**Session #10—Life and Death**

**Romans Chapter 12**

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Pierre not wanting to work out. There had to be internal change

1. **Setting the Scene**

The “therefore” in v. 1 refers back not simply to the previous argument about God’s mercy in bringing salvation to Jew and Gentile but to everything that Paul had been teaching from the beginning of the epistle. It marks the transition from the theology of God’s redemptive act in Christ Jesus to the ethical expectations that flow logically from that theological base. We come now to what is usually called the “practical” section of Romans.[[1]](#footnote-2)



**12** We now reach the concluding portion of the Epistle, that devoted to the practical application of the previous discussion. The main idea running through the whole section seems to be that of peace and unity for the Church in all relations both internal and external. As St. Paul in the earlier portion of the Epistle, looking back on the controversies through which he has passed, solves the problems which had been presented in the interests no longer of victory, but of peace, so in his practical exhortation he lays the foundation of unity and harmony on deep and broad principles. A definite division may be made between chaps. 12, 13, in which the exhortations are general in character, and 14–15, in which they arise directly out of the controversies which are disturbing the Church[[2]](#footnote-3)



The implication of this ‘therefore’ is that Christian ethics are theologically motivated or—to put it in a different way—that the Christian’s obedience is his response to what God has done for him in Christ, the expression of his gratitude. Given its full force, the οὖν makes clear right from the start the theocentric nature of all truly Christian moral effort; for it indicates that the source from which such effort springs is neither a humanistic desire for the enhancement of the self by the attainment of moral superiority, nor the legalist’s illusory hope of putting God under an obligation, but the saving deed of God itself[[3]](#footnote-4)



1. **Understanding the Text Romans 12**



1. **Mind of the Members (Romans 12:1–3)**
2. Present Body (12:1)cf. 6:13; 1 Pet 2:5

* Present - language of sacrifice ***offer, bring***



* + - * + The word means to ‘place beside,’ ‘present’ for any purpose, and so is used of the presentation of Christ in the temple (Luke 2:22), of St. Paul presenting his converts (Col. 1:28), or Christ presenting His Church (Eph. 5:27), or of the Christian himself (cf. Rom. 6:13 ff.). In all these instances the idea of ‘offering’ (which is one part of sacrifice) is present.[[4]](#footnote-5)



* Living
  + - * + While sanctification is gradual in the sense that it continues throughout life, each advance depends upon a decision of the will. That the sacrifice is “living” reflects the voluntary nature of the act. F. F. Bruce comments that “the sacrifices of the new order do not consist in taking the lives of others, like the ancient animal sacrifices, but in giving one’s own



* + - * + In view of God’s acts of mercy it is entirely fitting that we commit ourselves without reservation to him



* Holy- Set Apart
* Acceptable - ***pleasing***



* Sacrifice



* + - * + Believers are exhorted to “make a decisive dedication” of themselves as worshipers stepping forward to place their offerings on the altar.



* + - * + The relation to the Jewish rite is partly one of distinction, partly of analogy. The Jewish sacrifice implies slaughter, the Christian continued activity and life; but as in the Jewish rite all ritual requirements must be fulfilled to make the sacrifice acceptable to God, so in the Christian sacrifice our bodies must be holy, without spot or blemish.[[5]](#footnote-6)

1. Non-Conformity (12:2)
   1. Do not conform to this world



* + - 1. **to form according to a pattern or mold,** ***form/model after***[[6]](#footnote-7)



* + - 1. As citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20) we are to “set [our] minds on things above, not on earthly things (Col 3:2). Paul reminded the Galatians that the present age is evil (Gal 1:4). It cannot, and must not, serve as a model for Christian living. Its values and goals are antithetical to growth in holiness.



* 1. Renewing of your mind



* + - 1. Transformed – to be renewed or changed



* + - 1. The transformation of which Paul spoke in Rom 12:2 is not a change effected from without but a radical reorientation that begins deep within the human heart.



* + - 1. The mind renewed enables us to discern the will of God. Released from the control of the world around us, we can come to know what God has in mind for us. We will find that his will is “good, pleasing and perfect.”



* 1. Prove will of God



* Good **- to meeting a high standard of worth and merit, *good***
* Acceptable- pleasing



* Perfect **- to meeting the highest standard**[[7]](#footnote-8)



Natalia already made varsity so she has a tendancy to have arrived when the summer comes.



1. Sound Judgment (12:3)
   * 1. Do not think highly

That they were to think of themselves with “sober judgment” (v. 3) suggests how out of touch with reality were their opinions of themselves. Since the metaphor suggests intoxication, one might say they were in danger of becoming “egoholics!”



* + 1. Allotted to each member of faith
       1. Allotted - ***deal out, assign, apportion***[[8]](#footnote-9)
       2. To each member of the church in Rome, God had given a measure of faith (cf. 1 Cor 12:11; Eph 4:7)



Working out on different muscle groups

1. **Service of the Members (Romans 12:4–8)**
   1. Many Members are One Body (12:4–5)



Unity in diversity is the theme that runs through this section. This unity, however, which is spiritual, was only possible because the members were “in Christ,” that is, joined by faith they had become a part of the body of Christ. Since they were all members of one body, it follows that “each member belong[ed] to all the others” (v. 5). The Christian faith is essentially a corporate experience. Although each member has come to faith by a separate and individual act of faith, the believing community lives out its Christian experience in fellowship with one another. John Donne’s “No man is an island” is true of the church of Jesus Christ. “Lone Ranger Christianity” is a contradiction in terms.[[9]](#footnote-10)



. Paul reminded them that as the physical body is made up of many members performing various functions, so also in Christ the many members form one body (cf. 1 Cor 12:12–31; Eph 4:25). Unity in diversity is the theme that runs through this section. This unity, however, which is spiritual, was only possible because the members were “in Christ,” that is, joined by faith they had become a part of the body of Christ



* 1. Gifts (12:6–8)
     1. Differ According to Grace
     2. Exercise Them
* Prophecy prophet was a person who spoke for God
* Service
* Teaching - In the New Testament world teaching was primarily but not exclusively moral instruction
* Exhortation
* Giving
* Leadership Another gift of God’s grace is leadership. Leaders are to carry out their responsibility with diligence. Although leadership in the contemporary world is often seen as the fruit of ambition, persistence, and good fortune (cf. Matt 8:9), biblical leadership is essentially a service carried out for the benefit of others.
* Mercy - helpful activities as feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, and caring for the aging. These are to be done cheerfully.

1. **Practice of the Members (Romans 12:9–21)**
   * + 1. Nowhere else in Paul’s writings do we find a more concise collection of ethical injunctions. In these five verses are thirteen exhortations ranging from love of Christians to hospitality for strangers. Each of the thirteen exhortations could serve as the text for a full-length sermon. What they deal with are basic to effective Christian living.[[10]](#footnote-11)



* + - 1. Love Without Hypocrisy (12:9a)
      2. “*Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good”* (12:9b [NASB])

To love God is to regard evil with horror



* + - 1. Be Devoted (12:10)
* Brotherly Love
* Give preference to one another in honor
  + - 1. Diligent in Service (12:11)
* Not Lagging
* Fervent in Spirit
  + - 1. Rejoicing (12:12)
* In Hope
* Persevering in tribulation
* Devoted to Prayer
  + - 1. Hospitable, contributing to the needs (12:13)
      2. Bless (12:14)
* Those who persecute
* Do not Curse
  + - 1. Join (12:15)
* Rejoice
* Weep
  + - 1. Same mind (12:16)
* Not Haughty
* Lowly
* Not wise in own estimation
  + - 1. Nevers (12:17–20)
* Never pay back evil for evil
* Right in the sight of all men
* Never take own revenge – leave room for the wrath of God.

Vengeance is Mine (Deuteronomy 32:35)

Love Your Enemy (Proverbs 25:21)

* + - 1. Overcome Evil With Good (12:21)

**III. Textual Takeaways for Anchored Applications**

1. Robert H. Mounce, [*Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nac27?ref=Bible.Ro12.1-2&off=7&ctx=l+with+good.%0a12%3a1%E2%80%932+~The+%E2%80%9Ctherefore%E2%80%9D+in+v), vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 230. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. W. Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of the Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/icc-ro?ref=Bible.Ro12-15.12&off=359&ctx=+for+your+standard.%0a~12%E2%80%9315%3a12.+We+now+rea), 3d ed., International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1897), 351. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. C. E. B. Cranfield, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/icc-ro2?ref=Bible.Ro12.1&off=380&ctx=+already+been+said.+~The+implication+of+t), International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 595. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. W. Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of the Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/icc-ro?ref=Bible.Ro12.1&off=4022&ctx=%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%85%CC%80%CF%82+%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B7%CD%82%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9.+~The+word+means+to+%E2%80%98p), 3d ed., International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1897), 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. W. Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of the Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/icc-ro?ref=Bible.Ro12.1&off=5685&ctx=h+the+risen+Christ.+~The+relation+to+the+), 3d ed., International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1897), 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bdag?ref=Page.p+979&off=2541&ctx=%CF%83%CF%85%CF%83%CF%87%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B9%CC%81%CE%B6%CF%89+~to+form+according+to+a+patt) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 979. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bdag?ref=Page.p+995&off=4823&ctx=%2c+complete%E2%80%99.%0a%E2%91%A0+pert.~+to+meeting+the+high) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 995. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bdag?ref=Page.p+632&off=1152&ctx=16%3a13+(Is+53%3a12).%0a%E2%93%91+~deal+out%2c+assign%2c+ap) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 632. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Robert H. Mounce, [*Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nac27?ref=Bible.Ro12.3-8&off=1451&ctx=2%3a12%E2%80%9331%3b+Eph+4%3a25).+~Unity+in+diversity+i), vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 234. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Robert H. Mounce, [*Romans*](https://ref.ly/logosres/nac27?ref=Bible.Ro12.9-13&off=8&ctx=ng+burdens.%0a12%3a9%E2%80%9313+~Nowhere+else+in+Paul), vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 236. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)