



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study:

CONSECRATION AND NON-CONFORMITY TO THIS WORLD Romans 12:1,2

Romans chapter 12 opens with an appeal to believers. ***“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service”***. God requires holiness in the believer’s life, service and worship. The message on consecration and non-conformity to the world is only for believers who are justified. Generally, the epistle to the Romans talks about the believer’s justification by faith. It reveals our salvation and reconciliation with God through His grace.

In the build up to the message on consecration and non-conformity to the world, chapters 1, 2 and 3 of Romans discuss the guilt and condemnation of both the Jews and Gentiles; chapters 4 and 5 reveal the redemption of both Jews and Gentiles only by faith in Christ. Chapter 6 talks about our sanctification: the crucifixion and removal of the adamic nature of sin from the believer’s heart. While chapter 7 highlights the wretched and helpless state of sinners, chapter 8 shows the provision of forgiveness through Christ’s death and the possibility of a new life in the Spirit. Chapters 9, 10 and 11, reveal how the Jews who are children of the covenant are at present under dispensational blindness. While the Jews are blind to the light of the gospel now, the Gentiles receive the light of the gospel and enjoy all the privileges of redemption through Christ. This redemption puts on us, as beneficiaries, the responsibility to consecrate our lives to Him and refuse any tendency to conform to the world.

BLAMELESS AND ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE UNTO THE LORD

Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; 3:16,17; Psalm 50:5; 1 Timothy 5:1,2,22.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY, ACCEPTABLE UNTO GOD...” Apostle Paul addresses ***“brethren”***, people who are already saved from their sins. Called out of the world, they are now reconciled to God. Thus, their ambition and desire are in contrast with the world; their goal in life is to obey and please the Lord. The ***“mercies”*** that brings salvation, sanctification, healing, deliverance and makes us sons and daughters in the Kingdom should make us to be consecrated to the Lord. Some professing Christians in our society erroneously believe that God has nothing to do with their bodies, as He is only concerned about their soul and spirit. Thus, they do all sorts of abominable things with their bodies contrary to the admonition for us to present our bodies a blameless and acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. But the Lord will not accept any sacrifice that is contaminated with disobedience.

Why do we need to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to the Lord? ***“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”***. Christ, having paid the ultimate price for our redemption, the believer no more has power over his body. Bought and brought into the Kingdom by Christ’s Blood, he must ***“glorify God”***, not self, man or the world, in his body. The body he offers to the Lord to reside in as His temple must be pure. The Lord can make a sinner a saint while he is still here on earth contrary to the erroneous belief of false teachers. This He does by cleansing the sinner with the Blood of Jesus Christ and giving him the power to live above sin. Freed from sin, his new life in Christ affects his disposition, lifestyle, language, dressing, interaction with others, etc. The Lord demands purity and non-conformity with the world.

BLESSED AND ABSOLUTE SURRENDER UNTO THE LORD

Romans 12:1,2; 2 Samuel 15:15; 1 Kings 20:4.

As a representative of Christ, Apostle Paul appeals to believers to ***“present [their] bodies a living sacrifice... unto God”***. Presenting our bodies to the Lord means to consecrate and surrender our lives to Him. Satan will not be happy whenever we want to offer our time, talent, treasure, life, skill, ability, etc. to the Lord. When Mary anointed the feet of our Lord with a very costly ointment of spikenard, Judas Iscariot was not happy. As we lay our lives on the altar of service, we should not be distracted by Satan and his human agents but be firm in our decision to serve Him. A songwriter succinctly put it thus: *I have decided to follow Jesus... No turning back, No turning back! Though no one joins me, still I will follow... No turning back, No turning back! The world behind me, the Cross before me... No turning back, No turning back!* The world will try to entice us to conform to its system and standard; it will try to distract us from preaching the gospel by engaging us with sports, games, politics, traditions, etc., but we must be

watchful and diligent in our commitment to please the Lord who owns our body, soul and spirit. If we accept Christ as our Saviour, we must obey all His commands and surrender to Him without reservation.

BIBLICAL AND APPROVED SERVICE UNTO THE LORD

Romans 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15; John 12:24-26; Philippians 2:5-8; 3:7-10; Matthew 6:24; John 13:13,15.

Believers need to appreciate Christ's love and sacrifice by willingly rendering acceptable service to Him. Our service will be acceptable if we are not conformed to the world in fashion, politics, duplicity, deception and diplomacy. For our service to be fruitful and rewarded in time and eternity, it must be selfless. Seeking pleasure and men's praise will render our labour and service to the Lord worthless. But when we seek His glory and exaltation in everything we do, the Lord will surely reward us. We must be as selfless and faithful in our commitment to serving God as Christ, our Lord did. "***Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus***". And like Apostle Paul, we should always "***count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord***". If we remain unwavering in loyalty and consecration in serving the Lord till the end, He will surely reward us.

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