

ROMANS 12:1–8 (ESV), CALLED TO SERVE

¹I 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. ²Do 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.

³For 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.

⁴For 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. ⁶Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸the 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.

Discussion Questions (Choose a manageable number to discuss)

1. What are some activities or causes about which neighbors or acquaintances of yours are passionate?
Does it take what Pastor Garrett Nates called a recruiting “sledge hammer” to obtain their involvement?
2. Upon what (verse 1) is Paul’s appeal to the Roman believers to serve each other based?
What condition of ours necessitated God’s mercies?
To what does the “therefore” of this sentence refer?
3. What response (verses 1–2) is called for, and to whom is it to be made?
Why do you think this is called “spiritual worship”?
4. How will sacrificing *all* of ourselves to God transform our thinking about “sacrificing” temporary pleasures of this world?
(See also Mark 8:34–36.)
5. How (verse 3) will the kind of transformed thinking called for in this passage lead to a paradigm shift in how we think about ourselves?
Are we at the center of our universe, or is Christ?
Are we volunteers whose service to God is an optional activity?
Has thinking this way about “filling slots” in our church led to an “unintentional recruitment crunch”?
6. How (verses 4–5) will this mind renewal change how we relate to others in our church?
7. How do verses 6–8 bear out Pastor Nates’s observation that “individuality is best expressed in community”?
8. How could you answer the overall question Pastor Nates posed: What does your commitment to this church community and its ministry tell about your commitment to the gospel?