

THE BODY: INSTRUMENT OF THE SPIRIT (4)

Introduction: Read Romans 12:1-2. The book of Romans up to chapter 12 is easily divided thusly: (a) Introduction (1:1-17), (b) Doctrinal Section (1:18—8:39); (c) The problem of the Rejection of Israel (9:1—11:36, which also in a sense is doctrinal, but on a different subject).

1. Romans 12 marks the 4th great division of the epistle. The word “therefore” connects the practical exhortations of life with those doctrinal discourses.
 - a. Our very first obligation is to present our bodies as living sacrifices.
 - b. Why? Our bodies are the material part in which our spirits are housed.
 - c. Our bodies express outwardly what our spirits profess inwardly. When the two do not agree, we have the cause of unbelief (2:1-4, 21-24).
2. We have seen there is an ongoing struggle between our bodies & our spirits (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Indeed our spirit within us has responsibility to control the impulses of the flesh (Rom. 6:12-14). Today’s scripture tells why.

D. OUR BODIES ARE TO BE “LIVING SACRIFICES.”

1. In light of God’s indescribable mercy (see 11:30-32), Paul strongly exhorts saints to present their bodies a living sacrifice.
 - a. The word “present” (parastēsai) means “place beside, put at someone’s disposal” and in this context to offer oneself to the disposal of God.
 - b. “Bodies” refers to the material part of men which houses their spirits. The book of Romans places much emphasis upon our physical bodies: (1) Gentiles dishonored their bodies (1:24-27); (2) the “body of sin” was done away at baptism (6:3-7); (3) sin no more reigns in my mortal body (6:12); (4) Jews became dead through the law through Christ’s body (7:4); (5) see also: 7:24; 8:10-11, 13, 23. Immediately after 12:2 Paul turns from the physical body to Christ’s spiritual body (church).
 - c. Our bodies, then, are to be “*a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God*” as they are consecrated (set apart) & reserved for God’s service.
 - d. Thus our bodies are to be “acceptable” (well-pleasing) to God.
2. The offering of our bodies to God is “reasonable” (*logikēn*) service. That service that we offer to God grows out of the rational part of man (heart, spirit) and is the logical thing to do in light of what God has done in the expression of His compassions and mercies (see: 12:1a).
3. Every transformation in conduct comes from renewing the mind (12:2).
 - a. Worshipers under the Law did not have that ability (7:24-25).
 - b. Those in Christ have overcome the body of sin by His Spirit (8:1, 9-11)

Conclusion: Have you presented your body to God as a holy sacrifice? Have you presented to God your spiritual service? Why do you put off your obedience from the heart (Rom. 6:3-5, 16-18)?

Romans 12:1-2 [SCRIPTURE READING] 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 2:1-4 1 Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. 3 And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Romans 2:21-24 21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

Roman 11:30-32 30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, 31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

Romans 7:24-25 24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 I thank God -- through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:9-11 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 6:3-5 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Romans 6:16-18 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.