

Romans Lesson 9

Reading: Romans 12:1-8

Memory Verse: Romans 12:1

Definitions:

Urge – invite, beg

Offer – place near or beside, give

After reading the lesson, answer the questions using the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc22KzbMEh7fl_vu5qQg2m0sHsiUJaGDUJ9yTa2N2HB5CLGLA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Gifted by God

God has done an incredible amount of stuff for you. Have you ever wondered what you can do for God?

Teach a Sunday school class, invite a friend to church, be a Sparks leader, lead songs for the preschoolers, help repaint the church, shovel a neighbor's walk, make cookies for someone with a broken arm, pray for everyone in your youth group, write a story for a church newsletter, help organize a potluck dinner, give some money to the church building fund, stuff bulletins for the church secretary, be an usher, listen to a friend who is having a bad day, lead a small-group Bible study, invite a classmate to a small-group Bible study, help clean up after a potluck dinner, write a thank-you note for your high school leader, mow the lawn for someone with a broken leg, decorate the church bulletin boards, post notices of church events in storefronts around town, write a promo for your youth group for your local paper, help build the church float for the Fourth of July parade, call a friend you have not seen at church for a while, hand out tracks, get a weekend job and give the money to a missionary or support your own Adopt-a-Club,

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apply for a missions trip, play the piano or guitar for junior church, volunteer to visit in a retirement home, organize a car wash to raise money for the church, watch the lonely kids in youth group and ask them to sit with you, be a Cubbies leader, make a meal for the family of someone in the hospital, knit baby booties for newborns, work in the church nursery, sing in the choir, join (or organize) your church's drama team, work the church sound board, fix the church bus, be a greeter, smile at the pastor and ask him if you can do anything to help, clean the bulletins out of the pews after the service, write the church Christmas program, sing a solo for the offertory ...

You get the idea. Paul must have figured that the Romans were wondering what they could do for God, because he changes his approach in chapter 12. So far, he has been writing about what we are like inwardly. we are sinners. When we trust Christ as Savior, we are justified, saved by Gods, grace. Now he explains how that inward change should show on the outside.

You and God (12:1-2)

He starts by writing, "*Therefore I urge you, brothers ...*" Already we see a difference. He *urges* them (and us). In other words, he pleads, begs, and invites, but he does not command as was done under the Mosaic law. However, Paul strongly encourages us to pay attention to what he is saying. He urges *us to offer your [our] bodies as a living sacrifice*. "Offer" means to place near or beside, to give. We need to place ourselves at

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God's disposal. We need to be willing to offer (give) our bodies, our personalities, our minds – everything to the Lord.

Offering our bodies as a living sacrifice should not be a difficult choice for us. (Notice that we are to offer a living sacrifice as opposed to the dead sacrifices of the Old Testament.) We do not need to panic, or get upset or worry about whether or not we can really do it. Paul writes that offering *your bodies as a living sacrifices* is an act of worship.

The Romans had the same problem we do. Sometimes they were more concerned about the world than they were about God. Paul wrote: *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* (12:2). *Conform* means to pattern ourselves after the world. That patterning could include our actions, our speech, our styles, and our habits. Our lives should not be pattern after other people, but after Christ (Titus 2:7).

You and Your Gift (12:3-8)

Now that Paul has plainly stated our responsibility, he explains what happens when we do put ourselves at God's disposal. First of all, no Christian is supposed to go around thinking he or she is better than another Christian. We are to work together as the parts of our body work together. Think about it. When you have a bad headache,

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you lie down. Your arms and legs and toes and here are doing fine. Still, you feel yucky because your headache affects everything.

God, in his infinite wisdom, gave us different gifts so we could work together. The Greek word for gift is “charismata” which is from the same root as the Greek word for “grace.” The word “gifts” here is synonymous with the word “grace.” This is what God has done for us! Freely, in his grace, he has given us gifts (more grace) so we, in turn, can serve him.

Instead of giving ALL of us ALL the gifts, God gave us a different gift so we could work together in a Christian ministry. If everyone had the gift of teaching, there would be no one left to teach! If everyone had the gift of leadership, no one would be left to follow! Actually, most people have a combination of two or three gifts so that no one’s abilities are exactly the same as anyone else’s. Each one of us was created so we fit into the body of Christ in a unique and individual way. Let’s take a closer look at the gifts.

Prophesying -

Giving a message from God. Now we have God’s completely revealed word in the Bible, so prophecy would come directly from Scripture. This is different from instances in the Bible when men were actually given messages (sometimes concerning future events) directly from God.

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Serving -

This could cover many of the practical aspects of Christian service, such as the missionary mechanic who keeps the mission planes running smoothly, the man who does such a great job organizing the children's church schedule, or the lady who fixes a delicious meal for the sick or incapacitated.

Teaching -

Teaching is teaching (now there is a deep theological concept). This could apply to a Sunday school teacher, pastor, or Awahna leader; anyone who teaches God's Word.

Encouraging -

Comfort, encouragement

Contributing to the needs of others -

Being generous, helping others who are in need. This includes financial generosity as well as giving of your time and or ability.

Leadership -

The people who do a good job in leadership.

Showing mercy -

Being kind.

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God has given you at least one gift. That is his promise. Have you identified your gift?

Are you using your gift?

Fast Fact

Have your parents ever renovated a room of your house? Maybe they took down old walls, or scraped off several coats of wallpaper and paint, pulled off the old tile and generally took the room apart piece by piece. The word “renewing” in Romans 12:2 means “renovate.” We are literally to remove the old, sinful ways of thinking and acting and put in their place the new, godly thoughts, attitudes, and actions.