

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia
Bible Class Instructor: *Dr. Geof W. Jackson, Board Member*

ROMANS LESSON 76 PART ONE: OUR LOGICAL RESPONSE

ROM 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. ² 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.*

As we covered in our lesson last week, Paul opens this "Practical Christianity" section of his **LETTER TO THE ROMANS** by appealing to them on the basis of the **"Mercies of God"** that they have received. I believe it is really significant that Paul uses that phrase to draw together ALL the things which Believers have received by God's grace of salvation: **JUSTIFICATION; PEACE; RESTORATION; RECONCILIATION; SANCTIFICATION; GLORIFICATION...** NOW, what are we to do about that? It ALL was given "freely and by grace" - it cost us nothing! Our access to these "Mercies of God" was to simply "believe."

Paul tells us there is a **"LOGICAL RESPONSE"** to this incredible gift: *"To offer ourselves as 'Living Sacrifices' to the God of our salvation."* This becomes the key to all that is presented in **CHAPTERS 12-16**.

A LIVING SACRIFICE

Vs 1c *"...to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God..."*

One of the most amazing things about the Salvation we have received is the many ways scripture declares it to us. It is described as **"the Power of God"**; It is a demonstration of **"God's Righteousness"**; It is **"given by grace"**; It is a **"free gift"**; it **"freely given"**; it the realization of **"His peace"** and **"His love overflowing into our hearts."** In other words: WE didn't have anything to do with it! He did it through His Son, Our Savior Jesus Christ. And our **FIRST** response to all of that is, **"I BELIEVE..."**

Having received this great gift, God waits for us to **"present our lives for service."**

➤ OUR PRESENTATION

Our Christian life doesn't end with "believing". As we discussed in our last Session, we are created **"for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."** We have been saved to LIVE for God IN this world. I love the quotation in Hebrews from Isaiah:

HEB 2:13 *"Behold I and the children God has given me."*

The more complete statement in Isaiah gives more detail:

ISAIAH 8:18 *"Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion."*

In both cases the reference is NOT just about Jesus. It is about Jesus AND the children God has given Him. The Isaiah reference carries the thought to it's conclusion:

JUST AS Jesus came to the earth to do "signs and wonders" that would demonstrate the compassion and love of God for humanity... SO ALSO, we have been given to Jesus to do the same "good works" and make God known through our lives.

The beautiful thing about this is that whatever God has "given us to do" is not based upon our power or ability. We draw from the grace, the gifting, the power of God to **"perform"** these good works. However, they are NOT automatic. They DON'T just happen. WE must **"present ourselves..."**

- The word **“present”** was used consistently in the Greek OT [SEPTUAGINT] as a technical term for the action of the Priest bringing an offering and laying it upon the Altar.
- It carries the idea of **“giving up to God”** that which you have in your hands – what YOU have control over.
- It is used in a similar sense in **ROM 6:13**.
*Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but **present yourselves to God** as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.*
- This is a CONSCIOUS CHOICE that is made... and it is often NOT easy...
Even though we have been given the “grace, the power” to do so.

ROMANS LESSON 76 PART TWO: OUR LOGICAL RESPONSE

➤ OUR “BODIES”

Notice **“what”** we are to present... our **“bodies”**. Although there are many ways that “body” is used in the NT, here the context would dictate that Paul is referring to the **“whole life”** of the Believer.

In Chapter 6 we covered the issue of sanctification, and the thought here is similar. But Paul is really emphasizing the overall commitment of the Believer to “act” for God.

- It is more than **“spiritual”** service – dedication of our **“inner man”** to the Lord...
- It is more than **“soulish”** service – committing our thoughts, desires, and will to God...
- It is more than **“physical”** service - offering the service of our bodies to **“work”** for the Lord.
- It is ALL of those... and more.
- All of the issues Paul will address in **CHAPTERS 12-16** fit into this context of **“Presenting our bodies...”**

➤ LIVING SACRIFICE

The familiar quote: **“The problem with a living sacrifice is that it keeps crawling off the altar.”**
Yes... that’s good but it doesn’t really cover the fulness of what Paul is saying.

- The idea of **“Living”** is not just in contrast to **“dead.”**
- Sacrifices are supposed to be dead... their life was taken as a payment of trespass.
- But God did not want YOU dead... From the beginning God had made the plan for a substitute:
 - The Lamb slain ...
***1 PETER 1:19-20** “...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” He indeed was **foreordained before the foundation of the world**, but was manifest in these last times for you...”*
 - The **“skins”** that covered the nakedness of Adam and Eve ...
 - The **“RAM caught in the thicket”** ...
 - The **PASSOVER LAMB** ...
 - The **2-Goats of THE DAY OF ATONEMENT** ...
 - The **“LAMB OF GOD”** ...
 - The **MESSIAH** ...
- He wants us ALIVE... Active... Animated...
- **Empowered** by His Grace... **Anointed** by His Spirit... **Yielded** to His Voice

1 PETER 4:10-11 *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.¹¹ If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

➤ **HOLY AND ACCEPTABLE**

- **Holiness** is not in clothes or appearance... it means **“separated – distinct - exclusive”**
- Our Holiness is shown to BOTH God & Man
 - **To God** we are separated **UNTO** Him in the profession of our life
 - **To Man** we are separated **FROM** the world to live a life of distinction from their ways and desires
- Acceptable is from the Gk word **“Euarestos”** – **good pleasing – to make that which pleases another the thing that pleases us...**
- We should not offer our life **“grudgingly”** - looking back at what we lost NOR looking forward to what we will miss
- IF we are to please God with the offering of our Life **It MUST also be pleasing to US...**

OUR LOGICAL RESPONSE

ROM 12:1D *“...which is your spiritual worship.*

Having considered ALL that Christ has done FOR us and given TO us, Paul admonishes the Believers to respond in an appropriate manner. This is NOT forced... NOR does God offer an incentive to do so... It is LOGICAL!

- **Spiritual** – There is really no reason to translate this word as **“spiritual”** – it has no connection to that word **“Pneumatikos”**
 - The word actually come from the same root as **“Logos”** – **having reference to what has been “recorded” or written**
 - **“Logikos”** – **to be reasonable – to consider what has been presented and reach a determined response that is in proper balance...**
 - **We would therefore say it is “Logical”** – credible / sensible / reasonable
- **Worship** – **this word is difficult to translate with one just word –**
- It is **“Latreia”** – **Service that is done AS worship... OR “the worship OF serving”**
- It was especially used in reference to the priests and attendants at the temples – their entire life was given to worship through their service
 - **They didn’t just Worship...**
 - **They didn’t just Serve...**
- **Others may come to visit or to offer sacrifices...**
- **They weren’t just “janitors” or “butchers”**
- That was not **“Latreia”**

A more complete and expanded translation of this last phrase would be:

“Which is the Logical response of a Worshipful Service to God”