

ROMANS

LAYING A SOLID FOUNDATION



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Rightly Responding to God & Others

Romans 12:1-8

In response to God's majestic glory shown in Romans 11:33-36, we are to choose to obey God's will. We are not to repeat the hardening of the Israelites. Even if we are Gentiles, we are to focus on affirming our faith rather than disregarding its clear meaning. Faith means to live in light of God and His truth. This faith will show up in the way we think and live.

In verses 1-2, Paul exhorts us to generally dedicate our lives to the Lord. In 3-8, he identifies the right approach to care for our brothers and sisters in the church.

FOR FROM HIM AND
THROUGH HIM AND TO HIM
ARE ALL THINGS. TO HIM
BE THE GLORY FOREVER.
AMEN

A) Two Kinds of Commands (Romans 12:1-2)

✦ Body (Romans 12:1)

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Romans 12:1).

I urge you to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God.

Paul exhorts us to do nothing less than fully dedicate our bodies to Him. God can use us. He wants to use us. He wants to work in our lives in such a way that we are holy and acceptable to Him. The only way is to give up our own life's pursuits.

Results: Spiritual service of worship

Once we dedicate our lives to Him, He wonderfully transforms them to His glorious purposes.

✦ Mind (Romans 12:2)

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)

(You) do not be conformed ... But (You) be transformed

The way to escape the influence of this world is to transform the way we think. We only can renew our minds through the Word of God and in that way discover what God's will is, that which is good, acceptable and perfect. Do we not naturally doubt God's will as being the best? We are thinking wrongly about Him and His will.

Results: Able to test, prove God's will.

If we consecrate our selves to God, then we are at the humble service of Christ's body. Therefore according to God's imparting grace, we minister to each other.

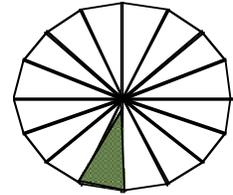
B) Properly Ministering to Each Other (Romans 12:3-8)

Before Paul goes on and provides more than 27 exhortations to God's people (12:9-21), he provides a general approach on how each believer ought to care for another. It is important for God's people to realize the importance of rightly relating to one another. If we are to love God, certainly we are to reflect His love in the way we care for each other.

✦ Responsible to build up each other (12:3-5)

"For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." Romans 12:3-5, NASB.

We were never given our resources to selfishly use on ourselves. If God has so given us our faith and gifts, then we ought to humble ourselves and realize God has given them to us to exercise. We are one body, not many. God's one body has many members. Each of us are like one segment of a circle. Altogether we form a whole. Our part is important and indeed we must use what God has given to us to help build up our fellow brothers and sisters. If we belong to each other, then we should treat them just as ourselves.



✦ Responsible to use our spiritual gifts (12:6-8)

The spiritual gifts that we receive are different. They are different in proportion as well as different in combinations. Each believer has at least one spiritual gift and ought to use this special grace from God to carry out good deeds through the power of the Spirit of God and to His glory. For other lists of spiritual gifts see 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4. Below Paul exhorts them to exercise their spiritual gift according to the grace given to them. Neglect is irresponsibility.

Spiritual gifts	<i>"Exercise accordingly..."</i>
Prophecy	According to the proportion of his faith
Service	In his serving
Teachers	In his teaching
Exhorts	In his exhortation
Gives	With liberality
Leads	With diligence
Mercy	With cheerfulness

Do you know what spiritual gift is yours? This is not an exhaustive list but it is a good starter list. Learn how God has especially graced your life so that you can uniquely serve Him and others. If you are just learning about these things, pray regularly about this, asking Him to teach you. Discover what you like doing. Try doing different things. You will find a greater joy and desire for some matters and then you can further discover your spiritual gifts from there. Remember, although these are gifts, we improve as we regularly use those spiritual gifts.