**Week of May 26, 2019**

**Romans 12 1-8**

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly\*, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

**Understanding the Scriptures**

In today’s lesson Paul addresses the Christians and pleads on behalf of the mercies of God. It was by God’s mercy that Christians have received the righteousness of God through faith the Christ. So, Paul says because of the mercies of God, there are some responsibilities that every Christian owes God because of the new life they received through the righteousness of God. Their bodies are to be sacrificed to God. Sacrifice happens when people resist their own way and seek the will of God instead. The Jews of the time believed that evil powers dominated this age, which is implied in the word world in verse 2. Paul warned Christians about conforming to worldly standards and behaviors. The world’s standards are very different from God’s standard. Paul advised the people to allow God to transform their minds, so they would no longer desire the things of the world. Living “according to the flesh” in verse 5 means living to satisfy our sinful, selfish desires. In Galatians 5:16-26, Paul describes in greater detail the struggle within believers between the “flesh” and the “spirit”. Finally, Paul outlined the seven spiritual gifts, but God has given numerous spiritual gifts and still makes them available for Christians to do His work. When people are saved, God determines which spiritual gifts they will receive so they can begin serving others. No one needs to worry; every believer is gifted.

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