

# Serving God

March 17, 2013 ~ Romans 12.1-2

## Love & Respect for Romans

- ❖ Martin Luther: “This letter is truly the most important piece in the New Testament. It is purest Gospel.”
- ❖ William Tyndale: “It is the principle and most excellent part of the New Testament .. the more it is studied, the easier it is to understand; the more it is chewed, the more pleasant it is .. the more it is searched, the more precious things are found....”
- ❖ John Calvin: “When one gains a knowledge of this Epistle, he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.”
- ❖ Gordon H. Clark: “.. it is the most profound of all the epistles, and perhaps the most important book in the Bible ..”
- ❖ Popular unattributed quote: “Romans will delight the greatest logician and captivate the mind of the genius, yet it will bring tears to the humblest soul and refreshment to the simplest mind. It will knock you down and then lift you up. It will strip you naked and then clothe you with eternal elegance..”
- ❖ We’re not beginning a sermon series on Romans ~ (*only 2 vss from Rom 12*)
  - ✧ We’re entering Paul’s presentation at a critical juncture ...
  - ✧ **Chapters 1 to 11** present the gospel in awesome splendor (*less than 7k words*)
  - ✧ **Read Romans 11.33-36** ~ “Oh, the depth of the riches .. glory forever. Amen.”
  - ✧ Now he turns to make application of it to his readers lives

## v1a ~ “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God”

- ❖ Paul has shared the gospel beautifully – from the heart to fellow believers
- ❖ His next statement is a plea – also from the heart – “What does he ask for?”
  - ✧ He pleads with them to sacrifice themselves in service to God . . .
  - ✧ By this time, he had been doing just that himself for nearly 20 years
    - ◆ “He knows that of which he speaks.”
  - ✧ This is the most important plea Paul makes in all of Scripture
    - ◆ All other requests & commands are based on us heeding this plea . . .
  - ✧ This plea falls only upon brethren . . unbelievers are unacceptable sacrifices
- ❖ Paul points us to the mercies of God as reason for this response . . .
- ❖ God has given all for us ~ Paul pleads for us to give our all for God . . .

**Xition:** Look at your handout if you haven’t yet . . .

## Paul's Plea is for Us to Do or Allow to be Done 5 Things

- ❖ I'll provide each word as we cover it . . .
- ❖ Handout text is top down ~ diagram is bottom up ~ last block blank
- ❖ We'll begin with the first ~ "sanctify"

### 1. SANCTIFY (Inward – must begin inside us – hearts and minds)

v1b ~ "that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God"

- ❖ **Sanctification** – the word – covers a broad spectrum of meaning
  - ✧ A common OT meaning is to "set apart" ~ ceremonial system required it
    - ◇ "Are you set apart unto God?" ~ "How do you do it?"
    - ◇ Peter said this in **1 Pet 3.14-15** ~ "But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.' <sup>15</sup> But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear .."
- ❖ Sanctification is a dedication / an internal purification / preparation
  - ✧ This process requires reading and praying / not necessarily a lot / but enough
  - ✧ Sanctification is inward but manifests itself outwardly . . .
  - ✧ !!!: Guard duty of the soul . . . Daily practices that if left undone imperil you
  - ✧ "Are there hedges we must plant & maintain to remain pure?"

### 2. CRUCIFY (Inward – sanctification identifies what must be crucified)

v2a ~ "And do not be conformed to this world"

- ❖ Part of our nature as humans is to conform ~ good & bad aspects
- ❖ Paul doesn't admonish us not to conform ~ but what not to conform to . . .
- ❖ We must "crucify" our fleshly desires to resist conforming to them
  - ✧ Conforming to them will occur unless we resist . . .
  - ✧ Q - John Owen: "He finds the current strong who swims against it – but he who goes along with it is insensible to it..." (xxx – verify quote)

**Xition:** The next words is our longest by far . . .

### 3. TRANSMOGRIFY (Inward – Holy Spirit’s work in us)

v2b ~ “but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”

- ❖ I always thought transmogrify was a pretend word / but it’s real . . . !
- ❖ Conformation is from outside in . . / Transformation is from inside out
  - ✧ Many people try and transform themselves ~ but focus on outward behavior
  - ✧ We participate in inward transformation / but the Holy Spirit “does” it
  - ✧ We addressed this 2 weeks ago in “Knowing God”

### 4. SATISFY (Outward – Our character & conduct “proves the former 3)

v2c ~ “that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

- ❖ Paul said in v1 that we owed God “reasonable service”... “What is reasonable?”
  - ✧ “Who defines what is reasonable?” | God does .. But how does he inform you?
    - ◇ Through prayers, studies, sermons, consciences and experiences
- ❖ Our message title is “Serving God” ~ That assumes we are servants
  - ✧ We are more like indentured servants / bondslaves (*God is master – not employer*)
  - ✧ **Read 1 Cor 6.19-20** ~ “.. do you not know that .. you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
- ❖ When you hear the word servant you think of someone who waits on others
  - ✧ Restaurant workers are referred to as “servers”
  - ✧ In aristocracies the bulk of citizens were/are serfs or servants
  - ✧ Servants are still hired by wealthy people to do useful things for them
    - ◇ Butler – male in charge of all male servants (*Mr. French of Family Affair*)
    - ◇ Housekeeper – female in charge of all female servants (*Alice of Brady Bunch*)
    - ◇ Victorian era servants: land steward, house steward, butler, housekeeper, chef, valet, footman, nurse, chamber maid, parlor maid, house maid, skullery maid, laundry maid, groom, stable boy, gardener, groundskeeper, gamekeeper, gatekeeper, governess
- ❖ **Read Acts 17.24-25** ~ “God, who made the world .. and all things.”
  - ✧ God does not need us ~ He does not benefit from our service
  - ✧ Q – J. Piper – “The Supremacy of God in Preaching” – “All God’s actions flow from fullness, not from deficiency. Most human actions are motivated by the need to make up some deficit or supply some lack in ourselves. God never takes steps to supply his insufficiency. He

performs no remedial exercises. As an absolutely sovereign and all-sufficient fountain, all his actions are the overflow of his fullness.”

◇ Q – A. W. Tozer: “It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is **why** he does it.”

## 5. GLORIFY (Outward – Our service and existence are intended to glorify God)

v2c ~ “that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

❖ Humans were created to serve ~ and we do serve God or His enemies

✧ **Deu 28.47-48a** ~ “Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, <sup>48</sup> therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you ..”

✧

**Xition:** The unfaithful but desperate also recognize their need of Him . . .

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,  
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,  
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,  
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.  
Amen \*pause\* Go in peace . . .

# Serving God

March 17, 2013

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Sermon Handout

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Romans 12.1-2

## Introduction ~

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2. C \_\_\_\_\_ ~

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3. T \_\_\_\_\_ ~

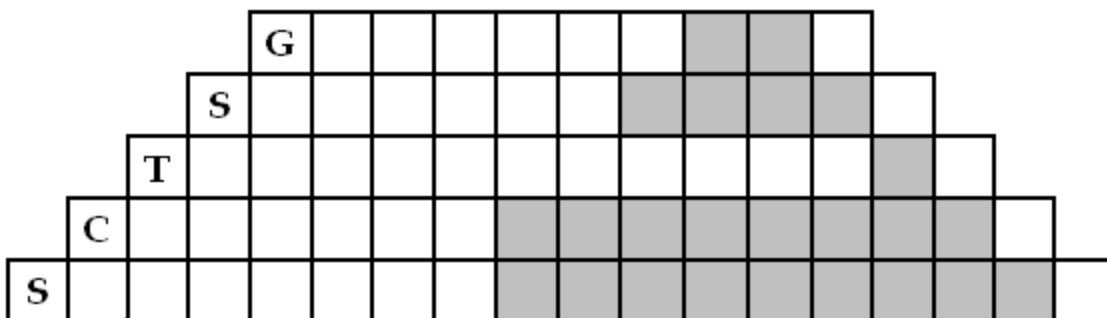
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4. S \_\_\_\_\_ ~

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5. G \_\_\_\_\_ ~

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# Romans Doxology

by John G. Elliot

Oh, the depth of the riches, the wisdom of God  
How unsearchable are His ways.  
How profound are his judgments,  
so high above our thoughts,  
And His pathways no man can trace.

## **REFRAIN**

For from Him and through Him,  
And to Him are all things!  
To Him be glory forevermore!  
To Him be glory forever!  
Amen! Amen! Amen!

Oh, the depth of the riches, the wisdom of God  
How magnificent are His ways.  
Who has been His advisor  
And who has counseled Him,  
All He gives us who can repay?

Oh the depths of the riches, the wisdom of God  
How immeasurable is His grace!  
How unfailing His kindness,  
so far removed His wrath,  
And His mercies are new each day!