

Dedicated Living

Romans 12:1-20

INTRO: Spirit-filled living is a life of dedication, first to the Lord and then to the family of God. Christianity is not a private life; it is a life lived in the fellowship of God's family and in the world as members of His family pointing the way to Him. Paul addresses a variety of characteristics that should be true of all believers and are true of Spirit-filled believers. Romans 12 gives us four major topics of this nature:

I. Living a Life of Dedicated Devotion to God

- A. Worship is a lifestyle, not an event. A true, spiritual service of worship is not found in an order of service, but in a life that is presented to God as a *living* and holy sacrifice.
- B. The key to transformation is a renewing of our mind—to think the way God thinks, to share the same view of the world that God has. (This comes to us now largely through the Scriptures.)
- C. This devoted life and transformed thinking results in living out the will of God: that which is good, acceptable, and perfect (not one or the other, but all three simultaneously.)

II. Every Believer has a Gifted Calling which is to be Lived Out in the Family of God

- A. A balanced self-image: thinking not more and not less than we ought to think of ourselves
- B. The body of Christ has many members with different functions, we belong to each other in the interest of being whole and well
- C. We are expected to exercise our gifts for the benefit of the Body of Christ: Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Leadership, Mercy, to name a few...

III. Spirit-filled Believers Love One Another Genuinely

- A. Abhorring what is evil and clinging to what is good
- B. Devoted to one another in brotherly love; giving preference to one another in brotherly love
- C. In the context of loving one another:
 - 1. diligent, passionate, serving the Lord
 - 2. rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer
 - 3. contributing to the needs of fellow believers, practicing hospitality

IV. Living Together in the Family with Empathy, Humility, and Forgiveness

- A. Bless those who persecute you (in and out of the Church)
- B. Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep
- C. Treat everyone with the same respect
- D. Do not be wise in your own opinion of yourself
- E. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone
- F. Do not take your own revenge. Put all injustice and offense in the hands of God and let Him deal with those who have been cruel. Forgive those who sin against you and do not hold it to their account.

CONC: Spirit-filled living is a family affair. Most anyone can "be spiritual" if they are by themselves. But we are called to love and to serve one another; to live in the community of a born-again family with members who are at various stages of growth. Those who are Spirit-filled are to live a life which models Christ in spiritual maturity.