 1-11 laid the foundation of man's lost condition, our justification by faith in Christ, Israel's stumble and fall, and finally God's grace and mercy to both the Jews and the Gentiles.
3. Chapters 1-8 dealt with salvation and how the gospel of grace (D.B.R.) saves us from God's wrath to come. Chapters 9-11 dealt with how the gospel has affected Israel and what has happened to Israel dispensationally since the gospel of grace is now in effect.
Chapters 12-16 will deal with how to live in the age of grace and how God equips us to live for Him.

*We will see how Paul deals with the Christian as a believer in the first 2 verses in Chapter 12, then with the Christian as a brother in the Body of Christ from verse 3 on.

Romans 12:1 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

1. Paul now tells us to focus on our service and dedication to the Lord. Because without the proper foundation of sound doctrine laid down in Romans 1-11, the believer would not have the renewed mind by which he can dedicate himself to the Lord.
 - a. Take all the practical instructions you have learned and apply them to the details of your life. Paul says, "I beseech you" which means to beg or request the Roman believers to live for Christ.
I Thessalonians 4:1-2 - Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more and more. 1Thess. 4:2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.
 - b. Paul is requesting them to be motivated and asking them to do this by grace motivation - to walk like a son, recognizing our sonship position under grace and not under bondage (the Law).
 - c. The Grace gospel of obedience is based on "love". It is the attitude and behavior we are to show in Christ.
Ephesians 4:2 - With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
II Corinthians 5:14-15 - For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 2Cor. 5:15 And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.
2. We have to acknowledge what we were before God touched us - how we were without God, having no hope. But, "by the mercies of God", He pitied us and moved in compassion in our heart to deliver us.
3. "That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice". The word "present" is the Greek word meaning "to yield", used in Romans 6:13.

Romans 6:13 - Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

*"a living sacrifice" - This is in contrast to the O.T. program where animals were put to death. The question is - which life do we sacrifice (our old self-life or our new Christ-life)? We are to present ourselves to God as those alive from the dead.

Romans 8:11 - But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

4. "Holy" just means to be set apart for God's will to use you. You have been made spiritually alive and are to be separated to godliness.

Ephesians 1:4 - According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5. "acceptable to God" means that when believers recognize their position in Christ and live out in practice of the truth, this pleases God.

Ephesians 1:6 - To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

6. "which is your reasonable service" means to offer our body to God after all He has done for us. It would only be reasonable and logical.

*Our reasonable service can also be translated as our spiritual worship - to worship God and being used by God with our gifts.

Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

1. Paul tells believers not to be conformed to "this world", which means a system under the control of Satan - this present evil world we live in today.
- a. We are not to be pressed into the mold or shape of this world. The world is against God and is opposite of God's truth. The world is the expression of the philosophy of Satan and his demons.
- Galatians 1:3-4 - Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:
- I Corinthians 2:12 - Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.
- b. So Paul is encouraging and warning us not to be conformed, or molded, into this evil world's system.
2. "be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," is a process of being changed or transfigured - being more like Christ. This doesn't happen in a day, or a month, or a year.
3. The "renewing of your mind" takes place when we accept a new way of thinking and it is a process that does not end until we get to heaven. Repentance has a similar meaning.
- a. This happens when you do not allow the three great sins listed in I John 2:16.

I John 2:16 - For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

- b. Our mind can only be renewed and overhauled when the truth for the Body of Christ is energized by the Holy Spirit and taken in. God's Word has to be placed into our mind and heart by studying and hearing it.
- c. We need to kick out the world's so-called wisdom and replace it with God's truth.

II Corinthians 10:4-5 - (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 2Cor. 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

4. And last, we demonstrate or "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Instead of God's will and commands being a threat to us, you begin to find yourself in agreement with God.

- a. It is because of our old nature that we naturally resist God's will in our life. But, as we study God's Word, we see our resistance to weaken and maturity begins to kick in.
- b. Three keys for knowing God's will in your life are: ❶to yield your body; ❷have a separated new life from the old; ❸have a transformed mind.

*Philippians 2:13 and 4:8-9 tell us that in time you will see God's way of living and His will in your life.

Philippians 2:13 - For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Philippians 4:8-9 - Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things. Php. 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

5. It is only as we mature that we can discern what is best and excellent in our life - becoming complete. That will take us to a higher level in our relationship with God.

Hebrews 5:13-14 - For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. Heb. 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Romans 12:3 - For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

1. We are to think correctly about ourselves and not be puffed up - being unrealistic of our own importance and superiority.

Galatians 6:3 - For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

2. Paul begins to explain why we are to surrender certain needs of our daily life. Humility is the attitude we are to display, which keeps our pride in check.

3. The last part of verse 3 says, "according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." How has God given to each of us this "measure of faith"?

The answer is: God has given this to us, through sound doctrine in the rightly divided Word of God. This is stored up in our soul as a measuring stick to evaluate how we should react to circumstances in life.

Ephesians 4:7 - But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

4. Each believer is to find out the gift that God has placed in them and to use it for encouragement in the Body Church.

I Corinthians 12:18 - But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

- a. To know this helps us to use our gifts alongside others. It helps us to maintain the unity that God desires us to have.
- b. We are one and equal in Christ. But, God has shown grace to us differently so that the Church can be whole and balanced.

*Paul now introduces one of his favorite illustrations in verse 4 & 5.

Romans 12:4-5 - For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:
Rom. 12:5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

1. We have many members in the human body and yet not all of them have the same function. All members work with, and for, each other because they are all dependent upon one another.
2. Paul is showing a picture of the Body of Christ Church, where all parts within the Body are important but have different functions.

*It is when the church is healthy in their relationship with Christ and each other that it gives credibility to the grace gospel.

*To summarize these first five verses, we can identify 3 of the 4 Grace Principles operating in us today for our Sonship walk:

- ① In verses 1 & 2, we have "the principle of liberty" (our freedom).

Galatians 5:1 - Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

*We are to stand fast and not go under legalism, but to be free to serve God.

- ② In verse 3, we see "the replacement principle". We are to put off this old way of thinking and put on the new way.

II Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

- ③ In verses 4 & 5, we have "the expedient principle". This is the mutual concern that we have for all members of one body (Body of Christ) and the building up of others found in Ephesians 4:1-6.

*Next week, we will see the fourth Grace principle in verse 9 - the "Grace Motivation Principle", talking about the act (love) as a Christian's responsibility and their conduct.

Ephesians 4:2 - With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;