

# Your Ministry

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## Lesson #12

### Preparing to Minister

#### Scripture: Romans 12:1

Believe it or not, we have spent more than three months studying one chapter in the Bible, Romans 12. The theme of our study has been service (as is the theme of this chapter). Every Christian has a ministry to perform for the Lord and to others. We have at least one gift that puts us into a ministry to the church, the Body of Christ. Functioning according to our gifts, we meet the needs of the other members of the church (vs. 1-13). Each of us also has a ministry, or perhaps more exactly a witness for Christ, to the unsaved world. Our contacts with the lost must help our witness to them and not hinder it (vs. 14-21). It is very exciting to think of the purpose of life as serving other people. It is even more exciting to think that God is going to use us to help others! To be used of God is the greatest experience on earth. However, the Book of Romans is clear in teaching that we must *prepare* our lives to be used of God. Some of what we are going to study this week will review what has been taught in previous lessons in this series, and some will be “new.” However, all the points we are going to make are vital to a life of ministry, and therefore merit our attention this week. Here are 3 things you must have before you can minister effectively.

Chapters 1 through 5 give a wonderful and quite thorough exposition of God’s salvation from the penalty of sin. Chapter 1 tells us why mankind is condemned for its sins. Chapter 2 reveals that even upright, religious people are deserving of condemnation. Chapter 3 concludes that “*all have sinned*” and deserve punishment, but it also shows how faith in the propitiation that Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross will justify any sinner. Chapter 4 explains that faith in Christ not only takes away the guilt and condemnation of our sins by the blood of Christ, but that it also imputes the righteousness of Christ to our account. Now comes Chapter 5 saying that we have been “*justified by faith*” (v. 1). Justified means to be made right. We

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no righteousness, but we got Christ’s by faith. We had plenty of sins, but Christ paid for them and we found forgiveness by faith in Him. We are “*now justified by his blood*” and “*saved from wrath through him*” (v. 9). “*We have now received the atonement,*” says Romans 5:11, and atonement means complete reconciliation with God—at-one-ment! We sinners are now made right with God. We have “*peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” You cannot serve the Lord until you are saved. You cannot minister with the Lord’s help until you are at peace with Him. Do you *know* that you are saved and on your way to Heaven? The key to assurance of salvation is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Look carefully again at Romans 3:19-26. Put your faith in what Jesus did for you on the cross, and He will save your soul. So has God promised!

#### 2. “The Spirit of God” (Romans 8:14).

When you trust in Christ for salvation, you receive the Spirit of God. Romans 8 calls Him “*the Spirit of life*” (vs. 2-4), and says that God’s Spirit helps us know that we are true children of God (v. 16). The chapter also calls Him “*the Spirit of Christ*” and teaches that the presence of the Holy Spirit helps us live like our Savior (vs. 8-10). He is also called “*the Spirit of adoption*” because He helps us relate to God as children of God (vs. 14-27). It is the Holy Spirit Who empowers us to minister for the Lord. Paul wrote in Romans 15:19 that he performed his ministry “*by the power of the Spirit of God*” (Read vs. 17-21). To be ready for service to Christ, we must become acquainted with the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit within us. We must pray for Him to use us. We must depend on Him to work through us. We cannot do God’s work in our own strength. We need the Holy Spirit’s guidance and anointing.

#### 3. Dedication to God (Romans 12:1).

The Bible so clearly promises that every Christian will have a ministry if we present ourselves to God for service. Notice what Romans 12:1 says,

*"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

You must come as *"a living sacrifice."* This term reminds us of Galatians 2:20.

*"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

Our philosophy of life must be *"not I, but Christ."* We must be willing to do *anything* He wants us to do!

Romans 12:1 tells us that we must be *"holy"* when we present ourselves for service. This means we must confess our sins and be cleansed.

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*  
(1 John 1:9)

Being holy means we must turn our backs on all our sinful ways. Be *"holy, acceptable unto God."* If we get right with God about sin and then dedicate ourselves to God for service, the whole ministry scheme of Romans 12 will happen in our lives! Prepare your life today to serve the Lord.