



The way
of Wisdom #4

Scripture Memory Rom 12:1

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We are in a series on Scripture Memory until the end of July. In the summer, people commonly leave town...when you are in town, we are inviting you to populate two services for the next month.

This is the third Scripture Memory verse and it has to do with worship.

Romans
12:1

Worship



My question for you: If you think hard enough, what has God been asking you to let go of? You are holding on tight to something and God is asking you to let go of something. This can be a change in perspective or an action or....

The rock climbing metaphor is that these scriptures give us footholds and handholds (“jugs”), things you hold onto so you can climb higher.

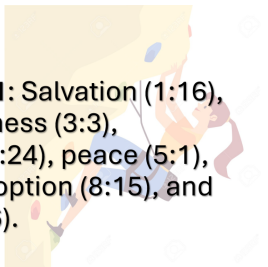
Romans 12:1
Therefore,
I urge you,
brothers and sisters,
in view of God’s mercy,
to offer your bodies as a living
sacrifice,
holy and pleasing to God—
this is your true and proper
worship.
Romans 12:1



Let’s practice saying this verse in the 2011 NIV translation:

Therefore

Romans 1 – 11: Salvation (1:16),
God’s faithfulness (3:3),
justification (3:24), peace (5:1),
hope (5:5), adoption (8:15), and
the Spirit (8:16).



Let’s start with “therefore” which signals to us to wonder what this word is “there for.” Two reasons: the first 11 chapters are about theology and the rest of the chapters are how to live out this theology.

Romans is about Salvation, Faithfulness, Justification, Peace, Hope, Adoption as God’s children, and the Spirit.

Therefore

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 34 “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” 35 “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?” 36 **For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.**

The first reason for the “therefore” in Rom 12:1 is the reference to the first 11 chapters. Chapter 11 is about the Jews and God’s relationship with them and their salvation until you get to verse 33. This is Paul’s way of saying “God is reality.” Based on the fact that God defines reality is what is truly real.

I urge you,

KJV	“I beseech you”
NLT	“I plead with you”
NET	“I exhort you”
CEB	“I encourage you”
Young’s Literal Translation	“I call upon you”
J.B. Phillips	“I beg you”
The Message	“Here’s what I want you to do”

What does “I urge you” mean? Notice how all these different translations say this.

When you are trying to navigate a crowd, it’s dangerous to let children go unguided. When my children were young, it was helpful to put my hand on their heads and shoulders to get to our destination. Paul also is putting his hand on our shoulders because he wants us to hear him and go in certain directions. He’s not just suggesting this to us: he’s urging us.



Brothers and sisters means everyone! Even though you might see brothers or sisters in various translations, most often, these words are speaking to a mixed audience of both men and women. When you test your weight on this verse, know that Paul is urging YOU individually and corporately.

Back to the child metaphor: he’s now putting his hands on our face, speaking directly to you.

In View of God’s mercy

NIV: In View – The Lens

ESV: “by the mercies of God”

KJV: “by the mercies of God”

NASB: “by the mercies of God”

Eric Cepin: Mercy - God moving toward us through Jesus to rescue us!

Notice what the NIV is doing in this next phrase (KJV and ESV and NASB are word-for-word translations; I prefer the NASB). NIV says “In view of God’s mercies” which means to put on the lens of Jesus, God. The mercy of God is the empty cross, the empty tomb, the ascension of Jesus sitting at the Right hand of God. Paul is saying to view this through the lens of the cross and your adoption and that you are marked by the Holy Spirit”

Both Greeks and Jews understood this idea of sacrifice which happened at a particular place.

We don't understand sacrifices in this culture. They are not part of our mindset as modern people. But Paul is saying based on what God has done for us, we need to offer ourselves as sacrifices. You need to offer these at a specific place to commune with God: however, YOU are the living sacrifice and the mobile temple.

Chris Williams told me in a conversation this past week that when he was in the military during the first Gulf War he said "Send Me." He volunteered to go into danger. This made me think of a rap song by LeCrae called "Send Me."

Send me I'll go, Send me I'll go, lemme go lemme go!
(repeat x4)
I seen it with my own two,
there's no way i can show you
a perfectly poverty stricken people with no view.
And i bet you can't believe this,
they never heard of Jesus.
Heard of young buck, lil wayne, and young jeezy.

to offer your bodies as a **living sacrifice**

Your eyes.	Your phone.
Your mouth.	Your sleep.
Your hands.	Your goals.
Your stomach.	Your money.
Your sexuality.	Your presence with
Your calendar.	people.



LeCrae is saying, with energy, "I will go, I am available." I was thinking about what it means to be a living sacrifice. It means because your body isn't dying, other things must die. Other things about you are wanted by Jesus. As the sacrifice, you don't get to define things like you might want (see the list to the left. The image of "Send Me" comes to mind; these are not mine to control.

For me, this applies to wanting you to know and feel that my way of thinking about politics or theology is right. Instead, I want to be caught up in learning what you believe and even be able to Steel Man what you believe (which means I can argue your position better than you can!) I will let go of my control of you thinking I am right.

Another area (not related to Rom 12:1) that I have been wrestling with is the idea of gleaning. In the OT, people are invited to not harvest their entire field so people who don't have as much can harvest it for themselves. I wonder whether there should be a gleaning in everything I do. For example, If I go out to eat at a nice restaurant, do I need to set aside part of this for someone else (I mean the financial part, not setting aside leftovers.) My issue is that I don't want to let go of control over my money and even have to think about this: it's disruptive because of how much fun and leisure and wealth that I have (and I don't feel very wealthy). There are some ways that I expect the world to work that I need to let go of. "Send me" means "I will let go."

It can happen in relationships with others, too, where you hold grudges. Jesus died for them.

holy and pleasing to God

- Holy – Set apart
 - Pleasing – being shaped and formed
- Does my body belong to the story of mercy?
Not, Am I impressive?
Not, Am I more spiritual than someone else?
Not, Do I look religious?
Is my actual life becoming available to God?

this is your true and proper worship.

Reasonable worship:

After mercy, offering yourself to God is the sane response.



Holy literally means set apart and here it means being shaped and formed.

Holy does not equal being impressive, spiritual, or religious: it means does my body belong to Jesus. Do I narrate my life in the way of Jesus or me? I start as a broken person who is being redeemed: I offer my body, meaning I tell my story in the context of Jesus.

Is my actual life becoming available to be transformed, Holy, and pleasing, to God? This is your true and proper worship. Some versions say “reasonable” worship. If God defines reality, offering my body is the only sane thing to do. If you are wrestling with insanity (you are defining your life by you), first check who is the center of your story. If I am the center and the main thing, I am going to be insane because I feel I (not God) get to define reality.

Service of a Priest

- Worship is what happens when God’s mercy becomes the lens for our life, and we make our actual bodies available to him.

Worship has a priestly sense: it happens when God’s mercy becomes the lens for our life. I will trust in God’s goodness.

Romans 12:1

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Romans 12:1

Let’s practice memorizing this verse together:

Returning to the question about what God is asking us to let go of. Here is a confession to reflect on what God might be calling you to.

I offer you my calendar; make my time yours. I offer you my relationships; teach me to love with patience and truth. I offer you my hidden places; bring your mercy there too. I offer you my ordinary life; receive it as holy and pleasing to you. This is my true and proper worship.

Lord, in view of your mercy, I offer you my whole life. I offer you my eyes; teach me to see what you see. I offer you my mouth; let my words bring life. I offer you my hands; make them ready to serve. I offer you my fear; empower me to offer the gospel with love and humility. I offer you my appetites; reorder my desires.

