



**Sermon-based reflections connect the week to the weekend!**

*Dig deeper into the talk each week, in a small group or independently. Challenge yourself to see how the message actually makes sense and applies to your everyday life.*

**Message Info:** Responding to God's Mercy, 7/2/23 - God's compassion and mercy are beautiful and boundless. We can admire Him for that and be grateful, but...is that it? Should we keep Him to ourselves? This talk digs deep into how God's goodness should change our lives. (*Passages: Romans 12:1-8, Philippians 3:20, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 Timothy 4:12, Philippians 1:6, 1 John 3:16*)

**Discussion Questions:** Take your time and dig into these questions.

What does "serving" look like to you? Is it a very specific picture, or is it vague? Is serving reserved for church leadership or seasoned members? Can we serve outside of our skills and preferences?

Read Romans 12:1-8. What stands out to you in this passage? Why?

Sacrifice in the Old Testament was a temporary covering of sin, but foreshadowed the perfect propitiation that is Jesus Christ. He is the perfect example of a living sacrifice. He *lived* in full surrender. This is what Paul was urging the early church to model their own lives after, and it should be our response to God's mercy. So how does that translate to our everyday lives?

To live in full surrender to God, we must:

1. Have the right mindset (v. 2) - the transformation Paul refers to doesn't simply happen. It's key to remember that we don't belong to the world any longer (Philippians 3:20) because we are new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our minds belong to God, so they should be submitted to Him. How can we nurture the renewing of our minds?
2. Have the right attitude (v. 3) - The goal of using our God-given gifts should only be to glorify Him. How can we get off course if we aren't careful?
3. Serve with the Body (v. 4-5) - We are each called to carry out specific parts of God's plan, and it's best accomplished as a unified body. How effective would the church be if everyone operated individually?
4. Know our gifts (v. 6-8) - All gifted uniquely, we compliment one another. If you're unsure of your gift, you can take a spiritual gift test online, pray about it, or simply start serving.

**Weekly Challenge:** Reflect on 1 John 3:16 and what laying down *your* life looks like.