

Reasonable Response To Christ

Text : **Romans 12: 1-12**

INTRODUCTION :

A. What is the proof of the pudding ?

1. It's in the eating, of course.
2. No matter how much one talks up his or her food it all boils down to taste.

B. The same is true when it comes to being a Christian or to preaching the gospel.

1. It matters little how godly a person claims to be, the proof is in the living.
2. As well, it matters little how much the audience is “*wowed*” by sermons, the proof is in the changes they bring about in the lives of the hearers.

C. Thus, a lesson must be constructed with a view toward bringing about a specific result in the life of the hearer.

1. They must be given information to instruct them why they should change.
2. They must be told how to apply the information to make the change happen.
3. They must then be motivated to put forth the effort to make the change.

D. Paul was a trained preacher so he followed this basic format.

1. His books start off with a doctrinal section wherein he informs us of the will of God.
2. The latter portion of his books explain how we should respond to the doctrine.

TRANSITION :

A. The text we're about to study is the beginning of the practical section of Romans.

1. **Rom. 12: 1-2** **Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your rational service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**
2. Any time we read the word “**therefore**” we understand it as “*because of what went before.*”
3. Thus, we understand the **Romans 12** is telling us how God expects us to respond to chapters **1-11**.

B. Logically, in order to understand chapters 12-16 we must understand 1-11.

1. Chapter 1 shows us that the gentiles are condemned because of sin.
2. Chapter 2 declares that the Jews are condemned because of Sin
3. Chapter 3 concludes that all men are condemned because of Sin
4. Chapter 4 teaches righteousness can be imputed to man by God based upon faith.
5. Chapter 5 explains that no one deserves salvation; it is freely given in Christ.
6. Chapter 6 warns that though righteousness is given by grace it's not a license to sin.
7. Chapter 7 the system of grace sets one free from judgment based on law keeping.
8. Chapter 8 tells us that grace justifies us, but is we must remain faithful in life.
9. Chapter 9 is a lament over Israel's rejection of the gospel and rejection by God.
10. Chapter 10 reconfirms that one can only be justified/saved by faith in the gospel.
11. Chapter 11 affirms that God did not reject Israel; they rejected God's salvation.
12. Chapter 12 appeals for the reader to respond to Christ's sacrifice.
 - a. Law puts man in control of his destiny. (*Man always falls short.*)
 - b. Grace through faith surrenders control to God. (*God never fails.*)

I. God urges us, "Don't make the same mistake as the Jews ; surrender yourselves."**A. The word translated "urge" (par·ak·al·eh·o) is also translated "pray."**

1. It is most often translated "beseech."
2. It means a very strong advise or request ... "to beg, entreat, beseech."

B. God (through Paul) is expressing a very strong desire for us to do this.

1. He has just explained how Israel is being lost because they refused to do it.
2. Chapters 1-11 explain why we should do it.
 - a. The consequences of not doing it are horrible. (*Urgent that you avoid it.*)
 - b. The reward for doing so is great.
 - c. *Considering what has been done for you, it would be unreasonable not to do it.*

C. This response is a demarcation between being lost and being saved.

1. **Matt. 7: 21-23** (Read ... Lk & Mt). **Matt. 10:37-39**
2. Those who will not commit are not worth to be His disciples. **Luke 9:23, 14:27**

II. The basis of God's expectation that we will surrender to Him is His mercies.

A. Love demands a response.

1. **I John 4: 19-** We love, because He first loved us.
2. **I John 4: 11-** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

B. Jesus died for us.

1. His death did for us what we could not do for ourselves.
Rom. 5:6- For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
2. He died for us while we were His enemies .. deserving of His wrath.
Rom. 5:7-10 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. **11** And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

C. The sacrifice of Jesus is a unilateral expression of love.

1. God asked for a response to His act of love.
2. Unrequited love destroys a relationship.
3. Without a relationship with God one is doomed to external exclusion from Heaven.

III. The response that God requires to His self-sacrifice on the cross is for our love for Him to motivate us to sacrifice our bodies to Him.

A. The sacrifice which God wants involves our bodies.

1. He wants our hearts, but He expects that we give him our physical body as well.
2. When Jesus died upon the cross He did more than save our souls, He purchased our physical bodies as well.
 - a. **I Cor. 6: 19-20** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? **20** For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
 - b. When God purchased our bodies, He purchased all that our bodies produce.

B. We must present our bodies to Him as a sacrifice and when any sacrifice has been presented on the altar, it never returns to the presenter.

1. Ownership is surrendered and value is transferred when the sacrifice is presented.
2. There is a cost to the one who presents a sacrifice. (*Give context of II Sam. 24*)

II Sam. 24: 24-25 However, the king said to Araunah, “No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God which cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. ²⁵ David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Thus the Lord was moved by prayer for the land, and the plague was held back from Israel.

3. Christianity is not convenient in this life **it completely takes it over.**

* ***There is a significant difference between being religious and being Christian.***

- a. Salvation changes us from the inside out. (**It costs us our earthly life.**)
- b. As we grow in faith we yield to God ... **body , soul , and spirit.**

C. When we have yielded our life to Christ, **HE lives on earth through us.**

1. This exactly what the Apostle taught us in Galatians 2.

Gal. 2:20- I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

2. Our love for God must be total .. all consuming.

Matt. 22: 37- And He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with **all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.**’

3. When our love for God fills our heart, soul and mind, **it takes over our lives.**

II Cor. 5: 14-15 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, **so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.**

- a. If I am still living my life according to my plan, I do not yet love God completely.
- b. The more we understand what God has done for us, the greater will be our commitment to Him.

D. Christian ... YOU are the manifestation of God on this earth.

1. God shines the light of the gospel through YOU ... **Matt. 5: 14-16**
2. God called YOU out of the world to proclaim His glory ... **I Pet. 2: 9**

IV. Our sacrifice is to be a living sacrifice.

A. Animal sacrifices were point action .. here it is and it's over.

1. The animal was not giving itself voluntarily.
2. It was constrained and killed.
3. By the time it reached the altar it could not feel the heat.

B. A living sacrifice goes on and on .. day after day .. year after year.

1. A living sacrifice must offer itself voluntarily. (*motivated by heart – faith*)
2. A living sacrifice must be willing to stay on the altar when the fire gets hot.
 - a. Allurements create strong desires to leave. (*Pleasures, loved ones, etc*)
 - b. Cares of life cause living sacrifices to jump off the altar. (*financial crisis*)
 - c. Social pressure robs God of many sacrifices.

C. A living sacrifice must be offered every day.

1. We live our lives one day at a time.
 - a. Each morning we decide what we will do with our life that day.
 - b. All day long the world will try to seduce our sacrifice off the altar.
2. **Remember :** *The sacrifice we offer is our body, not just our mind.*
3. Our sacrifice is presented .. action of doing, not just restraining from doing.

V. Living sacrifices must be kept holy.

A. God has never accepted a defected offering.

1. **Lev. 1: 3-** *If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; he shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the LORD.*
2. **Lev. 22: 20-** *Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it will not be accepted for you.*

B. God has prepared you to be an acceptable sacrifice.

1. He called you out of the world.
 - a. **II Cor. 6: 17-** *“Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord. “And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you.”*
 - b. The word “*church*” literally means *those called out to be separate from the group.*

2. In Christ, God cleansed those He called out and set them aside for Himself.

I Cor. 6: 11- Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

CONCLUSION :

A. Understanding the mercy God poured forth in Christ, God is NOT demanding an unreasonable response.

1. He saved us from certain eternal destruction.
2. We accepted His salvation understanding that God demands :
 - a. Complete and utter surrender to His rule over our lives.
 - b. **DAILY** service from our mortal bodies.

B. We understand that His rejection of those who do not surrender is just.

1. **Luke 6: 46-** “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”
2. **Matt. 7: 21-23** Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?” ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’

C. How is your sacrifice progressing ?

1. Are you able to keep it on the altar ?
2. Is it alive and active each day ?
3. How holy and undefiled is it ?

D. Romans 12: 1-2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your rational service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

INVITATION :

Lesson Text : (In 5 different translations)**Romans 12: 1-2 (New American Standard Version)**

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your rational service of worship. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12: 1-2 (King James Version)

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. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12: 1-2 (The New King James Version)

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 12: 1-2 (The New International Version)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. **2** Do not conform any longer 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.

Romans 12: 1-2 (Young's Literal Translation)

I call upon you, therefore, brethren, through the compassions of God, to present your bodies a sacrifice—living, sanctified, acceptable to God—your intelligent service; **2** and be not conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, for your proving what is the will of God—the good, and acceptable, and perfect.