

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercies, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual act of worship. (NIV)

Intro: Written by the apostle Paul from Corinth on his third missionary journey. Written to the Christian believers in Rome, that included both Jews and Gentiles. At that time there were no apostles in Rome and Paul's letter would likely have been the first piece of Christian literature they would have had and, therefore, was an important tool for the early church, presenting strong doctrines of Christian faith.

Question: Have you ever put something together without instructions? (think legos or puzzle) We have in our hands this awesome, complete, instruction manual God has provided for us. We need to regularly ask ourselves if we are truly valuing, and treasuring, immersing ourselves in the entirety God's word.

Chapter 12 follows eleven chapters of strong theology, which presented many fundamentals of faith including sin, forgiveness and the freedom from sin. Now Paul begins to explain in the next four chapters what this should look like in the lives of believers; practical guidelines beginning with our personal response to God's great work in us. **A Call to action!**

Urge: Beseech, exhort, encourage, call near, invite, alongside. It is strong yet gentle. Jesus used this word to describe the Holy Spirit as comforter. John 14:16, 26, and means to come alongside to help. We have a personal responsibility as Paul urges us to make a choice to live our lives for God. Paul used urge as a call to action many times in his letters. One example...

Eph 4:1 I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

Read Romans 11:33-36. Emphasis on the benevolence of God apart from merit.

Therefore: Connected to "in view of God's mercies" and the riches of mercies called out by the previous eleven chapters, but directly follows Paul's doxology, specifically **Romans 11:36** "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever, Amen".

In view of God's mercies: Because of all the wonderful unmerited favor we have received from God including faith, salvation, peace and freedom from sin, spelled out in the previous eleven chapters.

A few examples of God's mercies:

Romans 1:5 through whom (Jesus Christ) we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake.

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

Romans 5:5b ... because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Romans 6:6-7 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin, for he who has died is freed from sin.

1Pet 2:10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

To offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God: Because of all this our response is to offer our bodies. Your body: physical, hands, eyes, mouth, feet, but also your entire being, whole self, mind body and spirit. Living as opposed to former sacrifices given which the church would have understood, and living in the sense of alive and also ongoing. Holy (set apart and righteous) and pleasing to God as any sacrifice should be – unblemished, without defect.

The only rational response of our soul is complete sacrificial offering of self as instruments of righteousness to God.

Romans 6:13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life: and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. (NIV)

Romans 6:16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? (ESV)

Romans 6:19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

1Cor 6:20 for you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

1 Pet 2:5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

What are you doing today to “offer your body”? Are you prepared to sacrifice your own desires to serve God? What are you doing to present yourself “Holy and pleasing”? In what ways are you actively pursuing righteousness? Think specifically.

Spiritual act of worship: KJV “reasonable service” reasonable, rational, divine service.
Ministration of service to God under Levitical law.

Worship: (Webster’s) the act of showing respect and love for God, especially by praying with likeminded people; excessive admiration.

Have you ever owed somebody money and forgot to pay them back, but remembered at some other time in the future? We have a strong Desire to rectify the debt. How much more should we desire to give our all to God?

Ps 116:12 How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me. What shall I return to the Lord for all his goodness to me? (NIV) render (ESV)

What can you do to repay God?

If we remember the mercies of God we should be compelled to give him what we have to give him – nothing but our very lives. To do that, we need a good memory. Remember where you came from. Remember where you’re going. Remember who made your life possible and to whom you owe everything.

Eph 2:4-10 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Hebrews 13:15-16 Through him, then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶ Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Summary: Keeping in mind all that God has done in the life of every believer, there is no other acceptable response of each and every Christian than a completely, enthusiastically offering up our lives daily in obedience to God.