

AN APPROPRIATE RESPONSE ROMANS 12:1-2

"The just shall live by faith"–the gospel,
good news from God to man.

Power of God which produces salvation.

Rom: from creation to present, *the only way anyone
has ever come to God is by faith.*

Paul began by showing *necessity of salvation by faith.*

Religious or pagan, ALL sin => ALL deserve to die.

While we were in that condition,

God showed His love for us by sending His Son to die.

When we *trust Christ* & His finished work,

God declares us righteous. *That's the Gospel.*

APPLICATION OF GOSPEL 12-15:13 12:1 *"Therefore, I
urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as
living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God–this is your spiritual act
of worship."*

"Therefore" ties doctrine to practical implications."

[What's he looking back to as basis for these exhortations?]

*"Therefore" looks back to 11:30-32 => **God's mercy.***

*"You who were at one time disobedient to God have now received
mercy... ³²For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that
he may have mercy on them all."*

Draws focus back to ALL he says about **salvation by faith**

Since God's done so much for us–people who don't
deserve it!–**we should respond appropriately.**

How should we respond to God's love?

We don't serve to earn God's favor; we've already received favor; **that motivates us to serve Him in gratitude.**

1-2 => TWO ways we should respond to God's mercy:

["Offer" refers to initial, once-for-all response.

What initial commitment does he want us to make?

What will that look like in daily life?]

We respond to God's love by presenting our life as a sacrifice to God 12:1 "Therefore, I urge

you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy & pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."

When we realize gift God offers, we want to serve Him.

Sacrifice based on God's MERCY to us

God couldn't show mercy to people who are worthy.

Only disobedient people receive mercy.

That's how we ALL come to God!

Because of God's mercy, we respond appropriately:

Sacrifice which is living

God doesn't ask for dead animal sacrifices; He wants our life

NOT TO DIE; BUT TO LIVE FOR HIM

Sacrifice which is holy –*unblemished* offerings

Sacrifice acceptable to God—pleases Him

Sacrifice which is logical act of worship

Combines 2 ideas: "logical" => reasoned response
with (temple-related) "service"

Orig.=>work for hire>in temple, "service to gods"> worship

Appropriate way to "serve gods" => esp. *the true God!*

Worship *isn't* offering God ritual—going through motions!

Real worship involves offering our life to Him

Worship isn't what we do in church on Sunday a.m.

Worship isn't about *where* we are

Authentic worship is logical response to God's mercy

—offering *our self* to Him

We're called to place **all** we are on altar—to offer *ourselves* as a living, holy, sacrifice—to please Him!

Definitive decision—affects perspective for life!

Life orientation: "*I want God's will more than anything!*"

Nothing less is worthy of what Christ has done for us!

That commitment may cost us our life—it has for many in Sudan, China or N. Korea.

For most of *US*, it never comes to that—series of baby steps.

"I'm willing to give *big* to God. "Put \$1,000 in offering."

What are we going to do with quarter in our pocket now?!

Initial dedication doesn't resolve all issues forever!

Daily circumstances require moment-by-moment decisions.

"Problem with *living* sacrifices: keep crawling off altar!"

That's why=>2nd aspect to logical response to God's mercy:

[What's our continual, ongoing response?

How does that relate to our initial commitment?

What will that look like in our daily life?]

WE RESPOND BY DAILY SURRENDER TO HIS WILL

2 “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test & approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing & perfect will.”

Don’t imitate the lifestyle of this world.

Phillips: “Don’t let the world ... squeeze you into its mold, but let God remold your minds from within ...”

What pressures attempt to squeeze us into world’s mold?

Friends, television, internet, music we listen to...?

By 21, we’re bombarded by more than 300,000 digital messages telling us living for self is #1 goal in life.

Paul calls for *different* lifestyle, because of what God has done. Our lifestyle shouldn't be same as people who don't know Christ.

Living for self goes from one extreme to another.

“Cross *ME* on highway, I’ll shoot you down!”

“If I just earn enough money, I’ll be happy.”

“Success is path to fame, wealth, pleasure, and power.”

Unless we *think* differently, we buy world’s philosophy!

Instead of being conformed, be transformed.

Let God CHANGE OUR LIFE!

"*Metamorphosis*": “change of form” insects go through:

Butterfly transformed from unattractive creature to another which world admires for beauty.

Not just external transformation—change from inside out.

Transformation changes looks and lifestyle.

Radical change: **2 Cor. 3:18** “We who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

We look at God's glory; we're **transformed** into His image.

Spirit of God **changes** us to become more like Him.

1. Transformation changes how we think.

Agent: Holy Spirit Instrument: God’s Word

He re-programs our minds!

How much time spent in front of screen absorbing thinking of our age?!!

Many **things we don’t do**—we know they’re wrong.

Don’t commit adultery—no sex outside marriage—don’t abort babies

How about desire for just a few more things?

–way we dress? –way we use time?

–things we worry about?

We don’t renew our own mind.

God changes us — *from inside out!*

We recognize His will and do what pleases Him. =>

2. Transformation shows us what God's will is

We test & approve what’s consistent with God’s will:

God’s will is good

God’s will is pleasing: Two possible ideas:

Doing God’s will pleases Him.

Alternative: Way Satan markets idea: (*saw it in garden!*)

“God wants to take away your fun!”

Rom 12 objects: God’s will is good; it’s pleasant =>

Doing God’s will satisfies us. It leads to contentment.

Both approaches meaningful:

We do God’s will, because it’s good; pleases God & us!

Check it out; we’ll find it /S good! It /S pleasant!

God’s will is perfect – it lacks nothing!

Have you been struggling with understanding God’s will?

Maybe Paul has uncovered the problem!

Do we want to fit world’s mold, instead of being *transformed*?

God has given us a new way of thinking so we might discern what’s good, acceptable & perfect

DON'T BE CONFORMED; BE TRANSFORMED

If we’re stamped in same mold as rest of world, no one will see anything worth imitating. We’ll be like everyone else.

Our new mindset allows us to determine His will and do it!

Nothing short of total commitment to God makes sense!

HOW SHOULD PAUL'S ADVICE CHANGE OUR LIFE?

Offering: Little girl takes plate, puts it on floor & stands in it.

"Sunday School teacher told us to give ourselves to God."

Are WE willing to put ourselves on offering plate?

God doesn’t need our money. **He wants our life!**

Appropriate response, when we consider God’s mercy:

Isaac Watts: “Were the whole realm of nature mine, [even] that were a present *far too small!* Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all!”