

# Desperate for the Lord

Romans 12:1-2  
*January 21/28, 2024*

In chapter 12 of his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul shifts from intricate theology in earlier chapters to a more practical application of these truths. He emphasizes the necessity of wholehearted dedication to God. These initial two verses provide a summary of the response to God's grace and serve as an introduction to the broader section from 12:1 to 15:13. Essentially, they capture the essence of living in a way that brings pleasure to God.

## **Romans 12:1-2<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> 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.

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## Opening Questions

1. Consider the word 'desperate.' How would you define that word in a simple and understandable way to an 8-year-old?
2. When was the most recent instance when you felt a sense of desperation? What was the specific thing you were yearning for in that desperate moment?

## Bible Study

3. On the opposite page, highlight or circle the words that you feel are most significant from these verses.
4. In the boxes below, make an effort to rephrase each verse in a way that is understandable to you.

*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.*

*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.*

5. In your group setting, work together to build out a list of the astonishing mercies from God that Paul has previously mentioned in the book of Romans. To help, you may consider including the following verses: Romans 3:24; 4:5, 7-8; 5:1,2, 8; 8:1, 15,17,18,28,38-39.
6. God calls us to serve Him motivated out of love and thankfulness for these mercies. See also 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. In contrast, what are some wrong motives people can have to serve God?
7. How do these two verses guide us in surrendering our entire lives to the Lord in worship, rather than just a specific part of ourselves?

8. In the Old Testament worship was manifested through animal sacrifice. What does Paul mean by “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice”? If you’d like to look elsewhere in Scripture to build out your answer, consider looking also Romans 6:13-16, 1 Peter 1:14, and 1 John 2:15.
9. According to verse 2, what must happen in order for a person to discern and agree with the will of God? Why do you think this needs to happen first, and how can we bring this about in our lives?
10. What priorities or changes is the Lord leading you to make so that His word will govern your thinking? What specifically are you going to do to allow His word to rule your heart?
11. Romans 12:2 describes how we are to live dedicated to God. What does the verse tell us NOT to do? What does Paul say in Romans 1:25 is the practice of the world? What do they worship? What are some idols the world has that Christians must guard against?
12. To live for God, a Christian must make a decision regarding the world. What happened to Demas when he began loving the world in 2 Timothy 4:10? What values and patterns of thinking and acting that are of the world do you sometimes struggle with? What decisions regarding the world’s values and practices is the Lord showing you that you need to make?
13. Consider the following statement:  
**“To break away from my struggles with the world, I need to try harder as a Christian.”**  
Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?

