

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Let us turn our bibles to Romans 12

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this amazing letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to believers in Rome and to us to today about the fundamentals of our faith –

The Gospel of grace

It is a letter of instruction and exhortation – that we might grasp, embrace and live in His grace.

That our salvation, our sanctification and our glorification is all a work that He does.

We simply receive and believe and trust by, faith

The just shall live by faith – the theme of this entire letter

Paul reminds us, who we are in Christ

What He has done

And what is the only reasonable and logical response of a genuine believer.

Complete and total surrender

To willingly present our bodies a living sacrifice.

Not just a portion of our body

Not just on Sunday

Not just when it is convenient

Not just when we feel like it

He wants all of us

Paul wants us to understand that Jesus died on the cross – and rose three days later – to purchase all of us.

We have been redeemed

Mind, body, soul, addictions, our worries, our struggles, our anxieties, our weaknesses

They are all His

We belong to Him

So our response, as we lean on the Holy Spirit – as He does the work in us to be more like Jesus - is to think like Jesus, walk like Jesus, talk like Jesus, love like Jesus

It is a life of worship and service as we surrender to His perfect will that He has for each one of us.

Our doctrine (Romans 1-11) becomes our duty (Romans 12,13,14,15) – not out of obligation – but motivated by love

Our belief becomes our behavior

Paul wants to apply what we have learned

Not just know about His grace – live it

We serve Christ

But here is the thing that Paul is going to remind us in our text this morning.

We also serve each other – because of Christ.

With the spiritual gifts that He has bestowed upon every single one of us – in order that we might minister to one another, encourage one another, motivate one another, provide for one another.

But we need to have the right motivation / right perspective

We need to have to right mindset that it is all about Him – not us.

Paul, over the next few weeks, is going to teach us what does a living sacrifice with a renewed mind looks like –

And the first thing he is going to address is – making sure we have a soberly mind.

Let's pray...

Read Text –

It is our human nature to compare ourselves with other people.

If I could only have what that person has –

It could be physical –

If I only had Danny's blue eyes

If I was just a bit taller

If I had hair like so and so

It could be a talent –

If I could just sing like them

If I could sing – period!

If I could only speak like them

If I had a voice like RJ

If I could just communicate like him or her

If only I could play the guitar like them

I want what my neighbor has!!!

And the mentality is this -

They have something that I want and if I only had it – my life would be awesome!!!

If I just had what they have.



This is a crazy way to live our lives

We compare and contrast ourselves with other people – never really satisfied with who we are in Christ.

Not only is it foolish – but it is sinful

**[2Co 10:12 NKJV] 12 For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.**

Not wise - It is foolish!!

You see, this is done even in churches –

Ministry leaders

If I only served in that church

If I only had that building –

If I only had that ministry

If I only had.....

Compare and contrast

Not being content in where God has placed me

Not being content in God's provisions

Not being content in God's spiritual gifting upon my life

God doesn't want me striving after someone else's ministry

God's desire for me is for me to be me – and to serve Him as me

In the same way He desire you to be you and serve Him as you.

Not someone else.

Everyone of us is unique.

Let's look at our text...

**[Rom 12:3-5 NKJV] 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think [of himself] more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.**

Here in verse 3 – Paul is speaking of our attitude – our mindset – our frame of reference.

You see, over the next few weeks, here in ch 12 – Paul is going to discuss some of the spiritual gifts that God bestows upon each and every one of us.

And we will look at those starting next week –

But before Paul even brings us the spiritual gifts – he wants to make sure we are thinking soberly.

Because Paul understood that misunderstanding concerning spiritual gifts could cause confusion in the church

Confusion on the way we live

Confusion in the way we think

Confusion in our roles in ministry

So Paul in addressing this – he wants to free us to do our duty - to simply serve Jesus and one another.

So Paul exhorts us think soberly

To have an honest estimate

To use good judgment

The idea behind the word soberly –

Is that we fully understand of who we are in Jesus Christ

It is coming to that conclusion that I am me and you are you – and I am ok with it

I am content with what God has for me

Understanding that He is still changing me and growing me and making me into His image – and I am ok with it.

I don't have to compare and contrast with others – because I am unique and you are unique.

There is only one of you and only one of me – Amen to that – because we couldn't handle more than one.

And what God does – He brings all these unique personalities and brings them together as the church.

God, in His grace, has made us, who we are and He wants to use us who He made us to be.

And I had you make a note at the end of the verse – God, by grace, has dealt to every single one of us – a measure of faith.

That means – a spiritual gift.

So God gives us the gift of grace and He gives us another gift – spiritual gift

Every single one of us, as believers in Jesus Christ, has at least one spiritual gifting – that God wants to use in His church

And God is desiring that they be used

God doesn't want us sitting on our spiritual gifts

He doesn't want us to be inactive



He wants us to use it

Grace is the gift

But faith is the conviction to use the gift that He has given us – to step out and go for it.

That is faith in action –

The confidence to be able to use the gift that God has equipped us with.

God made me this way, I believe it and I am going to serve Him

I am going to let Him use my life

My life belongs to Him

And we see how grace and faith work together

The problem is that we don't always think soberly

Because when we don't think soberly, we usually allow pride to affect our judgment

We start to think too highly of ourselves

That we are better than other believers and even non believers

We look down upon them

That is pride church

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But there is also the opposite extreme

And one that is common in the church today

Where we are not soberly minded and think too lowly of ourselves.

We have this false humility about ourselves

We think that there is no way that God can use us

Who am I? – I am just a nobody

What can God ever do with me?

Who am I?

I am chosen

I am a child of the King

Jesus Christ died for my sins and He draws me into a relationship with Him

And He has spiritually gifted me – how dare we ask, who am I

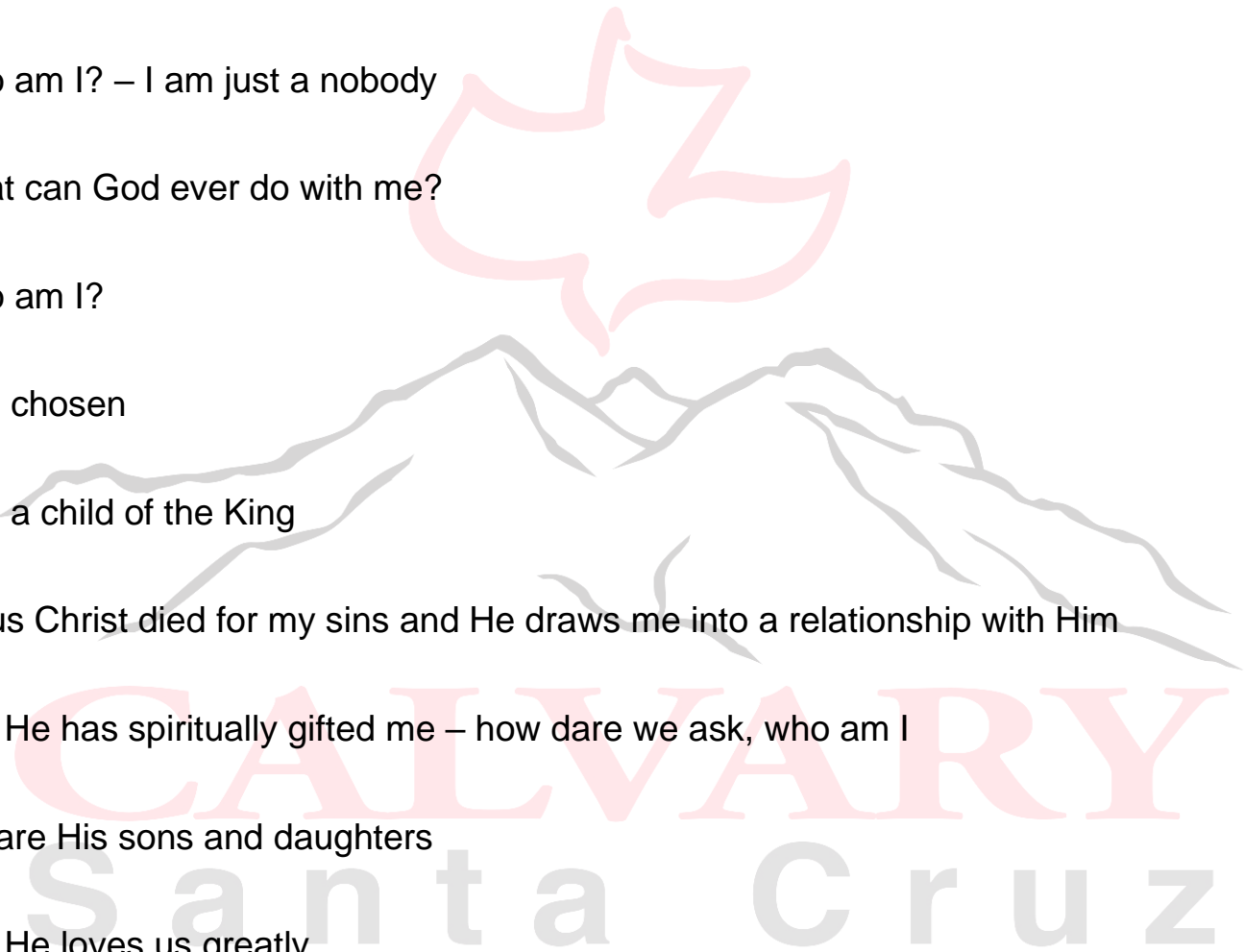
We are His sons and daughters

And He loves us greatly

And He wants to use our lives with His gifting flowing through our lives.

But often what happens is that we make excuses –

And we make more excuses



And the more we make excuses – that is the only thing we will be good for – making excuses.

God wants to stretch us – we make an excuse

God wants to use us – make an excuse

God wants to grow us – make an excuse – I can't right now.

And so we make excuses in our life in order to avoid obeying the Lord

Turn with me to Exodus 3

Because I want to show you that we are not alone in making excuses, in order to avoid obeying God's purpose for our lives.

We have a perfect example of an expert excuse maker in Moses.

And so here in CH 3

God speaks directly to Moses through the burning bush.

And we see that Moses responds with excuse after excuse – some of the excuses that we often use today when God calls on us to do something.

Let's pick up the illustration in verse 9

God is speaking to Moses – from the burning bush -

**[Exo 3:9-10 NKJV] 9 "Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. 10 "Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."**

There is the calling –

Moses – I got a job for you

I am going to use you

The same calling that we all have – remember, by grace, God has given us spiritual gifts to be used.

So we have the calling directly from God –

That alone should be enough

Verse 11 – should read, and Moses put his sandals back on and told God, "I am ready Lord, vamonos, let's go free Your people!!!"

But that is not what it says -

Look at verse 11

**[Exo 3:11 NKJV] 11 But Moses said to God, "Who [am] I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"**

You see, 40 years prior to Moses having a conversation with God – he was a prideful man. He sensed a calling by God upon his life, but he tried to do it through his own flesh and he failed miserably – he killed the Egyptian and fled to the wilderness.

Now, he is on the other extreme – false humility.

Moses is not a soberly minded individual

Who am I?

How can you use me God?

Are you sure you got the right guy God? Look at my inadequacies God?

Same excuses we use –

Who am I?

We are a trophy of His grace

We are a testimony of His love and His faithfulness

We are the one He pulled out of the miry clay

Are we inadequate? Of course, we are – because we are human.

But all things are possible with God.

Who am I? with that excuse – we are simply a person who is disobeying God

Look at verse 12 -

**[Exo 3:12 NKJV] 12 So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this [shall be] a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."**

God is telling Moses –

Moses, I know you are inadequate – but, I will be with you – promise.

That's good enough right –

Verse 13 – should read, and Moses cried out let's go.....

But he didn't.

**[Exo 3:13 NKJV] 13 Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, [when] I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What [is] His name?' what shall I say to them?"**

What the excuse this time?

I don't know what to say

What if they start asking questions???

This excuse is the one that prevents us from sharing the good news to people at work and at the store –

God puts a burden in our heart – and we respond – I don't know what to say.

What if they ask questions?

But we forget that we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us

That the Holy Spirit brings to remembrance His word – so we trust Him.

So God tells Moses exactly what to say –

So again, we think that Moses would be on his way to Egypt –

But look at ch 4 now –

**[Exo 4:1 NKJV] 1 Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, 'The LORD has not appeared to you.' "**

Moses sounds like he has a bad case of the what ifs

In our lives it would look like this –

God has spoken, He has given us clear direction –

And we respond –

What if this happens and what if this happens and so forth.

And we what if the will of God into the ground and we don't move on, in faith.

Because we are always contemplating the what ifs.

We analyze things until they can't be analyzed anymore and then when we are done analyzing them – we no longer hear the word of God because it is no longer a fresh word anymore.

We need to stop analyzing the will of God in our lives and actually step out in faith and walk in it.

Again, all this comes from not being soberly minded –

Thinking too highly of ourselves.

We think we deserve more from God than what He already gave us – instead of stepping out on what He has given us to do.

We want the entire picture laid out for us.

We don't trust God by taking that one step.

We are willing to step out in faith – when God tells us what the next 10-20 years will be like.

We don't want to walk by faith – we want to walk by sight.

The next excuse –



**[Exo 4:10 NKJV] 10 Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I [am] not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I [am] slow of speech and slow of tongue."**

Here is another excuse –

I can't speak well God

I have a stuttering problem.

I have a speech impediment –

And God's response – I made your mouth, I will be your mouth

Now – surely, we would think that Moses would have ran out of excuses –

God has commissioned him, God has promised to be with him, God has given him what to say, God is going to be his mouth

Surely Moses would have said – “ok, God I will be obedient to your will. I will surrender”

But he didn't

**[Exo 4:13 NKJV] 13 But he said, "O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever [else] You may send."**

Moses' excuse – send someone else

Let someone else do it Lord

I'm too busy

I have too much going on -

**[Exo 4:14 NKJV] 14 So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses,**

Why was the anger of the Lord kindled? Excuses.

Church,

Here is the point –

Our excuses do not please God

So Paul – he wants us to be soberminded.

He wants us to exercise the gifts that God has given us

To not underestimate who we are in Christ – like Moses

But also not to overrate ourselves and try to do a ministry that we were never called to do.

And when we have believers on both sides of the spectrum – the church suffers.

One side says, “I can’t so that – that is beneath me”

The other side, “Who am I”

So – we exercise our spiritual gifts

We serve because we are servants – that is our identity in Christ.

**[Mat 20:26-28 NKJV] 26 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- 28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

In the church, we are all co-laborers in the body together

We all serve in the body together

Because as we abide in Jesus – we wash each others feet

That is the example that He gave us

We don't even hesitate – if there is a need, we do it.

To simply respond to what God has called us to do.

To serve Him and the church

You see loved ones – the church is the training ground for the outside world.

We serve one another – in the friendly confines of the church

The world is not as friendly as the church

For 40 years, God prepared Moses by having him talk to sheep – that is what he did.

Then God told Moses, go deliver my people – you're the guy

And to us here in Nogales and Rio Rico

He says – there are a bunch of hurting people in our community

They are distressed, in despair, hurting –

And God has called us to give them Jesus

God uses human beings to reach human beings and He wants to use you and me.

He wants to bless us and use us and help us and grow us.

He wants to pull us away from all the excuses and wants us to think soberly

Because once that switch is turned on in us –

There is no turning back.

Because God really wants to use us and He wants to see us exercise the gifts He has given to us by grace –

And once we grasp that church – we will grasp that about each other spiritual gifts.

Which is exactly what Paul is going to tell us next week -

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

We are changed not by a program, a practice, or a procedure, but by a Person. We are changed by looking at Jesus—by spending time with Him, learning about Him, receiving from Him, offering worship to Him.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

