



FIRST LIGHT CHURCH

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Date: 5/21/23

Series: My Next Step

Text: Romans 12:1-2

BIG IDEA: What conforms you, transforms you.

ICEBREAKER: What has played a big role in shaping who you are today?

CONTEXT: Romans has been an incredibly rich letter filled with deep theological realities, like the righteousness of God and mystery of salvation. Next, Paul is going to get practical and tell followers of Christ how they can live out the realities of the Gospel.

PASSAGE: Have a volunteer read Romans 12:1-2.

DISCUSSION:

1. What does Paul want believers to do according to verse 1?
2. How does Paul connect the sacrificial system from the Old Testament to his appeal in verse 1?
3. What would it look like for you to live your life for God?
4. What does Paul say not to do in verse 2?
5. What does it mean to be conformed to this world?
6. What does Paul say is the key to not being conformed to this world?
7. Why is renewing our minds important?
8. What role does "testing" play in our spiritual maturity?
9. Why would we want to know the will of God?

APPLICATION:

10. What is mostly conforming you?
11. How can you renew your mind this week so you can better live out God's will for your life?

K4 CONNECTION:

In our community, people are being conformed by this world to live for themselves. As we live out our value of whole-life worship, we honor and please the Lord. We also experience the blessing of living out the will of God in our community. This week, let's show our neighbors and coworkers the power of the Gospel by living a transformed life because we are being conformed into the image of Christ!

CARE AND PRAY:

- Pray for our graduating seniors, that they would own their faith and continue pursuing Christ.
- Share any prayer requests with one another.

COMMENTARY

[v.1] The discourse now turns toward application of the theological truths of chapters 1–11 to daily Christian living and life together in the church.

“Appeal” and “brothers” convey Paul’s personal care. “Mercies” serves as a bridge back to the nine mentions of “mercy” in chapters 9–11. God’s mercy is an impetus and framework for daily living. Presentation of our “bodies as a living sacrifice” suggests a fulfillment of the intent behind certain OT sacrifices, which signified the worshiper’s personal commitment to God. Such sacrifice, then and now, needs to be “holy and acceptable to God.” “Spiritual [logikēn] worship” can be understood as worship motivated and ordered in a reasoned way based on the careful understanding of the gospel and its implications presented in chapters 1–11.

[v.2] “World” is the age in which we live, with its conviction and loyalties. Christian commitments entail loyalties to higher truths than are commonly affirmed or believed. As thinking (“mind”) is “transformed” by the gospel and its teaching (cf. 6:17), believers subject what they learn to the “testing” of everyday life circumstances. The result is discernment of God’s will—what is “good and acceptable and perfect”—in everyday situations. Christian life is lived out not primarily in the hour or two spent “at church,” but in the other 166 weekly hours spent in the home, workplace, or at leisure.

Commentary taken from the ESV Expository Commentary Romans 12:1-2

WHERE’S THE GOSPEL

Following numerous and important doctrinal explorations of God’s plan of redemption in previous chapters, Paul appeals to his readers “by the mercies of God” (mercies that make believers “holy and acceptable to God”) to let all he has said about the Gospel do its glorious work. The ethical vision of these later chapters of Romans flows from the grand vision of divine grace in the first 11 chapters. Giving glory to God (11:36) is worship, and that is what the Gospel enables (12:1) as people present their whole selves and lives completely to God. Part of this is a break with “this world” in its negative aspects, allowing renewal and discernment (v. 2), resulting in life that is “good and acceptable and perfect” (that is, “complete,” fulfilling God’s purposes).

The aim of the gospel is not merely doctrinal truth, but lives that connect with God, delight in His will, and further His interests in glad communion with Him.

Commentary taken from the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible Romans 12:1-2