

Core Values: Ministry Focused

Week 4 Study Questions

[Romans 12:1-13](#)

We are either focused on ourselves or we are focused on others. But when we start with the perspective of God's mercy and reflect on what he has done for us, it is only reasonable to then pour ourselves out for others as Jesus did for us. As we sacrifice ourselves and our time for the body of Christ, our gifts will allow us to do what God has called us to do. Instead of spending our time trying to perfectly identify our individual gifting, we can jump in to serve and trust that those around us will clarify and affirm our gifts.

Application

1. As you think about being ministry focused, do you lean towards self-protection or self-promotion and in what ways? How have you dealt with some of these issues? In what ways can you repent?

Self-Protection	Self-Promotion
Crave comfort	Crave Significance
Fearful of the "burden" of serving	Fearful of irrelevance or insignificance
"If I expose myself, my gifts, and my time, I might lose my comfort or find myself under this burden"	You are always thinking of how to be in the center of what is going on and in the middle of every room. It feels like a deep loss to sit in the back.

2. Paul's appeal for serving is based on everything God has done for us, not on anything we can accomplish ourselves or any particular need to be met. In what ways have you wrongly fed your soul off of what you are getting done for God or needs you are meeting versus feeding your soul on what God has already done for you? How has that affected your joy? What are some practical ways you can renew your perspective by reflecting on what God has done?

3. Read Romans 12:1 and 2 Timothy 4:6-7. What is the command here? How does this contrast with our culture's need to "create balance" and be comfortable? How are you or are you not living in this type of sacrificial serving (see key point #2 for more on this)?
4. Bill explained that the "how" of living a life of sacrificial serving is through continually being transformed by the renewing of our mind; In what ways do you daily reorient your mind around Scripture? How have you seen your mind transformed over time to come in line with the truth of God's Word?
5. We need humility that our service is rooted in God's sovereignty—in how HE wants to use us. And instead of seeking to perfectly deploy our gifts through self-discovery, we should just serve joyfully as we have opportunity and allow our community to clarify and affirm our gifts. Have you had this happen for you? When is a time that you were able to affirm someone else's gifts based on how you benefited from them? Where can you step out and start serving?

Key Points

- Serving starts from the perspective of all that God has done for us, and gaining that perspective happens in two ways: We read and understand through Scripture, and we *experience* God's faithfulness and work in our lives.
- We are commanded to be a living sacrifice as Jesus was for us, expending ourselves for others. If we don't experience sacrifice in the way Paul is talking about it in Romans 12, we will not experience the sufficiency of God because we are already full. We have to leave a lack and dependency in our lives that God has the opportunity to fill. You will only experience his sufficiency when you get to the place of your insufficiency.
- The sacrifice required of us has three qualifiers: living (daily, incessant, not a once-for-all kind of thing), holy (set apart, repentant), and acceptable (well-pleasing).
- One of the challenges we have as a church who values teaching is we can learn a lot but harden our hearts by hearing more than doing. We have to check ourselves to be sure we are acting on what we learn since we have access to so much truth.
- It is the quiet, ongoing, steadfast sacrifice that is the mark of true discipleship.
- A sustainable life of ministry can only be fueled in view of God's mercies.

Scripture References

[Luke 9:23](#)

[2 Timothy 4:6-8](#)

[Revelation 3:14-22](#)