



DAILY DEVOTIONS IN

ROMANS 12

Romans 12...

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

⁹Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” ²⁰To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 12:1–21.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

At the beginning of each session, read all of Romans 12.

At the end of that, say this simple prayer:

God, you know me. Use these verses to make me more like Jesus. Amen.

Then focus by reading the verse(s) of the day and the reflection below it.

After that answer the questions.

Remember, be honest; this is between you and God.

Romans 12:1-2

I APPEAL TO YOU THEREFORE, BROTHERS, BY THE MERCIES OF GOD, TO PRESENT YOUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY AND ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, WHICH IS YOUR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP. DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWAL OF YOUR MIND, THAT BY TESTING YOU MAY DISCERN WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD, WHAT IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT.

Up to this point in the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul has told us about our great salvation:

3:23-24 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

8:1-2 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

10:13 13 For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Then Paul says, “THEREFORE.” God has shown us mercy—saving us from sins when we did not deserve it—therefore, offer your lives as a living sacrifice. If you’re unfamiliar with the Old Testament, in the book of Leviticus, God gives specific instructions for how to worship Him: through the sacrifice of animals, grains and wine. The most expensive and valuable would be the

blood of animals. Paul is borrowing this image: Sacrifice yourself. Paul is not telling you LITERALLY to spill your blood and burn your body, but verse 2 explains the metaphor: live your life as if you have completely dedicated your life and your body to God. He says do not be shaped by this world but be changed by a new way of thinking. What is that way of thinking? It is everything he has been explaining about our salvation. If we come to understand all that God has done for us, it will change the way that we think about ourselves, and our lives. The heart of being a LIVING SACRIFICE is that we stop living our lives for ourselves and instead we do what God wants us to do. What does God want you to do with your life? Look at the end of verse 2. What is GOOD and PLEASING to Him. God’s will for your life is not about what house you will buy, what person you will marry, or what job you will have. God’s will for your life is that you would live as if your life belonged entirely to Him.

Monday, December 27

QUESTIONS:

Are you really willing to give Jesus every part of your life? Why or why not?

Up to this point in your life, what are you holding back?

What is different between “knowing” what God wants you to do and “doing” what God wants you to do? In what scenarios in the past week have you known what to do and NOT done it?

What could be different between a church who KNOWS what God wants, and a church that DOES what God wants?

Romans 12:3

FOR BY THE GRACE GIVEN TO ME I SAY TO EVERYONE AMONG YOU NOT TO THINK OF HIMSELF MORE HIGHLY THAN HE OUGHT TO THINK, BUT TO THINK WITH SOBER JUDGMENT, EACH ACCORDING TO THE MEASURE OF FAITH THAT GOD HAS ASSIGNED.

Do not think you are better than you are. This is a hard command. It is based on the verses before it. If we are all striving to be a living sacrifice, then there is no room for me to think TOO highly of myself. If you are not following Jesus, then this verse makes no sense. Going back to verse 1, the way that the world thinks is “I AM THE BEST.” We are told that we are special and perfect the way we are. In contrast, if we seek to give our lives to Jesus, we will continually search for areas where we have not reached perfection nor given complete control to Jesus.

This is HUMILITY. Humility is not the same thing as self-degradation; it is not the opposite of self-esteem. Humility is choosing to put the needs of others before yourself. This is made possible by a deep sense of self-worth founded in an identity in Christ. Humility isn’t thinking less of myself; it is thinking of myself less often.

Tuesday, December 28

QUESTIONS:

Why is it so easy to think too much of myself?

What am I like when I think more highly of myself than I ought to?

What are the dangers of being proud?

What do you think Paul means when he says, “Decide what you really are by the amount of faith God has given you?”

How can you deepen your identity in faith so that you can be humbler? How will that impact your daily life?

Romans 12:4-8

FOR AS IN ONE BODY WE HAVE MANY MEMBERS, AND THE MEMBERS DO NOT ALL HAVE THE SAME FUNCTION, SO WE, THOUGH MANY, ARE ONE BODY IN CHRIST, AND INDIVIDUALLY MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER. HAVING GIFTS THAT DIFFER ACCORDING TO THE GRACE GIVEN TO US, LET US USE THEM: IF PROPHECY, IN PROPORTION TO OUR FAITH; IF SERVICE, IN OUR SERVING; THE ONE WHO TEACHES, IN HIS TEACHING; THE ONE WHO EXHORTS, IN HIS EXHORTATION; THE ONE WHO CONTRIBUTES, IN GENEROSITY; THE ONE WHO LEADS, WITH ZEAL; THE ONE WHO DOES ACTS OF MERCY, WITH CHEERFULNESS.

We need each other. We need each other to be better. God did not intend for us to try to figure out how to be more like Jesus on our own. He gave us one another. This group of Christians are called *The Church*, and we exist to bring glory to Christ together. Any member of a church agrees to two things. First, they will use their gifts to build up the faith of other believers; second, they will allow other believers to build them up. It is wrong for a Christian to think of himself or herself as separate from the church or to view the church as a resource, a service, or a program. The church is a group of people that we belong to if we are believers in Jesus. Each of us has different gifts, and all of us are needed to accomplish our mission of caring for one another’s needs.

Wednesday, December 29

QUESTIONS:

In what ways do you isolate yourself from the church? How often do think of your faith as just between you and Jesus?

What gifts (or talents) do you have?

Which gifts are you not currently using to help other Christians become better followers of Jesus? Why?

How could you use those gifts to benefit Calvary?

Romans 12:9

LET LOVE BE GENUINE. ABHOR WHAT IS EVIL; HOLD FAST TO WHAT IS GOOD.

Real Love is a wonderful, powerful, and incredibly rare thing. It is what sets us apart as Christians. The heart of our “religion” is LOVE God and LOVE others. Real love has no ulterior motives; it is not seeking to gain anything from anyone else. It is found when a person gives up themselves for one another. This is seen most clearly in Jesus Christ giving up Himself for us. The word CHRISTIAN means “little Christ.” To follow Christ, I must desire to show this kind of love in every area of my life. I should look for opportunities to give up myself for the benefit of others. This is only possible when I have experienced this kind of love by embracing what Jesus has done for me.

Hating what is evil and loving what is good goes back to verse 2: We need to have a transformed mind, so that we can know what is good and pleasing to God. It seems obvious that we should dislike evil things and like good things, but we sometimes fail to see the evil that is within us (the sin nature that is fighting to have its way). Our sin keeps us from being able to love one another. In order to love one another we need to root out every bit of evil in our own souls.

Thursday, December 30

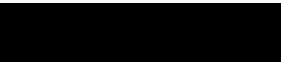
QUESTIONS:

When have you experienced REAL LOVE from another person (besides Jesus)?

When have you been nice to someone else to get something from them or benefit from them in some way?

How could our church be hurt if we do not have genuine love for one another?

What opportunities do you have TODAY to give up yourself for the benefit of others?



Romans 12:10-11

LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITH BROTHERLY AFFECTION. OUTDO ONE ANOTHER IN SHOWING HONOR. DO NOT BE SLOTHFUL IN ZEAL, BE FERVENT IN SPIRIT, SERVE THE LORD.

When I (Zach) was young, my brothers and I did not have a lot of love for each other. As we have grown older, our love for one another has grown. This verse suggests we should love one another like a good family. A good family loves one another no matter what, accepts one another where they are, and seeks to improve together. The second statement in these verses is powerful: “Outdo one another in showing honor.” This is like the reversal of sibling rivalry. Rather than competing for attention or power, compete in being as kind as possible to one another. Speak well of one another, complement one another, and work for one another.

In an environment like this one, we could think that Paul is allowing us to be lazy. By everyone being nice to each other, what motivation is there to try hard? But Paul corrects this, if we see our work as if we were serving God directly, we should work as hard as possible.

Friday, December 31

QUESTIONS:

In what areas of your life are you competitive?

What gives you a desire to WIN in those areas of life?

What would motivate a person to not need to WIN and instead to “compete” in showing honor?

What will happen to our church if we “compete” in showing kindness?



Romans 12:12-13

REJOICE IN HOPE, BE PATIENT IN TRIBULATION, BE CONSTANT IN PRAYER.
CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEEDS OF THE SAINTS AND SEEK TO SHOW HOSPITALITY.

Why do you need hope? Hope is the belief that things will change for the better. This implies that something NEEDS to change. What’s wrong with the world that needs to change? The answer is in verse 12: “Be patient WHEN TROUBLE COMES.” Our world is broken. Sin broke it, so there *will* be difficult things that happen in our lives. Jesus died for our sins, and this began the renewing of creation. It is our hope in Jesus that helps us to endure any hardship especially because we always have access to Him through prayer. The commands that follow in verses 12 and 13 are the natural outpouring of our hope. Because we have hope and life is hard, share with God’s people and be hospitable to strangers.

Monday, January 3

QUESTIONS:

What are some hard things that have happened in the past two years?

How will HOPE in Jesus change your experience of those hardships?

What will remind you to pray to Jesus in those hard moments?

How can we share with those who need help?

Romans 12:14, 17

BLESS THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU; BLESS AND DO NOT CURSE THEM.

REPAY NO ONE EVIL FOR EVIL, BUT GIVE THOUGHT TO DO WHAT IS HONORABLE IN THE SIGHT OF ALL.

What is contained in these verses seems so obvious. Anyone who wants to be a good person knows this basic rule: Be kind, even to people who are mean. But, we aren't kind. We need more than just the basic rule; we need a reason to be kind. That reason is JESUS. Jesus endured suffering, torture, and death because of our sin. He took our sin on Himself and bore the punishment for sin. If you are going to call yourself a Christian, you must be ready to do the same--to take other people's sin against you and forgive it even when it costs you much. Most often, forgiveness costs us pride. Someone is mean to us, and we are kind back. Even What we want to do is get even, but instead we can forgive because we have been forgiven.

Tuesday, January 4

QUESTIONS:

When is the last time someone made you angry? What did they do to you or say to you?

Was it your sin or theirs that made you angry?

Have you forgiven the person who hurt you? Why or why not?

How will you be able to practice this attitude of forgiveness in your daily life?



Romans 12:15-16

REJOICE WITH THOSE WHO REJOICE, WEEP WITH THOSE WHO WEEP. LIVE IN HARMONY WITH ONE ANOTHER. DO NOT BE HAUGHTY, BUT ASSOCIATE WITH THE LOWLY. NEVER BE WISE IN YOUR OWN SIGHT.

These verses are beautiful. Someone who fully lived these verses would have a peaceful and happy life. Verse 15 is a call to true empathy, to embrace one another, to celebrate and mourn together. Empathy takes energy, strength, and vulnerability. It is entering into someone else’s emotions and experiencing those emotions with them. Verse 16 calls us away from pride and encourages us to befriend even those who seem unimportant and to live in harmony. As with previous verses, most people would agree this is the kind of person they want to be, but few try to practice these principles. Why? Because they are costly, they are time consuming, and they requires us to give up our own ambitions.

Wednesday, January 5

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think these virtues are so rarely found in people?

What would our church be like if each person decided to pursue these virtues?

Which one seems to be the hardest for you?

Would you really want to be someone like this? What will you have to give up?

Romans 12:18

IF POSSIBLE, SO FAR AS IT DEPENDS ON YOU, LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL.

Not everyone will desire to live at peace with you. If you represent Jesus and stand for biblical principles, then people will disagree and be unhappy with you. If we claim the Gospel is true, this will lead to conflict. But, many Christians confuse their own agendas, their own pride, and their own way of life with the Gospel and believe that they have a right to pick fights with those who do not believe in the Gospel. They believe that they are not at fault for offending others with the WAY they talk about Jesus. They are willingly and openly combative. This verse suggests this is wrong. In everything, we should do all that we can to not offend others. We should love and forgive those who wrong us. We cannot control how others react, but we should control how we respond. So, as it is up to you, live a life of forgiveness, love, and peace.

Thursday, January 6

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think many Christians present their views in an aggressive way?

Who are people in your life that you are regularly in conflict with?

What have you done to be at peace with them? Have you asked forgiveness for your fault in the relationship? Have you tried to understand them? What must YOU do?

What will happen in our church if we do not adopt this teaching?

Romans 12:19-21

BELOVED, NEVER AVENGE YOURSELVES, BUT LEAVE IT TO THE WRATH OF GOD, FOR IT IS WRITTEN, “VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY, SAYS THE LORD.” TO THE CONTRARY, “IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM; IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM SOMETHING TO DRINK; FOR BY SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD.” DO NOT BE OVERCOME BY EVIL, BUT OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD.

Verse 21 sums up everything that Paul has said in this chapter; defeat evil by doing good. This reflects the Gospel: Jesus defeated sin and death by doing the BEST good. He sacrificed Himself in an act of obedience to God. This is what we are seeking to do in our church; we are seeking to defeat evil by doing good. We should do good by bringing restoration and renewal to people’s lives. This reflects the restoration and renewal that we look forward to at Christ’s second coming. We do this so that we might proclaim His first coming and the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ. If our hearts are not ready, if we have not given our lives to Jesus Christ and are not ready to follow Him, we will have nothing to offer others.

Friday, January 7

QUESTIONS:

Have you really given your life to Jesus, placing your life on the metaphorical altar as a living sacrifice? If not, what is stopping you? If yes, what will keep you from crawling off that altar?

What do you want to see Jesus change in your heart?

What sense of direction do you hope to gain?

How do you need to be transformed?



A DEVOTIONAL WRITTEN FOR

CALVARY
BAPTIST CHURCH