



Pre Group

- Send the group the Bible text and discussion questions from the guide so that they can be ready to discuss when the group starts.
- Text your group throughout the week to encourage them and remind them about the group.
- Pray for God to be in your group time.

BELONG

Open the group with an opportunity for everyone to have a place to belong.

- If you are willing, share one way that God has been working in your life over the past week?
- As a Christian, what does it mean to have a mindset of sacrifice when it's natural to do what's easiest, or what's best, for us?

Open the group in prayer.

BELIEVE

Use this time to study God's word together and grow in your understanding of God and his will.

Read Romans 12: 1-8

12 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;

⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

In Romans 12, Paul lays out for Christians a pattern for the Christian life.

In the first 11 chapters of Romans, Paul has explained what the gospel is. He has gone on and on about the good news of Jesus Christ and his plan of redemption and the glories of salvation.

As Paul comes to chapter 12 he begins to explain that the good news of the gospel should motivate Christians to live a certain way. **Paul sums up the Christian life as a life of sacrifice and service.**

Christians are called to sacrifice.

“present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

When you think about it, sacrifice is probably the most foreign idea in the world to humans. Outside of certain parental or romantic instincts, we are wired to look out for numero uno. Moreover, we live in a world that encourages us to disregard sacrifice. Instead, we are encouraged to promote ourselves, protect ourselves, and pursue our desires.

In light of the gospel, Paul argues that this is no longer a logical option for Christians. Instead of living with self at the center, we are called to sacrifice ourselves to God and live with him at the center.

- Can you think of an example of Christian sacrifice, a time where someone gave up what was best for them in favor of what God wanted?

Christians are called to service.

As Paul writes he takes us to a place where sacrifice can logically be played out, service to the church.

If we are called to sacrifice, then Christians should “not think of himself more highly than he ought to think,”

In other words, a lifestyle of sacrifice is played out in reality when we begin to think of ourselves less and think of others more.

⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

A mindset of sacrifice leads to a lifestyle of service.

- In an appropriate estimation of yourself, what's one gift you have that you can use in the service of others and the church?

Sacrifice and service are only natural to people who walk with God.

Despite the fact that we are called to sacrifice and service, many people find it difficult to walk in these realities. The question is how do we begin to embrace this way of life?

Paul makes clear, this only happens as we put off the old way of thinking that is natural to us and have a mind renewed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

We cannot expect to know how to do the will of God if we do not walk with God, spend time with him, and have him continually change our hearts and minds.

- How do you spend time with God so that your mind is renewed? If you struggle to do this, how can you improve?

BECOME

Use this time to encourage the group to take new information and put it to action.

Romans 12 is about action. It's about the action that we are called to in the Christian life.

As the group closes, spend some time thinking about how the gospel motivates us to action.

- Discuss: Why does the good news motivate us to action and not just reflection?
- Discuss: What's one way that God might be calling you to sacrifice and service in the days ahead?