

“Knowing is for Living”

The Ministry of the Epistles

November 30, 2025

Rom 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. (NIV)

Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (NASB)

Eph 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, (NASB)

[TITLE]

[OUR DAY]

"Heads down. Phones out. Fingers scrolling. This is the humanoid posture of our age. We see it everywhere. ...From the rising of the sun to its going down, we scroll our way through the day. We scroll our way through life. And we are scrolling ourselves to death." ..."Our critical faculties struggle to keep pace with the scope and speed of the digital revolution. As a result, we're often blind to the ways we're being transformed." **Brett McCracken**, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 11

[The Coming DYSTOPIAN Humanity]

"Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture" (**Neil Postman**, quoted by Brett McCracken, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 13)

"In Postman’s view, TV accelerated a seismic shift in the dynamics of information. For much of human history, he observed, we suffered from information scarcity. But now we have the opposite problem: information satiation." **Brett McCracken**, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 16

...The Urgent Message from the Epistles is—“Knowing is for LIVING”!!

GENRE ...Remember, Epistles are Biblical Content SYNTHESIZERS (helping us "Process" the Biblical Story)

Outline of Romans: **Rom 1-11** ...Doctrine at the Deepest Level! => THEREFORE => **Rom 12-16**

*[Note: The Similar Layout of Eph.: Eph 1-3 (Indicatives & Doctrines) => Therefore=> Eph 4-6

Doctrinal Depth for the 1st Century Daily Christian

- 85-90% of citizens were illiterate
- The writing style and content of Paul
- The vocabulary words of Romans 1-11 (reveal “the mercies of God”) ...*the Gospel ...righteousness received as a gift ...justification by substitution ...covenant by God’s Sovereign Grace ...release from enslavement to sin ...new life in the Holy Spirit ...God’s purpose in election continuing ...God’s insistence on mercy!*

...At the center of the Call to be a Disciple is the Call to LEARN—to be a "Learner"!!

“All will admit that Romans 1-11 contain perhaps the deepest, most dense, complex, and at times mind-bending treatment of theological truths to be found anywhere in the Bible. And it is from those lofty, elevated heights of big, expansive thoughts about God and what he has done for us in Jesus that Paul now descends into the muck and mire and rigorous realities of daily Christian living. ...Paul moves from exposition to exhortation. It is a transition from principles to practices, from doctrines to duty, from credenda, or what we believe, to agenda, or how we are to behave. Some explained the difference using the words indicative and imperative. The indicative is the statement of fact, the declaration of good news of the gospel. The imperative is the exhortation to respond, the call to now live in a way that is consistent with the truth of the gospel.” **Sam Storms**, “#48 Moved by the Mercies of God: Romans 12:1-2, Nov. 15, 2022

...Rom 12-16 ...There's a Lot of "DOING"!

Rom 12:4-6 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

Rom 12:9-21 ...29 commands

Rom 13:1 ...submit to authorities

Rom 14:1 ...instructions on how to treat brothers/sisters who are weak in the faith

Rom 14:13 ...don't pass judgment on others with differing views, don't put a stumbling block in their walk

Rom 12:1-2 ¹ | 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.

...v. 2 ...**After 11 Chapters of Synthesizing the Most Valuable Ideas in the Bible and On Earth—There is an All-Important, Protective Command!! ... "Do NOT be conformed to this world"**

...Every Christian is to be a **DISCERNING** Christian! ...Every Christian is doing "Worldview-Work" everyday of their lives!

"Do NOT be conformed to this world"

WARNING: THIS might be the Biggest Vulnerability to the Christian in the "Information Age"!! ...So Much Info!! So Little Filtering!!

WARNING: We tend to know how many games are played in an NFL season... more than we know how many chapters are in the book of Romans!

...IF my mind were "Renewed" ...I would Not be Surprised—when I Encounter "Chap. 2" – The FALL

Eph 4:1-3 ¹ | therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

...Paul's Common Ministry Approach ... Deep Doctrine—then—Real Life Application!

...Again... Mind Renewal is at the Center of Discipleship (in Eph 4 and Rom 12)

Eph 4:17-24 ¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must **no longer walk as the Gentiles do**, in the **futility of their minds**. ¹⁸ They are **darkened in their understanding**, alienated from the life of God because of the **ignorance that is in them**, due to their **hardness of heart**. ¹⁹ They have become **callous** and have **given themselves up to sensuality**, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not

the way you learned Christ!—²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

...The FALL ...corrupted the heart/mind of man! (v. 17-19)

... "Learning" (Gk. - 'manthano') sits at the heart of "Restoration"!!

- 'manthano' relationship to 'mathetes' (Disciple)

... ***This "Learning Leads to Living"!! ... "Learning Christ" (v. 20)—Creates a Hostile Force against v. 17-19 and an Enabling Force for v. 22-23***

Discipleship = TRUTH on FIRE

Remember—"Knowing us for... LIVING" ...Biblical Knowing is "Impacting & Experiential"!!

Biblically Encountering the Truth Sits as the Gatekeeper for 3 things in Rom. 12:

- 1) Mind (heart) Renewal! (Eph 4:23, Rom 12:1 ...*"the renewal of your mind"*)
- 2) Life Transformation (Eph 4:22-24, Rom 12:2 ...*"be transformed"*)
- 3) Worship! (what is the Ultimate End of All Things) (Rom 12:1 *"present yourselves to God, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is your spiritual worship"*)

...***a TASTE of 2026!!*** ...Remember Our Starting Point: ***Jn 4:23*** But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

The Ministry of the Word is a Supernatural Encounter with "Living Words" filled with Mysterious Power!

2 Cor 2:14-15 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ ***"a fragrant knowledge!!" (ie, the 'imaging' of God)***

>> **ILLUST:** "Pellet Grill Discipleship!"

...You need the Right Wood + the Right Fire!! ...a 'smoke' that influences and alters the flavor/aroma of our lives!! -- it is Mind CHANGING! ...it is Life ALTERING! ...it is Worship INVIGORATING!!

" In today's hyperconnected world, information comes at us fast and furious, from every direction, 24-7. ...We are overstimulated but underactivated. Information bombards us but action is elusive." **Brett McCracken**, "Scrolling Ourselves to Death", p. 158-160.

?? - What if we were to combine "Spirit & Truth"? ...What if we were to set the Truth of God next to the Indwelling Spirit of God? ...Welcome to the N.T.!!

Acts 2:1-4 ¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Rom 8:9-11, 15-16 ⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

... ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

"[Paul] was always 'doing' theology, grappling with how the Gospel works—and works out... The only worthwhile theology after all is one that is translated into life; and Paul's understanding of the Spirit is ultimately a matter of lived-out faith. The experience of the Spirit was how the early believers came to receive the salvation that Christ had brought, ...the Spirit is foundational to their entire experience and understanding of their present life in Christ." **Gordon Fee**, "Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God", p. 2-3