

# Walking Through Romans to Christ

## Romans chapter 12 “A Character distinctly different from the World”

### Righteousness by Faith Series

**Opening/REVIEW:** After just revealing that we by Faith are part of God’s Olive Tree (Israel) (ch.11), the Apostle goes on to reveal the **high calling of all who choose to follow Christ**. God desires a life for His people that is entirely different from the sinful lifestyle of those who belong to the world and are outside of Christ. Romans chapter 12 gives us an overview of instruction on what Christ has called the Christian to become through Him!

#### 1. Becoming a Living Sacrifice (v.1, 2) (Transformation by renewed mind)

- a. Our lives should be a “living sacrifice” for God. We are to give ourselves fully to Him. Our bodies, minds, and hearts must be fully His—to be kept pure and holy. We must not be “conformed” to the image of this world, but rather “transformed” by the “renewing of our minds” so that we may live that blessed life which is according to the perfect will of God.

#### 2. The Purpose of God’s Gifts to His people (v.3-8)

- a. (v.3) God gives talents and gifts to all for the purpose of serving and helping one another. (We did not choose our talents. God gives and God can take away, if need be). We should think “soberly” and not more highly of ourselves than we ought to.
- b. (v.4,5) Everyone has a specific gift or gifts that God has given to us. Not all things are to serve the same function. **Why didn’t God just give all the gifts to one person or every gift to every person?** (Certainly not all to only one lest he be God, and not all to everyone, lest we serve ourselves). **God teaches us interdependence, while the glory is to go to Him as the giver of “every good and perfect gift” (James 1:17).** We are to depend upon God first, and upon one another secondly. We must be connected together as God’s children. We are to be bound together in **“one body”** of the human family; A web and community that must work together always in love and humility, being “individually members of one another.”
- c. (v.6-8) Let us use the gifts that God has given to each of us in service to Him and to one another. We are responsible to use and to improve every single gift that God has entrusted into our hands.
- d. **The World is Completely opposite of God’s order:**
  - i. They’re always asking questions like, “Who’s the greatest?” (More gifts and talent, more self glory). The competition of men is always to outdo each other (Who’s the richest, best, most attractive, having the most talented kids, etc?)
  - ii. This is Satan’s order of things (**See Ezekiel 28:17; Isaiah 14:12-14**)
  - iii. Sadly, this Spirit of evil has been manifest in the church although there is no excuse for it (**Luke 22:24-27**). (Often this world is like a **“Talent show”**. It’s all about who can display themselves more, the best, the most gifted, and get the prize money. The gifts which God has given for loving, and humble service to one another, to uplift our fellow men, and to glorify God with, have been abused, and used for men to glorify themselves!) It’s okay to have talent from God. No problem. It’s okay to use that talent, in the fear of God, to bless, uplift, help, and cheer our fellow brothers and sisters in the human family. It’s just not okay to use those talents to glorify ourselves because actually they belong to

God, not to us. They were lent to us from God. We should be humble (**1 Corinthians 4:6,7**).

**3. Christian Character Traits—Living at its Best (v.9-16)**

- a. (v.9-10) *Hating evil, cling to what is good. Show love and affection to each other with brotherly love.*
- b. “Not slothful in business” (v.11, KJV) Christians are not to be lazy.
- c. “Persevering in prayer” (v.12) If you don’t *feel* like praying—pray!!! (You and I need it). This is when we need it the most. We **must keep open the channel of communication** with God. Communion with God should be a joy. The Devil is trying to intercept and break off the communication line (to leave us helpless on the battlefield).
- d. **Press your petitions before God.** Persistence pays (**Luke 18:1-8**). Don’t give up so easily. We need this quality in many lines of service (like Canvassing, etc.). The Gentile woman had this (Matthew 15:25-28). King Joash failed to have this before Elisha and was rebuked (2 Kings 13:18, 19).
- e. (v.14) What good is it if you’re nice to those who are nice to you? (anybody can do that)  
*Illustration:* I once lived in apartment, while in university, where I would always walk out to door frequently to head to my classes. The dogs next door however would always bark at me. How annoying!! Sometimes I just wished they’d fall over dead—but it occurred to me that I needed to love even those lousy ones who persecuted me. It’s not natural to do of course, but with God’s help “all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26). I decided to pray for those dogs who didn’t know any better and for myself as well. This, Jesus teaches us to do (Matthew 5:43-48).
- f. (v.13,15,16) Give to those in need, share feelings with those who rejoice or sorrow—empathize, loving one another. And “do not mind high things.” Set your mind on humility!

**4. Overcoming Evil with Good (v.17-21)**

- a. Some say, “I’ll get even with them. I’ll show them. You don’t walk on me...” (this is exactly what the world expects—hatred, strife, and self-justification)
- b. **Retaliation is not what God calls us to.** Christ was not that way. Although they spit upon Jesus, they mocked him, they flogged him, they taunted him, and they despised him, yet Christ prayed, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). Even as Christ’s follower Stephen was being stoned to death for his faith in Christ, he also said in prayer, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” (Acts 7:60). We are to pray for our enemies and even treat them with God’s love (ref. Matthew 5:43-48).
- c. (v.19,20) **Kindness convicts the heart more than an evil act.** (conscience will start to eat them)
- d. (v.21) Evil tries to drag you down to its level. We cannot fight evil with the same weapons and tactics as evil does though. God has “drawn us with loving-kindness” (Jeremiah 31:3), and we ought to do the same. **“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”** What can we expect from those who don’t know Christ, but unkind treatment? Let us pray for them and demonstrate the love of Christ which He has shown freely to us.

**Today’s Appeal:** Will you seek by prayer, surrender, and the grace of God to live a life pleasing to God? \_\_\_\_\_