

*“A Call For Commitment”
Romans 12:1-2*

Introduction:

1. We Come This Morning:
 - To A New Chapter:
 - In Our Study Through The Book Of Romans:
 - Which Is Also:
 - The Beginning Of:
 - An Entirely New Section:
 - In The Book!
2. So - Let's Turn In Our Bibles To:
 - Romans 12 - Where:
 - As You Can See On Your Message Guide:
 - We Are Going To Be Looking At:
 - Just Two Verses!
 - But These Verses:
 - Are Likely - *Not* Unfamiliar To You:
 - Because They Are The Apostle Paul's:
 - Great Call For Commitment!
 - A Call *To* Christians:
 - *For* Commitment:
 - *To* Christ!
3. Let's Read These Verses Together:
 - Romans 12:1-2:
 - “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. / And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God!”
 - This Morning:
 - As We Explore These Notable Verses:
 - I Want Us - To Both Hear & Heed:
 - This Call For Commitment:
 - In A Fresh, New Way!
4. Because - It Seems Like:
 - It Is So Easy For Us:
 - Even As Christians:
 - To Be Committed To Anything & Everything:
 - But Our Own Namesake:
 - Christ Himself!
 - **IE:** After All - The World Calls For Your Commitment All The Time, Doesn't It?
 - Every Four Years - When Its “Political Season” - The Country Calls On You To Make A Decision About Who You Think Should Be The Next President Of The United States! But Even More Than That - Voices From Every Side Call On You To Make A Commitment! Don't Just Make A Choice! Take A Side! And For Far Too Many Professing Christians, Politics Has Become Their Religion!
 - Its To You, This Morning, That We Bring This Appeal From The Apostle Paul:
 - “I Beseech You Therefore, Brethren!”
 - But You Don't Even Have To Wait Four Years To Hear This Call For Commitment From The World!
 - Every Season Of The Year - Whether Its Baseball Season Or Football Season Or Basketball Season! Fans From All Teams Call On You To Make A Commitment!
 - Invest Your Time! Invest Your Energy! Invest Your Money! Even To The Point Where - Again - For Far Too Many Professing Christians:
 - Sports Has Become Their Religion!
 - And It Is To You Too, That We Bring This Appeal From The Apostle Paul:
 - “I Beseech You Therefore, Brethren!”
 - You Many Not Be Very Political! You May Not Be Into Sports! But There Are Other People & Other Organizations & Other Of Your Own Desires That Are All Vying For Your Commitment!

- And - Again - For Far Too Many Of Us:
 - Our Commitment To Them:
 - Has Become Far Greater:
 - Than Our Commitment To Our Savior:
 - The Lord Jesus Christ!

5. It Is To All Of Us:

- That The Apostle Paul Brings His Appeal:
 - 12:1 - "I Beseech You Therefore, Brethren, By The Mercies Of God, That Ye Present Your Bodies – A Sacrifice!"
 - Now That's A Call For Commitment!
 - **IE:** This Call Would Have Been Understood By Just About Everyone In Paul's Day!
 - Because Just About Everyone Had, At One Time Or Another, Been Involved In Making Sacrifices To Their Gods!
 - Of Course - The Jews:
 - Were Given Instructions By God:
 - To Offer Sacrifices:
 - For Just About Any Reason Imaginable! There Were Burnt Offerings & Sin Offerings! Peace Offerings & Even Drink Offerings!
 - And Most Of Those Offerings Were Of Animals:
 - Whose Lives Were Taken & Whose Blood Was Shed!
 - The Gentiles - And Especially The Romans:
 - Had Dozens Of False Gods & Goddesses:
 - That They Would Have Offered Sacrifices To!
 - Which Also Included:
 - The Offering Of Animals & Sometimes Even People:
 - To Appease The Wrath Of Their Gods!
 - And Though The Religious Differences:
 - Between Those Sacrifices Were Great:
 - There Was One Thing:
 - They Usually Had In Common!
 - And That Was:
 - Whatever They Offered As A Sacrifice:
 - Was Given Completely & In Its Entirety - To Be Consumed On The Altar!
 - And That's Commitment!

6. So - Here In Romans 12:

- We Find A Call For Commitment:
 - In Similar Terms!
 - But - This Sacrifice:
 - Is Not:
 - A Sacrifice Of Animals!
 - Nor Is It:
 - A Sacrifice Of Possessions!
 - It Is A Sacrifice:
 - Of Yourself - And:
 - Your Own Body!
 - 12:1 - "I Beseech You Therefore, Brethren – That Ye Present Your Bodies – As A Sacrifice!"
 - And - If You Offer To The Lord:
 - Your Body - That Includes:
 - Everything That Goes Along With Your Body!
 - Your Body & Soul & Spirit!
 - Your Mind & Heart & Will!
 - Back In 6:13 - We Were Told In Similar Terms:
 - "But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God!"
 - In Other Words:
 - God Desires *All* Of You:
 - To Be Committed To Him!
 - And - Doesn't God Deserve:

- *All* Of You?

7. Paul Thinks He Does!
- This Is Why - At The Beginning Of This New Chapter - And:
- At The Beginning Of This New Section:
- He Uses That One Word:
- “Therefore” - To Tie It All Together!
- “Therefore” Points Back:
- To Everything He Has Already Written:
- In Chapters 1-11!
- Which - Essentially - Tells Us About:
- The Greatness & The Goodness Of God:
- In Offering Salvation & Justification To Sinners Like Us:
- Through Faith Alone In Jesus Christ!
- And - If You Have Received:
- And Believed In This Gospel:
- 1:16 - “It Is The Power Of God Unto Salvation!”
- Your Salvation!
- Have You?
- If So - Then:
- Whereas - In Chapters 1-11:
- We Are Told:
- How To Be Right With God!
- In Chapter 12 And Following:
- We Are Told:
- How To Live Right For God!
- So - Paul Now Turns From:
- An Explanation:
- Of The Gospel - To:
- The Expectations:
- Of The Gospel!

8. And - One Of Those Expectations:
- Is Commitment!
- As A Christian - Your Primary Commitment:
- Is Now To Be:
- To Christ!
- And The First Thing We Find:
- In Romans 12:1 Is That:

1. *There Is A Great Motive For Your Commitment To Christ!*

- And That Motive Is:
- “The Mercies Of God!”
- Again - 12:1 - “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice!”
- **IE:** When You Make A Commitment To Something Or Somebody - There Is Usually Something In It For You! Even When You Are A Committed Fan Of Some Team That’s Terrible - Like The Pacers - There’s A Reason For Your Commitment - That Will Keep You As A Fan - No Matter How Many Disappointing Seasons They May Have!
- Well - As A Christian:
- You Have An Infinitely Greater Reason & Motive:
- To Be 100% Committed To Christ!
- “The Mercies – And The Compassion – Of God!”
- And:
- The Mercies Of God Are Supreme!
- That Is - They Are Great!
- Just Think About The Book Of Romans Itself!
- Isn’t It Just An Explanation:
- Of God’s Mercy To Sinners:
- Like All Of Us?

- You Owe Your Very Salvation:
 - To The Mercy Of God!
 - As Paul Told Us Back In 9:16:
 - “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy!”
- And - The Mercy Of God:
 - To Save You:
 - Is Your Motive:
 - For Your Commitment To Christ!
 - But - Also:
- The Mercies Of God Are Substantial!
 - The Word “Mercy” Here:
 - Is In The Plural - “Mercies” - Not Only Because:
 - They Are Supreme - But Because:
 - They Are Substantial & Many!
 - Back In 11:33:
 - In Paul’s Doxology:
 - He Expressed His Wonder About:
 - “The Depth Of The Riches Of God!”
 - And Those “Riches” Include:
 - 2:4 - “The riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering!”
 - All Of Which - God Used To:
 - “Lead You To Repentance!”
 - And So - The Mercies Of God:
 - Displayed To You:
 - Not Only At Your Salvation - But Even After Your Salvation:
 - Is Your Motive:
 - For Your Commitment To Christ! But - Also:
 - The Mercies Of God Are Sure!
 - That Is - They Are Permanent & Lasting!
 - In Lamentations 3:21-23:
 - The Prophet Jeremiah Understood This, When He Wrote - “This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. / It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. / They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness!”
 - This Is The Great Motive:
 - For Your Commitment To Christ!
 - “The Mercies Of God!”
 - Like Jeremiah - You Need To:
 - Daily - “Recall To Your Mind” His Tender Mercies To You!
 - And - Because Of His Mercies:
 - Re-Commit & Re-Dedicate Yourself To Him:
 - Each & Every Day!
 - After All - Is There Anyone Else Or Anything Else:
 - Who Has Given You Such Mercy As The Lord?
 - But Then - As We Continue In Romans 12:1:
 - We Find That:

2. ***There Is A Great Meaning To Your Commitment To Christ!***

- And That Meaning Is:
 - Found At The End Of 12:1:
 - Where Paul Describes The Kind Of Sacrifice:
 - God Is Looking For!
 - It’s A - “Living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable Unto God, Which Is Your Reasonable Service!”
 - This Is The Kind Of Commitment:
 - God Desires From You - And:
 - The Kind Of Commitment:
 - God Deserves From You!

- It Is:

- A Devoted Commitment!
 - This Is Why Paul First Describes:
 - Our Christian “Sacrifice” As A:
 - “Living Sacrifice!”
 - This Means That:
 - You Offer Yourself To The Lord:
 - Willingly!
 - **IE:** Unlike Some Of The Animals That Were Dragged To Their Deaths!
 - This Also Means That:
 - You Offer Yourself To The Lord:
 - Perpetually!
 - **IE:** Unlike The Once And For All Sacrifice Of Animals!
 - To Be A “Living Sacrifice” Means:
 - To Live Your Entire Life:
 - In Devotion To The Lord!
 - **IE:** Much Like The Prophet Samuel - When He Was Offered By His Mother, Hannah, To The Lord! A “Living Sacrifice” Of Thanksgiving!
 - Are You Living Your Life:
 - In Devotion To The Lord?
 - The Mercies Of God Call For:
 - Nothing Less! It Is Also To Be:
- A Distinct Commitment!
 - This Is Why Paul Goes On To Describe:
 - Our Christian Sacrifice As A:
 - “Holy” Sacrifice!”
 - To Be “Holy” Means:
 - Set Apart To God:
 - And For His Service!
 - Does This Describe Your Life Before The Lord?
 - Even Though:
 - There Are Many Different Roles & Responsibilities That You Have In Your Life - And:
 - Many Commitments That You Need To Maintain!
 - Yet - Doesn’t God Deserve To Be Your Number One Priority?
 - Because Of All Of His Grace & Mercy To You?
 - And Yet - How “Distinct” And “Holy” Is:
 - Your Commitment To Him?
 - As Frances Havergal Reminds Us In A Hymn:
 - I gave My life for thee,
My precious blood I shed,
That thou mightst ransomed be,
And quickened from the dead;
I gave, I gave My life for thee,
What hast thou done for Me?
I gave, I gave My life for thee,
What hast thou done for Me?
 - Are You Living Your Life:
 - In A Distinct Way For The Lord?
 - The Mercies Of God Call For:
 - Nothing Less! It Is Also To Be:
- A Desirable Commitment!
 - This Is Why Paul Further Describes:
 - Your Christian Sacrifice As One:
 - That Is “Acceptable Unto God!”
 - Or - “Well-Pleasing” Unto God!
 - Now - What Kind Of Offering:
 - Is “Well-Pleasing” To God Today?
 - What Kind Of Offering Is:

- A Sweet-Smelling Savour:
 - To Him?
- I Think It's The Same Kind Of Offering:
 - That God Wanted - Even Back In The Old Testament!
 - An Offering Offered:
 - In Faith & In Hope & In Love!
- Even King David Understood That:
 - It Wasn't The Offering Alone:
 - That God Wanted! It Was:
 - The Offeror!
 - In Psalm 51:16-17 - "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. / The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise!"
- You See - An "Acceptable" Sacrifice To The Lord:
 - Is A Sacrifice From Your Heart!
 - It Is A Simple & A Sincere & A Spiritual Sacrifice!
 - **IE:** Its Like The Widow & Her Two Mites! Its Like The Woman Who Gave Up Her Only Precious Possession - "An Alabaster Box Of Ointment Of Spikenard Very Precious" - That She - "Broke & Poured It On Jesus' Head!" (Mark 14) - And What Did Jesus Say About Her? "She Hath Done What She Could!"
- This Is What God Desires From You!
 - This Is The Kind Of Sacrifice That Is "Acceptable Unto God!"
 - Its Not What:
 - Others Can Offer!
 - Its What:
 - You Can Offer!
 - From Your Heart, Through Your Hands, To His Honor!
- Are You Living Your Life:
 - According To The Lord's Desire?
 - The Mercies Of God Call For:
 - Nothing Less! But Also - Its To Be:
- A Deliberate Commitment!
 - At The End Of 12:1 - Paul Describes This Entire Offering:
 - As "Your Reasonable Service!"
 - In Old Testament Times:
 - The Priests, Who Were From The Tribe Of Levi:
 - Were Responsible For The Offerings & Sacrifices That The People Would Bring!
 - But Now - As Part Of:
 - A New & "Holy Priesthood":
 - You Are Personally Responsible:
 - To Offer Yourself To The Lord:
 - As A Christian!
 - This Is The "Service" That:
 - You And I Are Called To!
 - Not Just Here - At Church:
 - But At Work & At Home & Out & About In The World!
 - Your Service To God:
 - Is More Than:
 - Going To A Service!
 - Giving At A Service!
 - Greeting In A Service!
 - Even Glorifying God At A Service!
 - Your Service To God:
 - Is A Life Of Service!
 - And Paul Describes This As:
 - "Reasonable!"
 - In Other Words - In Light Of The Mercy & Mercies Of God To You:

- It Just Makes Sense!

- This Is To Be The Great Meaning:
 - Of Your Commitment To Christ:
 - As A Christian!
 - Every Single Day:
 - Commit Yourself Afresh To The Lord:
 - As A “Living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable Unto God, Which Is Your Reasonable Service!”
 - Every Single Day:
 - Offer Yourself To The Lord:
 - In This Kind Of Devoted, Distinct, Desirable, And Deliberate Way!
 - But - How Can We Even Do This?
- See Next - In 12:2:

3. *There Is A Great Manner In Your Commitment To Christ!*

- And That Manner Is:
 - Found At The Beginning Of 12:2:
 - “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind!”
 - True Commitment To Christ:
 - Based On God & His Mercy To You:
 - Involves Two Things!
 - First - It Involves:
 - A Resistance To The World!
 - Paul Tells Us:
 - “Be Not Conformed To This World!”
 - The Word Translated World:
 - Can Also Be Translated:
 - “Age!”
 - This Is A Good Way To Describe:
 - The Temporary & Transitory Nature:
 - Of The World In Which We Live!
 - Just Like In Paul’s Day:
 - In Our Day & Age:
 - The World has Its Own Spirit & Focus & Culture & Sins & Pressures & Influences!
 - This World Is Very Good At:
 - Consuming Our Minds & Hearts & Time!
 - To Take Away Our Commitment To Christ!
 - But - Paul Says:
 - As Part Of Our Commitment:
 - Do Not Let The Pressures & Pleasures Of This World:
 - Squeeze You Into Its Mold - And:
 - Conform You Into His Shape!
 - **IE:** What Is The World Doing Today To Express Its Independence From God & Its Insolence To God:
 - At This Present Time? Think About Its Amusements & Apparel & Associations!
 - Even If Not Sinful In & Of Themselves:
 - If You Are Absorbed By These Things - To The Neglect Of Your Responsibilities To God:
 - You Are Being Conformed To This World!
 - There Is To Be In Us:
 - A Certain Kind Of Defiance:
 - When It Comes To This World!
 - And A Certain Kind Of Difference & Resistance:
 - In Order To Be Truly Committed To Christ!
 - But Then - This Manner Also Involves:
 - A Renewal By The Lord!
 - Paul Continues In 12:2 - And Tells Us:
 - “But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind!”

- In Other Words:
 - Let The Change:
 - That God Has Started In Your Life Through The Gospel:
 - Continue!
- The Word Translated “Transform” Here:
 - Was Also Used Of Jesus:
 - When He Was Transfigured On The Mountain:
 - Before His Disciples, Peter & James & John!
 - And Though Our “Transformation” May Seem To Be Far Less Dramatic:
 - Yet - It Will Be No Less Visible:
 - As People Recognize That You Are One Who Has Been With Jesus!
- And This Great Transformation:
 - Can Only Come Through:
 - The “Renewing Of Your Mind!”
 - Which Is One Of The Reasons Why We Meet Together:
 - On The Lord’s Day!
 - Because - You Recognize That:
 - You Need Renewal!
 - Not Just Today, But Every Day!
 - And This Renewal Comes Through:
 - Exposure To God & His Word!
- And This Is The Great Manner:
 - Of Your Commitment To Christ:
 - As A Christian!
 - Every Single Day:
 - Make A Conscious Choice:
 - By God’s Grace & Through His Strength:
 - To Resist:
 - Being Conformed To This World! And:
 - To Be Renewed:
 - And Transformed:
 - More & More Into:
 - The Image Of Christ Himself!
 - Because - Then - You Will See That:

4. ***There Is A Great Mission For Your Commitment To Christ!***

- As We See At The End Of:
 - 12:2 - “That ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God!”
 - One Thing That The World & The Devil:
 - Wants To Convince Christians Of:
 - Is That Its Not Worth It:
 - To Be Committed To Christ!
 - But The Truth Is:
 - Only Christ Is Worthy Of Your Commitment!
 - And What Paul Is Telling Us Here:
 - Is That - When You Do:
 - Fully Commit Yourself To The Lord:
 - He Will Not Let You Down!
 - Instead - You Will “Prove – What Is – The Will Of God!”
 - Now - This Does Not Mean:
 - That You Will Have All Of The Answers:
 - About What God Wants You To Do:
 - With Your Life!
 - Its Not Talking About:
 - The Unknown Will Of God!
 - Instead - Its Talking About:
 - The Known Will Of God:

- Which Is Found In His Word!
- The Same Will:
 - That Tells Us To:
 - 12:1 - "Present Your Bodies A Living Sacrifice, Holy, Acceptable Unto God!"
- Well - The World Will Try To Get You To Think That:
 - This Kind Of Sold-Out Commitment To Christ:
 - Is Not What's Best For You!
 - The World Will Try To Get You To Think That God's Will & Even God Himself:
 - Is Not Good & Not Out For Your Good!
- But - When Your Mind:
 - Is Renewed - You Will See More & More That:
- God's Will Is Good!
 - And Is Always Good!
 - To "Prove" Here - Means To Test:
 - And Find True & Genuine!
 - IE: Like Armor Was "Proven" In Ancient Times!
 - The More You Commit Yourself & Your Life:
 - To The Lord - The More You Will Be Convinced:
 - Of The Goodness Of God & His Will:
 - For Your Life!
 - Don't Let The World:
 - Convince You Otherwise!
 - Also - The World Will Try To Get You To Think That:
 - Commitment To The Lord:
 - Is No Fun & That You Will Miss Out On So Much In This Life!
 - But - When You:
 - Resist The World & Are Renewed By The Lord:
 - You Will See More & More That:
- God's Will Is Acceptable!
 - Same Word As In 12:1:
 - "Well-Pleasing!"
 - Only - I Don't Think Here:
 - It Is Referring To What Is "Well-Pleasing" To God - But:
 - What Is "Well-Pleasing" To His People!
 - Because - You Will Find:
 - When You Are Truly Committed To Christ:
 - That What Is Well-Pleasing To God:
 - Is - Well-Pleasing To His People, And To You!
 - John Piper - Famous Quote:
 - "God Is Most Glorified In Us When We Are Most Satisfied In Him!"
 - But - I Think The Reverse Is Also True!
 - You Will Be Most Satisfied In God & Satisfied In Life:
 - When God Is Most Glorified In You & Your Commitment To Him!
 - But - The World Will Also Want You To Think:
 - That God Is Not Worthy Of Your Trust & Commitment:
 - Because - Just Look Around You:
 - He's Not In Control!
 - Even Those Who Have:
 - Committed Themselves Wholly To God:
 - What Did They Get? How Did They End Up?
 - But - When You Do Commit Yourself To The Lord:
 - As A "Living Sacrifice" - You Will Find:
 - More And More That:
- God's Will Is Perfect!
 - And You Can Be Confident:
 - As Paul Was - In Philippians 1:6 - "Oof this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform [it] until the day of Jesus Christ!"

- And This Is The Great Mission:
 - Of Your Commitment To Christ:
 - As A Christian!

Conclusion:

1. When You Do:
 - Present Yourself To God:
 - As This Kind Of Sacrifice:
 - You Will Not Be Disappointed!
 - Day After Day:
 - You Will Prove - To Yourself & To Others - That God's Will:
 - Is Good & Is Acceptable & Is Perfect!
2. So - This Morning:
 - Will You Hear This Call Once Again?
 - But - Even More - Will You Heed It?
 - Renew Your Commitment To Christ!
 - Today & Every Day!

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