

**Introduction:**

- Romans 12:1-2 is one of the best known passages of the NT besides John 3:16.
- It is a very succinct summary of what the Christians response to God's grace in Christ should be.
- It is a pivotal mark in the letter to the Romans.
  - One, it has in view everything discussed in Romans 1-11.
  - And it sets the tone for the remainder of the letter.
  - It keys in on:
    - Romans 1, with everything spiraling down to now being lifted in Christ.
    - Romans 6:13, 19, with presenting ourselves as not dead but alive unto God.
- *"And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."* (Romans 12:1-2, NLT)

**I. Give Your Bodies to God**

- A. "Therefore!" we must apply the full weight of these words in this verse. Paul wants us to realize that 12:1-15:13 all hang on what has been laid out in chapters 1-11.
  1. Parakaleo, παρακαλεω - two words: para and kaleo. It means something between a request and a command. It also has the powerful undertones of 'comfort'. IE. Paraklete - comforter.
  2. Paul is not commanding as one who sees himself as a superior being to them but as one who is walking in authority given to him by God and as seen in his letter to the Romans so far.
  3. All of what God has declared and taught in his letter flows out of the mercy of God. Therefore Paul urges the Romans, and us, based on God's mercy to do this act of giving ourselves to Him. THIS IS NOT in payback to God. It is a response of the life set free!
- B. God's mercy does not automatically produce obedience. We see that in these verses. But, in the imperatives that Paul uses it is quite clear it is expected.
  1. God's work, His mercy working on our insides, does compel us to the obedience that the Gospel demands of us.
  2. *"So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* (Romans 5:21, NLT) If God's grace reigns over us then it only makes sense that our response would be all encompassing.
  3. We are to become living sacrifices. God demands both...what we can give and the giver himself. Living sacrifice implies this is something done and continuing to be done. This sacrifice is a dedication of service to God.
  4. Paul presents the sacrifice with three different adjectives.
    - a) living - zao - to be alive. To be done and continue to live as such until death.
    - b) holy - means being set apart from the mundane and to be dedicated to the Lord.
    - c) acceptable - such a sacrifice that is alive and set apart is ...pleasing to God. In other words, that sacrifice brings pleasure to God.

- d) To present our bodies as a living sacrifice that is pleasing to God is to be our reasonable service or to be true worship as some translations read. *“Christian worship does not consist of what is practiced at sacred sites, at sacred times, and with sacred acts.... It is the offering of bodily existence in the otherwise profane sphere.”* Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 754). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

## II. The Great Transformation!

- A. Transformed - metamorphe, to change into another form.
1. Used of Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. Mark 9:2; Mt 17:2
  2. IE. It is where we get the word, metamorphosis. The worm to butterfly event.
- B. The mind is to be renewed.
1. Kainos - new in nature. anakainosis - means to renew. IE. Have you heard of Anakain Skywalker of the Darth Vader type. He went the opposite way the dark side gave him a new nature.
  2. So we are to undergo the renewing of the mind. Or the making new of the mind, according to Romans 8:9ff.
  3. The imperatives
    - a) Do not be conformed
    - b) Be transformed
    - c) Both are present passive imperative verbs that carry both urgency and ongoing work. This is not a one time event like salvation.
  4. Christians are to adjust their way of thinking about everything in accordance with the “newness” of their life in the Spirit (cf. 7:6). This “re-programming” of the mind does not take place overnight but is a lifelong process by which our way of thinking is to resemble more and more the way God wants us to think.” Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (pp. 756-757). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
    - a) Think of this in light of Romans 1:28 where God abandoned them because of their foolish thinking.
    - b) The renewing of the mind is so that we can discern, approve and walk in the will of God.