

The Practice of the Gospel--How  
To  
Practice What You Believe

Romans 12-14

## ***Romans 12***

**“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.* 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. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 so we, *being many*, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; 7 or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. 9 *Let love* be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 *Be kindly affectioned* one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. 14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16 *Be of the same mind* one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. 17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is mine*; I will repay, saith**

**the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

Romans is a book of theology and doctrine. Verse 1-2: Our right standing with God is something **God has done for us**. View the rest of the chapter through the glasses of verses 1-2. **Verse 1**, We're to sacrifice ourselves as living sacrifices in an act of worship. **“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.”** **Verse 2**, God wants to empower you with His Spirit. **“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 perfect will.”** The book of Romans enlivens Christians. Our sacrifices become a privilege when you consider what God has done for us. This is the essence of revival. Do you live for self or God? God doesn't want forced sacrifice but a sacrifice in love. Who do you idolize? Who do you wish you could be like? Are you doing what the world wants you to do or are you transformed by the renewing of your mind? So much of the victory is of and in our minds. How are our minds renewed? 1) Fellowship with Jesus and God the Father, i.e. Prayer, us talking to God. 2) Bible Study, study of God's Word, i.e. God talking to us. 3) Fellowship with God's people. These three activities stir God's Holy Spirit within your mind. They feed the **man of the spirit, the spiritual man**. Do anything for 21 days and it is said it becomes a habit. Apply these three things for 21 days and see what happens. Feed the spiritual man and starve the 'old man of the flesh' and the new man will defeat the 'old man.' When you do all this you will become living sacrifices to God. **Verse 3**: Understand rightly who you really are, not being puffed up with vanity. Have a moderate opinion of yourself. **“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.”**

*One Body Of Believers With Many Members  
Possessing Different God-given Gifts: How Are We  
To Become Living Sacrifices?*

**Verse 4-8:** The body of Christ has many different members that perform different functions and have different gifts -- gifts of grace. [When Paul was writing this there was basically only one **body of Christ**, one Church, composed of many members. Now there are many fellowships and denominations many of which make up the body of Christ. So referring to members of the body of Christ can and does have two meanings. There are individual members of the body of Christ -- referring to individual people -- and individual members of the body of Christ -- referring to individual fellowships or denominations. Whole fellowships and denominations can and do exhibit spiritual gifts and strengths within the body of Christ just as individuals can.] We all have separate gifts. Use your gifts. Viewing this through verses 1-2, use your gifts in sacrifice to God and to his glory. Can you see how verses 1-2 are expanded and modified by verses 4-8? We are now given some direction on how to fulfill becoming living sacrifices. **“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.”** The spiritual gifts are described in three places in Paul's writings, I Corinthians 12:12-31 (the manifestations of these gifts); Ephesians 4:11-16 (the use and purpose for these gifts); and Romans 12:4-8.

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<https://unityinchrist.com/ephesians/bodyofchrist.htm>]

### *What About Love?*

Paul now goes on to another vital aspect of being a living sacrifice -  
- LOVE. Love must be sincere. Verses 9-21 properly describes what

real godly love is and isn't. **“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”** Another important aspect of love is how you deal with your enemies. **“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. [Proverbs 25:21-22].’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”** [cf. *Matthew 5:9, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God.”*] Only 292 years of peace have existed in the over four thousands years of recorded history. 14500 wars have occurred in which 3.6 billion people have been killed. History is one battle after another. Weapons and weaponry have evolved from simple and ineffective to complex and extremely deadly weapons of mass destruction--threatening the existence of life itself on this planet. Weather weapons are now in the offing. What are the weapons we Christians have? Put on your weapons, armour and fight -- the battle is raging, Paul says.

## *Romans 13*

**Romans 13:1-7. “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then**

do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also for conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor."

### *How Should Christians Respond To The Government Over Them?*

**Verses 1-7:** How we should deal with this world's governments and societies? Paul says **"Be subject to the authorities of the world's governments because they are divinely ordained by God."** Do you pray for Bill Clinton? Did Paul pray for the Caesar -- perhaps even for the Caesar that signed his death warrant? It is a safe bet to say he did. Nebuchadnezzar came to understand who it was who is ultimately in control and authority. It is God. The leaders ultimately answer or will have to answer to God. Read Daniel 4. Nebuchadnezzar was a world dictator. Get the big picture. Habakkuk had to. **Habakkuk 1:2-4. "How long, O Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted."** What was God's response to Habakkuk? God said, **'Look at the big picture, Habakkuk. You're missing the point.'** **Habakkuk 1:5-11, "Look at the nations and watch -- and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor. Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like a vulture swooping to devour; they all come bent on violence.**

**Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand. They deride kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; they build earthen ramps and capture them. Then they sweep past like the wind and go on--guilty men, whose own strength is their god.**" Habakkuk was written as a dialogue or conversation between God and the prophet. Habakkuk saw that the leaders in Judah were oppressing the poor, so he asked the question as to why God allowed those wicked people to prosper. When God told him that the Babylonians would come to punish Judah, Habakkuk became more concerned. He did not understand how God could use the Babylonians, who were actually more wicked than the wicked Jews, to bring judgment on God's chosen people. God's answer was that the just would live by faith in God, Habakkuk 2:4, and that they had assurance that God was doing what was right. God told Habakkuk that in due time the Babylonians too would be judged and that justice would come about for the people of God.

### *Remember, God's In Charge When All's Said & Done*

Don't forget, Romans 13:1-7 comes right after Romans 12:19-21, which is a part of this very theme. **God is in charge.** That is what God told Habakkuk and Nebuchadnezzar. **Romans 12:19-21 states, "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay [Deut. 32:35],'** says the Lord. **On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. [Prov. 25:21-22].'** **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."** God says throughout his Word that he will take care of the wrongdoers, whether people or government leaders and whole governments and nations -- just worship God -- pray for the evildoers -- and live by faith -- God is in control. This is one of the key reasons for Bible prophecy, to show us who are believers just how much God is actually in control. Our job is to be Christians and show love, both to the good, the bad and the ugly.

### *What About If There Is A Conflict Between Man's Laws And God's Law?*

If there is a conflict between man's laws or government and God's, obey God first. Daniel 3:1-30 is an example of just how far three of God's servants were willing to go in obeying God over man's governments, while still showing proper respect to the king. Jeremiah told the captive Jews in Babylon to actually pray for the city they lived in -- Babylon. Jeremiah 29:7, **“Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”** The ultimate theme of Romans 12:19 through Romans 13:1-7 is **‘Be a Christian and I will take care of the rest of the world, it's leaders, and it's governments, all in due time -- I control history and where it will end up taking everyone who has ever lived -- So in the mean time, you be a good Christian.’** Love is the fulfillment of the law. Our main weapon in our spiritual combat is love. You are not going to break any of these commandments (vs. 9-10) if you love others. **Romans 13:8-10. “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not covet,' [Exodus 20:13-15,17] and whatever commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: 'Love your neighbor as yourself' [Deut. 5:17-19,21]. Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”**

### *Christian Awake! Put On The Armour Of God!*

In the next verses Paul is in essence saying, **‘Christian awake! There is a of Light.’** The *night* he is referring to is *this sinful age* we live in [i.e. from Adam to the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ]. **Romans 13:11-14, “And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”**

Paul, and many of the apostles, sincerely believed that the Lord's 2nd coming would be in their lifetimes; but this could be true for some of us living today! -- You all should be aware of the prophecy in **2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:3-4** which states, **“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is god...”** And **Daniel 9:27**, **“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”** Read **Matthew 24:15**. **Daniel 12:11**, **“And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.”** What all this is saying is that the temple service and evening and morning sacrifices in the temple will yet be set up again by the Jews. Then **“the man of perdition, the abomination of desolation,”** will cause the sacrifices to cease. **As Matthew 24:15** says, when you see this happen, if you are in Jerusalem -- flee for your life!!! World War III, the Biblical tribulation has started! **“When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains...”** (**Matthew 24:15-16**.) We see that when this event occurs -- the tribulation, World War III--is triggered. From there Jesus Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is just three and a half short years away! **Look at what's going on in the Middle East right now. The Jews are being set up for a major conflict over Jerusalem. The Jews are very close to setting up a Levitical Order to resume the “evening and morning sacrifices.”** [see <https://unityinchrist.com/End%20time%20temple/End-Time%20TempleI.htm>] Now back to Paul and **Romans 13**, **“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature [margin: ‘or the flesh.’]”** **1<sup>st</sup> John 2:10-11**. **“Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness, and walks around in the darkness;**

he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.”

*What is the Armour of God?*

**Ephesians 6:10-19, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms [i.e. the demonic world of Satan]. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God [i.e. the Bible]. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”**

**[CLICK HERE TO CONTINUE](#)** to Romans 14