

# - Week 17 -

## Romans 12

Read 12:1-3

This is the *introduction* to a section that runs to 15:8. Paul deals with practical applications of the doctrine he has presented in the preceding chapters, specifically in the areas of:

- Relationships between peers in the church (12:3-21)
- Relationships with those outside of the church (13:1-14)
- Relationships between “weak” and “strong” believers (14:1-15:7)

Why do you think he arranges his discussion this way?

Consider This Translation and Diagram of the Passage

I am coming alongside you to encourage you, brothers/sisters,

↓ ↓

By the mercies of God

You are continually presenting your bodies as a living sacrifice **[infinitive]**

↓  
↓  
↓  
↓  
which is

↓  
↓  
which is holy and to God  
acceptable  
your spiritual worship  
(or reasonable service).

DO NOT BE CONFORMED to this world **[both commands]**  
BE TRANSFORMED by the renewal of your mind

That by being tested [by God, see 1:28, 2:18]

You are continually discerning what is the will of God (8:37-38) **[infinitive]**  
→ good (7:18-19)  
→ acceptable (12:1)  
→ perfect (2:27)

The Verbs and Why Forms are Important:

The infinitive form of a verb is extremely flexible in Greek. We usually translate it as “to \_\_\_” but this is not the only sense of the mood. An infinitive expresses the verb as an abstract reality, rather than as an action in time.

When a verb pair appears in the imperative (command) with one in the negative, they are generally meant to be a reflective relationship. They mirror each other.

Discussion

- How does this passage read differently when “present your bodies” is not a command?

- Paul is not dealing with conditional statements. When he says he is encouraging us, it is to *see* the reality of the two infinitive phrase. How does verse 1 summarize his discussion in preceding chapters?
- Consider the paired commands in verses 2-3. What is the difference between *conform* and *transform*? (The two verbs do not rhyme in Greek, not even close.)
- When you hear the word *testing*, what does it evoke in your mind? How does testing relate to *discerning*?
- As you read the callback references in verse 3, how is Paul defining “the will of God?”