

Should We Be A Servant – Romans 12.1-2

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 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 (Romans 12.1-2).¹

Memory Verse – 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.* – Romans 12.1

We have discussed what it means to be a servant. We have looked at how a servant should act; and now we are going to discuss if we should be a servant at all. This might seem backwards, like we should have started with this, but knowing what a servant is, and how they should act are important to understand before we could even talk about being a servant.

Paul in his letter to the Romans has been exhorting them, warning them about their lifestyle and how they needed to follow Christ. How He died for them (Romans 3.23, 5.8, 6.23, 10.9-10). Without Christ in their life there is no hope of eternal life in Heaven, and they would be lost forever in the pit of hell.

Paul is speaking to the church at Rome, but his appeal goes out to all who will listen. Now, in chapter twelve, we find another appeal from Paul, he could have commanded believers to serve Christ, telling them what Christ had done. Of course, we can read the Gospels and see the sacrifice Christ made at the cross, His pain and suffering for us (Philippians 2.5-11, I Peter 2.21-25).

With all this Paul is gently speaking to the church and us, by saying, “I beseech you” or I urge you. The Greek word for beseech is “*parakaleō*, which has the basic meaning of calling alongside in order to help or give aid. It later came to connote exhorting, admonishing, or encouraging.”² Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the *Paraklētos*, our Divine Helper (John 14.16, 26, 15.26, 16.7).

Paul’s words carry the full weight of his apostleship, yet he does not want to come off as commanding, but as one who wants to be helpful and encouraging. Likewise, we must also want to help and encourage others in the service of the Lord. Sure, we can demand and command, but where will that get us in the long run.

Just because we can command someone to do something does not mean we should, and Paul is taking this kind of approach. He wants to encourage his fellow believers, why, because of who God is, and what God has done. Look at the next part of this verse.

“Therefore, Brethren, By the mercies of God,” therefore, let’s look back at the last four verses of chapter eleven.

“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen” (Romans 11.33-36, ESV).³

It is because of God’s great mercy and love, because He cared so much for us, that we have such an opportunity as this; to be part of His Kingdom, to share in the inheritance with His Son, Jesus Christ. How far beyond our imagination, awe and wonder is God, yet He came to us, sent His Son to us, sacrificed Himself for us so we could have a life. This is what Paul means by the mercies of God.

So, how should we respond, what must we do in return for this kind of undying love and devotion

¹ [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#). (2009). (Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version., Ro 12:1–3). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

² MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). [Romans](#) (Vol. 2, p. 139). Chicago: Moody Press.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 11:33–36). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

to people who did not deserve such love? Paul says, “present your bodies as a living sacrifice.”

We are to first give of ourselves to a Living and Holy God. Our bodies are not our own, and therefore, we are to offer them up to the Lord for His use. We should have the same mindset as Paul when he said, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, *the faith* which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me (Galatians 2.20, ASV).⁴

Our lives as believers are not our own, we have died with Christ and have been buried with Him and raised anew, to a new life. Our old life is passed away and behold all things are new (Romans 6.3-11; II Corinthians 5.17). Thus, we must present our bodies as a living sacrifice unto God, “Holy,” meaning set apart for a special purpose.

We are not called to be just a living sacrifice but a living and holy sacrifice unto God, someone who is set apart for a purpose to be used by God for His glory. When we are in this state, in this mind always remembering what it is that God has done for us, and committing ourselves to being a living and holy sacrifice unto God then we will be acceptable to Him.

Our goal should always be one of pleasing God, if we are trying to please men then we have the wrong goals and mindset. Again, we must present ourselves as living sacrifices to God, Holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service or spiritual worship.

Why must we present ourselves as living sacrifices unto God? Holy and acceptable, it is our reasonable service or spiritual worship. It is, in other words, the least we could do for what God and His Son, Jesus Christ did for us. God allowed His only Son to come and take on human form, to walk among us, to be beaten, mocked and put to death by us. He shed His blood on the cross, and split the temple veil in two opening a way for us. He was buried and rose from the grave defeating death and hell for us, giving us victory. Whereby, we never have to fear death nor eternal separation from God. He now sits at the right hand of the Father interceding on our behalf, so we have the right to come into the throne room of the Father with boldness, with all prayers, pleading and intercessions.

We ask why should we serve, because it is our reasonable service, it is the least we could do for a God who was so merciful. A God full of love and compassion, we must, we shall present our bodies as living sacrifices holy and acceptable unto God, because it is our reasonable service an act of spiritual worship for all God and Jesus Christ has done for us.

Application

1. Do you believe you are called to serve?
2. How can you be a living and holy sacrifice for God? Explain some steps or actions you might take.
3. Deeper Thinking: Read Romans 6.3-11, how does this passage help you understand the need to be a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God? What does the passage mean by “He that is dead is freed from their sins?”
4. Commit to learning Romans 12.1 and Witnessing to someone about what God has done for you.

Prayer

Lord, our Lord how magnificent is your name throughout the earth! I am amazed that You have taken the time to care about me, to look after me, to know me, and understand me. Lord help me to have a servant’s heart, to be someone who is looking out for the interest of others, and not just my own. Lord, give me wisdom to do for others, to have compassion on those who need Your help and allow me to show Your love and grace by my actions. As I serve You Lord, open the door to share Your gospel, begin to prepare the hearts of those I will come into contact with and provide me with the words to say. This I pray in Your Dear Son Jesus Christ’s Name, Amen.

⁴ [American Standard Version](#). (1995). (Ga 2:20). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.