



UPSIDE DOWN



KINGDOM

SUMMIT POINT WOMEN'S STUDY

SCHEDULE

DISCUSSION GROUPS

9 : 1 5 - 9 : 5 0 / 6 : 3 0 - 7 : 0 5

MOVE TO WORSHIP CENTER

9 : 5 0 - 9 : 5 5 / 7 : 0 5 - 7 : 1 0

WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

9 : 5 5 - 1 0 : 0 0 / 7 : 1 0 - 7 : 1 5

MESSAGE

1 0 : 0 0 - 1 0 : 4 5 / 7 : 1 5 - 8 : 0 0

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Upside Down Kingdom

WEEK 1 DISCUSSION GROUP QUESTIONS



1. INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE GROUP:

- a. Please share your name with the group.
- b. Please share one thing that intrigues you or a question you may have about the title of the study.

2. SCHEDULE:

- a. Please look over the schedule in the front of your notebook.
- b. For in person, Jonna or someone will give a 3-5 minute warning before you need to close in prayer.
- c. Please be sensitive to times especially because we will now be livestreaming the messages and have to be extremely accurate to our start time.
- d. If at all possible, please come a few minutes early so that you can enjoy the time in your groups to the fullest extent.

3. HOMEWORK:

- a. Please start each homework day with prayer so that we can invite the Lord to be part of our study time.
- b. We will have 5 days of homework. Please try to do the homework each day rather than trying to get it in all at once. Please try and let the “catch up” plan be the exception and not the rule.
- c. Homework questions with asterisks (*) will be the discussion questions for the coming week.

4. GETTING OUR HEARTS READY FOR THE STUDY:

- a. What is one thing you see in the world’s plan that is upside down from God’s kingdom plan? (A passage that may help is 1 John 2:15-17.)
- b. How do you think worship impacts our relationships with other people?
- c. If you could look forward 5 weeks from now, what is one thing regarding your relationship with Jesus that you hope this study will help you grow in?
- d. If you could look forward 5 weeks from now, what is one thing regarding your relationship with others that you hope this study will help you grow in?

5. PLEASE CLOSE THIS TIME IN PRAYER.

- a. Please ask the Lord to prepare your heart for the message you’re about to hear.
- b. Please ask the Lord to help you to open your heart and mind to what the next 5 weeks will bring.

Week One: Listening Guide

UPSIDE DOWN SACRIFICE: YOUR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

ROMANS 12:1-2



I. True spiritual worship _____ myself to God as a _____ sacrifice. (1)

II. True spiritual worship is not _____ but _____ by the renewal of my mind. (2a)

III. True spiritual worship seeks to _____ and _____ God's good, acceptable, and perfect will. (2b)

Week One: Homework

UPSIDE DOWN SACRIFICE: YOUR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

ROMANS 12:1-2



DAY ONE

PRAY: Commit your study time this week to the Lord and ask Him to reveal His truth to you.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:1a “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice.” Please read this verse several times, emphasizing a different word each time you say it.

STUDY: Paul begins Romans 12 with the words, “I appeal to you, therefore...” Before looking at what he’s appealing for us to do, let’s look at what the “therefore” is there for. For the next few days, we’ll look at a few passages that help us put this appeal into context. Today, we’ll look at Romans 5:12-17 as we learn about the “mercies” of God.

Please read Romans 5:12-17 and answer the following questions:

1. On the table below, please write down what came through Adam vs. what came through Jesus:

ADAM	JESUS
V.12	V.15
V.12	V.15
V.12	V.16
V.14	V.17
V.15	V.17
V.16	
V.17	

2. *This study is called, “Upside Down Kingdom.” How is vs. 16, specifically what follows “many trespasses,” upside down from what the world teaches?

3. *Romans 12:1 says, “I appeal to you, therefore...to be a living sacrifice...” From this passage that we just studied in Romans 5, what would be the reason to be a living sacrifice to the Lord?

Please close this time in prayer, telling the Lord what you learned about the reason you would be willing to be a living sacrifice for Him.

DAY TWO

PRAY: Please offer this time to the Lord, remembering what you learned from day one. Ask Him to lead you into greater understanding of these verses.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:1a. Using the phrases below, please write out the verse on the lines provided.

To present your bodies, therefore brothers, as a living sacrifice, I appeal to you, by the mercies of God.

STUDY: Today we’ll continue to study what the “therefore” is there for. Yesterday we saw the beautiful mystery of the free gift of righteousness given by the Lord. Now we will look at the absolute and unconditional love of the Lord. Please read Romans 8:28-39 and answer the following questions:

1. In vs. 28, we learn that God wants to work all things together for our good. How does vs. 29 clarify what that “good” is? Please describe how that would affect how we handle the struggles of life.

2. For a person who struggles with embracing God’s love and acceptance, what hope from vs. 31-34 would you give to encourage that person?

3. *How and why would God’s love be helpful when facing the struggles listed in vs. 35-36, 38-39?

4. How does vs. 37 give you an understanding of vs. 35-36, 38-39?

5. *What does it look like to conquer as a believer, keeping in mind that the truths in vs. 29 don't necessarily change our circumstances?

Please close this time in prayer, telling the Lord what reasons you found from today's passage to be a living sacrifice for Him.

DAY THREE

PRAY: Please ask the Lord to show you what He would like you to learn from your study today.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:1a Please fill in the blanks below:

I _____ to you _____, brothers, by the _____ of _____
to present _____ as a living _____,

STUDY: Continuing on with the "therefore," we'll take one more look back. We have seen God's free gift of righteousness and mercy. We have seen His love that overcomes even death. Today we will look at His incredible wisdom and worth. Please read Romans 11:33-36 and answer the following questions:

1. Please define "unsearchable" and "inscrutable," and rewrite vs. 33 in your own words.

2. What impact does it have on your understanding of God that no one is wise or knowledgeable enough to give Him counsel?

3. *Vs. 35 says, "Who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid?" What kinds of expectations do we sometimes place on God, thinking that He "owes" us something?

4. *Please explain how a person struggling with pride would respond to this passage versus a person who is humble.

5. Looking back over the last three days, please summarize the reasons that being a living sacrifice to God in worship is a worthy calling.

DAY FOUR

PRAY: Please open this time in prayer, asking the Lord to show you more of who He is.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:1a. Please review this verse and then rewrite it on the lines below as though it's a personal note from God to you.

STUDY: Today we finally look at the call on our lives to be a living sacrifice to God. Therefore, since we have learned all of these truths about God over the last several days, what does God call us to do? What matters to the heart of God?

Worship has often been defined as the part of the church service that includes singing. But we will see here in this passage that worship is a lot more than that. We are made to be worshipers. We worship someone or something 24 hours a day. The question is not, "Do we worship?" The question is, "Who or what are we worshipping?" Please read Romans 12:1-2 to get a deeper understanding of worship, and answer the following questions:

1. How does this passage expand upon your understanding of what worship is?

2. *Please compare this passage in Romans with 1 John 2:15-17. How is conformity (assimilation) to this world an obstacle to being a living sacrifice for God?

3. What is the difference between conformity (assimilation) and transformation (metamorphosis)?

4. *Notice the passage doesn't say, "Transform yourself." It says, "BE transformed." (It also doesn't say, "Don't conform yourself...but don't BE conformed.") What's the difference between "doing" and "being," and how does this transformation take place?

5. *Why is the renewal of our minds necessary for testing and discerning the will of God? By implication, what will we be tempted to think of the will of God when we're not having our minds renewed?

Please close this time in prayer, and tell the Lord what you learned about being a living sacrifice for Him as well as any areas of your life that you see yourself being conformed to the world.

DAY FIVE

PRAY: Please open this time in prayer, and ask the Lord to show you what He wants you to learn today.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:1a - Please write out the verse from memory.

STUDY: Today let's turn our attention to the Lord and tell Him what we've learned this week. Before completing the following sentences in prayer to the Lord, please go back over your homework from Day 1-4 and read Romans 12:1-2 once more.

Complete the following sentences in prayer to the Lord:

1. Father, You call me to be a living sacrifice because...

2. I realize that worship is more than...

3. I get tempted to conform to the world when...

4. It seems to me that the area of my mind You are renewing right now is...

5. *The way I've tried to discern Your will in the past was...but now I see I need to...

Please end this time with one more prayer, telling the Lord what you've learned about why He is worthy of your living, sacrificial worship.

Week Two: Discussion Questions

UPSIDE DOWN SACRIFICE: YOUR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

ROMANS 12:1-2



1. What impacted you from last week's message.
2. This study is called, "Upside Down Kingdom." How is vs. 16, specifically what follows "many trespasses," upside down from what the world teaches?
3. Romans 12:1 says, "I appeal to you, therefore...to be a living sacrifice..." From this passage that we just studied in Romans 5, what would be the reason to be a living sacrifice to the Lord?
4. How and why would God's love be helpful when facing the struggles listed in vs. 35-36, 38-39?
5. What does it look like to conquer as a believer, keeping in mind that the truths in vs. 29 don't necessarily change our circumstances?
6. Vs. 35 says, "Who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid?" What kinds of expectations do we sometimes place on God, thinking that He "owes" us something?
7. Please explain how a person struggling with pride would respond to this passage versus a person who is humble.
8. Please compare this passage in Romans with 1 John 2:15-17. How is conformity (assimilation) to this world an obstacle to being a living sacrifice for God?
9. Notice the passage doesn't say, "Transform yourself." It says, "BE transformed." (It also doesn't say, "Don't conform yourself...but don't BE conformed.") What's the difference between "doing" and "being," and how does this transformation take place?
10. Why is the renewal of our minds necessary for testing and discerning the will of God? By implication, what will we be tempted to think of the will of God when we're not having our minds renewed?
11. The way I've tried to discern Your will in the past was...but now I see I need to...

Week Two: Homework

UPSIDE-DOWN GIFTINGS – BY GOD’S GRACE – FOR GOD’S GLORY

ROMANS 12:3-8



DAY ONE

PRAY: Before you begin your study this week, ask the Lord to help you gain a fresh understanding of the gifts He has given you and how He may be leading you to use them to encourage other believers.

MEMORIZE: This week we will memorize Romans 12:1b “. . . holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” Write the memory verse on the lines below or on a notecard to use for reference and meditation throughout this week.

STUDY: Following the instructions from Romans 12:1-2, in verses three through eight Paul gives guidance regarding the renewed mind and transformed life. Specifically, he focuses on how believers in Christ should use the gifts they have received from the Holy Spirit to serve one another. Recognizing our natural tendency to prideful thinking, he begins by sharing how we should think of ourselves.

Please read Romans 12:3-8.

1. On the lines below record repeated words or phrases, power words, and key ideas that you notice in this passage.

2. From these verses, what do you learn about God?

3. From the verses, what do you learn about your responsibilities as a believer in Christ?

4. *Record any questions that you have about these verses.

5. Based upon what you have read today, what is one thing that you feel led to start, stop, or change in your life?

As you close in prayer today ask the Lord to help you commit yourself to careful consideration of the Scripture that you are studying this week and how it may be applied to your life.

DAY TWO

PRAY: Open your study time in prayer, asking God to show you what it means to think of yourself with “sober judgement.”

MEMORIZE: Read or say Romans 12:1b out loud several times. Try to fill in the blanks below without looking. “... _____ and _____ to God, which is your _____.”

STUDY: In Romans 12:3 we read two contrasting commands where Paul says something negative and then something positive. This is a pattern of instruction that he often uses to encourage believers to not only remove sinful words, actions, etc, but to replace them with right thinking and actions.

Please read Romans 12:3-8

1. Why do you think Paul started this section with the words, “by the grace given to me”? Do you see any significance in his repeating this phrase in verse six?

2. *In verse two we are challenged to be transformed by the renewal of our minds. What are the two contrasting instructions given in verse three that contribute to our renewed thinking?

3. *In what ways is this type of thinking (from verse three) different from the current idea of “self-esteem”?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 4:7. How can this verse help you understand Romans 12:3?

5. How does thinking of yourself with sound judgement help you combat pride?

As you close in prayer, ask God to show you any areas where you may be following a worldly pattern of seeking self-esteem and to renew your mind so that you think of yourself with sound Biblical judgement.

DAY THREE

PRAY: Before you begin your study today, ask the Lord to help you better understand what it means to be a member of His body, the church.

MEMORIZE: Read Romans 12:1b or say it from memory out loud. Emphasize the words that are most impactful to you.

STUDY: In Romans 12:4-5 Paul shares how each believer individually functions as part of the church. God has created the body of Christ and it is unique among all human organizations. Cultivating renewed minds and good judgement in our thinking is vitally important as we each consider how we are called to use our God-given gifts as part of the church.

Please read Romans 12:3-5.

1. In what ways do the instructions in Romans 12:4-5 relate to what we are told in verse three?

2. *Read I Corinthians 12:12-26.

a. How do these verses challenge your thinking of what “church” is?

b. According to these verses, why is there no room for personal pride in the body of Christ?

c. From these verses why has God created the church as a body with individual parts that all work together?

3. *How could the verses you have read today help renew your thinking when you are tempted by feelings of jealousy or envy in regards to the gifting someone else may have been given that seems more desirable to you?

4. The pattern of this world is to elevate ideas such as individuality, personal success and winning. Based upon what you have studied today, how does the idea that you are one part of the whole body challenge your thinking about what it means to be successful?

Close your study by sharing with the Lord what you have learned today. Thank Him for revealing these things to you.

DAY FOUR

PRAY: Thank the Lord today for giving you spiritual gifts. Ask Him to help you better understand what it means to use your gifts as a member of His body.

MEMORIZE: Try to recall Romans 12:1 from memory without looking. Write the entire verse by filling in the blanks below.

I _____ to you therefore, brothers, by the _____ of _____ to present your _____ as a living _____, holy and _____ to _____, which is your _____.

STUDY: In Romans 12:6-8 Paul encourages believers to use the variety of “grace gifts” that have been given to each one by the Holy Spirit. The giftings listed in these verses are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all spiritual gifts, but rather to highlight the beautifully diverse, yet complementary way believers contribute to growth in the body as each one uses their God-given giftings.

Please read Romans 12:6-8.

1. From Romans 12:6a, write down what you learn about spiritual gifts.

2. Read I Peter 4:10-11.

a. From these verses what is the purpose of grace gifts in the lives of believers?

b. What are the outcomes of believers using their gifts?

c. Peter lists 2 types of gifts. What are they and how specifically should each be used?

3. *Based upon the two passages you read today, what conclusions can you draw about spiritual gifts?

4. *In what ways have you been called to speak to and/or serve others in the body of Christ? Spend a few minutes thinking “outside the box” about how you could use the spiritual giftings God has given you. Record any thoughts you have below.

Close your time of study by sharing with the Lord what you have learned today. Prayerfully commit to using your grace gifts in service to others for the glory of God in Christ.

DAY FIVE

PRAY: Ask God to open your heart to the ways that He might be calling you to use the spiritual gifts He has given you as a means to serve other believers.

MEMORIZE: Review Romans 12:1 and write it below without peeking if possible!

STUDY: In Romans 12:3-8 we have learned that each believer has been given a measure of faith as well as differing gifts of grace from the Holy Spirit. And yet we are called to use this diversity toward the goal of building up the one body of Christ. Pastor John Piper encourages us to view our spiritual gifts “not as differences among contestants in a game where we try to beat each other, but differences among parts of a body where we try to serve each other.”

Please read Romans 12:6-8

1. These verses list seven different grace gifts. Using the chart below, list each gift mentioned along with a brief definition. In the third column record any additional instructions given for the use of that particular gift. If you need help with the definition you could use an online Bible dictionary or study Bible.

GIFT	DEFINITION	INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

2. Why do you think Paul gives specific instructions for how the individual gifts are to be used?

3. *Think of some practical ways each of these could be used to build up the body of Christ and encourage other believers. This may be as part of the physical organization of the local church or in other interactions with fellow Christians.

4. *How does what you have learned about spiritual giftings relate to what you learned in Romans 12:1-2?

5. Peek back through your lessons from this week. On the lines below, summarize what God has taught you.

As you complete your study this week praise God for how He has uniquely gifted you by His grace. Ask Him to continue to show you how you can better serve Him and others by using these gifts.

Week Three: Discussion Questions

UPSIDE-DOWN GIFTINGS – BY GOD’S GRACE - FOR GOD’S GLORY

ROMANS 12:3-8



1. What impacted you from last week’s message.
2. Record any questions that you have about these verses.
3. In verse two we are challenged to be transformed by the renewal of our minds. What are the two contrasting instructions given in verse three that contribute to our renewed thinking?
4. In what ways is this type of thinking (from verse three) different from the current idea of “self-esteem”?
5. Read I Corinthians 12:12-26.
 - a. How do these verses challenge your thinking of what “church” is?
 - b. According to these verses, why is there no room for personal pride in the body of Christ?
 - c. From these verses why has God created the church as a body with individual parts that all work together?
6. How could the verses you have read today help renew your thinking when you are tempted by feelings of jealousy or envy in regards to the gifting someone else may have been given that seems more desirable to you?
7. Based upon the two passages you read today, what conclusions can you draw about spiritual gifts?
8. In what ways have you been called to speak to and/or serve others in the body of Christ? Spend a few minutes thinking “outside the box” about how you could use the spiritual giftings God has given you. Record any thoughts you have below.
9. Think of some practical ways each of these could be used to build up the body of Christ and encourage other believers. This may be as part of the physical organization of the local church or in other interactions with fellow Christians.
10. How does what you have learned about spiritual giftings relate to what you learned in Romans 12:1-2?

Week Three: Homework

UPSIDE DOWN LOVE: LIVING LOVE

ROMANS 12:9-12



DAY ONE

PRAY: As you begin studying today, pray that you would gain a deeper understanding of God's love for you so that you can demonstrate that same love to others.

MEMORIZE: Our memory verse this week is the first part of Romans 12:2. Write the verse on a notecard or on the lines below. If you use a notecard, place the notecard where you can read over it at least once a day this week. Romans 12:2a: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,".

STUDY: Paul moves into a section of commands in Romans 12:9-21 that help us understand how we can practically offer our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord in our daily lives. And how would we first and foremost offer our bodies in worship to the Lord? We love others well because of how God loves us. Begin by reading our passage for the week, Romans 12:9-12. Then answer the questions below.

1. List the characteristics of the love God calls us to show to others in Romans 12:9-10.

2. Which of these characteristics comes more easily to you? Which do you find harder to demonstrate?

3. From verses 11-12, what do you think it means to be fervent in spirit?

4. How would thankfulness, patience, and prayer help to increase fervency?

5. *How do you think that love and zeal relate to each other? How do these commands connect?

Wrap up your study time today by using John 13:34-35 as a prayer to the Lord. Put your name in the blanks and personalize the call to love that comes from Jesus Christ himself. After personalizing these verses, use them as a guide to cry out to the Lord for help to grow in love for Him and others.

“A new commandment I give to you, _____, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, _____, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you, _____, have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

DAY TWO

PRAY: Begin with prayer, asking the Lord to reveal any selfishness that would taint love for Him and others. Ask Him to give you new insight into how to love those around you with genuine purity.

MEMORIZE: Refer to your notecard or to yesterday’s homework. Read Romans 12:2a. Say the verse out loud a few times, emphasizing a different word each time.

STUDY: Today we will take a deeper look into how to love others with sincerity and purity, as Romans 12:9 describes. Sincere love means that I love others without selfish motives and without hypocrisy. Pure love means that I seek God’s best for others, as I run from evil and cling to what God says is good. Is this the way that you love others around you? Begin by reading Romans 12:9, keeping this question in your mind and heart as you study today.

1. The Greek word for love found in verse 9 is the word *agape*. This word describes love as a choice, a commitment that I make to love that is not based on my feelings. Why is it important that the love we are called to is not just a feeling but a choice?

2. *If we obey the command to love without the feelings of love, are we being hypocritical or insincere? Why or why not?

3. *Notice in verse 9 we are told to abhor what is evil and cling to what is good. How does not tolerating evil while being glued to good help me to love others?

4. Also notice that we are told to abhor *what* is evil, not *who* is evil. How can this differentiation help you to love others with kingdom love?

5. *How can you develop a Godly hatred for evil? How can you develop a love for what God loves? Try to list one or two tangible actions you could take to help you to hate evil and love good.

Close in prayer, telling the Lord one step you will take to grow in genuine, pure love for others from what you studied today.

DAY THREE

PRAY: Pray that the Lord would show you one specific way to love others affectionately and humbly as you study today.

MEMORIZE: Refer to your memory verse. Turn Romans 12:2a into a prayer to the Lord. Then try to say it from memory.

STUDY: Yesterday we saw that the love that God calls us to is a love of choice, that seeks what's best for the other person according to God's standards. Today we will look at how to love others in the upside down kingdom with affection and humility. Paul uses a different Greek term for love in verse 10. This word indicates that we are to love others with a devoted, brotherly love, like the love we would find between family members. Read Romans 12:10 and then answer the questions.

1. What characteristics would you see in a family that is loving, close-knit, and mutually supportive? List all that you can think of.

2. How could these characteristics translate into the family of God, the church?

3. One nuance to the meaning of showing honor to others is that we look for ways to honor others *first*, before we would be honored. What could you do to honor those around you in this way? Think about your family (spouse, kids, etc), your coworkers, your friends, and your church family.

4. *Read Philippians 2:3-4. How do these verses help in your understanding of Romans 12:10?

5. *How would your relationships change if you truly loved with the affection and humility that Paul describes here?

Close in prayer, asking the Lord to help you to love with the affection and honor that he calls you to.

DAY FOUR

PRAY: Before you study, pray that the Lord would show you any areas of your heart that need to be stirred up with zeal for Him.

MEMORIZE: Refer to your memory verse. Try to say Romans 12:2a from memory. Review any portion of the verse that trips you up.

STUDY: The fact is that we have a tendency to lose heat as time goes on. Paul describes this phenomenon in Romans 12 as a loss of zeal. Our enthusiasm wanes. Our fervency is less ardent. Our love grows cold. These verses directly address this issue. Today we will use some definitions to help us examine our own hearts. Begin by reading Romans 12:11 and then answer the questions.

1. *The word zeal can be translated as diligence. Diligence means to have steady, energetic effort. Does a steady, energetic effort describe your relationship with the Lord right now? Why or why not?

2. Another word that can be used in place of zeal is enthusiasm. Enthusiasm refers to what controls your mind, where you give your thoughts in lively interest. Do the things of the Lord take first place in your thoughts? Think about what your thoughts shift to when you have free time, and what stirs you up in your thinking and heart. Is it the things of the Lord or something else?

3. Another word that can take the place of zeal is earnestness. To be earnest means to be fully serious in intent and purpose, not hesitating, reluctant, or unwilling. Do you willingly go after the Lord with all your heart and mind, not hesitating or resisting his Word and Spirit?

4. Another word that can be used in place of zeal is swiftness. In relationship to the Lord, to be swift means to quickly obey what the Lord reveals is His priority. Are you quick to obey the Lord, in all that is revealed by His Word and Spirit? What keeps you from swiftly obeying?

5. *The word fervent means to be “on the boil”. Think about what it takes for water to come to a boil: a heat source and time. In our own lives, to stir up fervency for the Lord, we also need a heat source and time. What are some things that would act as a heat source for your relationship with the Lord? What does the need for time to develop fervency indicate to you?

Close in prayer. Talk to the Lord about where your zeal for Him is right now. Tell Him about what you will do to stir up zeal for Him.

DAY FIVE

PRAY: Ask the Lord to open your heart and mind to his Word today. Pray that He would reveal any new ways that you can apply the truths of scripture found in Romans 12.

MEMORIZE: Write your memory verse, Romans 12:2a, on the lines below. Try to write it from memory.

STUDY: Like the steam on a steamboat powers the engine, the fervency that we have for the Lord needs to be directed so that it can accomplish a purpose. Fervency without direction will quickly fizzle out. Where should the boiling up, the fervency of spirit that we learned about yesterday, be directed? Today we will look at Romans 12:11b-12. Be thinking about how fervent you are in the areas that Paul points out. Begin by reading Romans 12:11-12 and then answer the questions.

1. Where is the outlet for our boiling up and fervency to be according to verse 11b? What could this look like in your life?

2. *The word used for *serve* in verse 11 comes from the Greek “doulos”. One who lives as a doulos to His Lord is a bondservant who is surrendered fully to His Master’s will and devoted to Him to the disregard of his own interest. How does this definition of serving shape your understanding of zeal?

3. In verse 12, Paul lists 3 commands that will help to stir up our fervency and service to the Lord. Put each command in your own words.

a. Rejoice in hope:

b. Be patient in tribulation:

c. Be constant in prayer:

4. *How could doing these three things help to stir up fervency as you serve the Lord?

5. Which of these three commands do you need to apply to your life today to stir up your own fervency in serving the Lord? How can you apply it?

Close in prayer, telling the Lord how you want to apply what you have learned this week as we have studied the love and fervency of His kingdom.

Week Four: Discussion Questions

UPSIDE DOWN LOVE: LIVING LOVE

ROMANS 12:9-12



1. What impacted you from last week's message.
2. How do you think that love and zeal relate to each other? How do these commands connect?
3. If we obey the command to love without the feelings of love, are we being hypocritical or insincere? Why or why not?
4. Notice in verse 9 we are told to abhor what is evil and cling to what is good. How does not tolerating evil while being glued to good help me to love others?
5. Read Philippians 2:3-4. How do these verses help in your understanding of Romans 12:10?
6. How would your relationships change if you truly loved with the affection and humility that Paul describes here?
7. The word zeal can be translated as diligence. Diligence means to have steady, energetic effort. Does a steady, energetic effort describe your relationship with the Lord right now? Why or why not?
8. The word fervent means to be "on the boil". Think about what it takes for water to come to a boil: a heat source and time. In our own lives, to stir up fervency for the Lord, we also need a heat source and time. What are some things that would act as a heat source for your relationship with the Lord? What does the need for time to develop fervency indicate to you?
9. The word used for serve in verse 11 comes from the Greek "doulos". One who lives as a doulos to His Lord is a bondservant who is surrendered fully to His Master's will and devoted to Him to the disregard of his own interest. How does this definition of serving shape your understanding of zeal?
10. How could doing these three things help to stir up fervency as you serve the Lord?

Week Four: Listening Guide

UPSIDE DOWN CARE: HUMBLE PURSUIT

ROMANS 12:13-16



I. Humble care seeks to _____ believers, strangers, and enemies. (13-14)

II. Humble care _____ with those who rejoice and _____ with those who weep. (15)

III. Humble care is about _____ and not _____. (16)

Week Four: Homework

UPSIDE DOWN CARE: HUMBLE PURSUIT

ROMANS 12:13-16



DAY ONE

PRAY: Please open your study time in prayer, and ask the Lord to help you learn and apply what he wants to teach you.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:2b. That by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Please read this verse several times stressing a different word each time you say it.

STUDY: Today we'll focus on the call in Romans 12:13 to "Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality." What better way to understand this verse than to look at the example of the one who exemplified it the best? Please read Mark 6:30-44 and answer the following questions:

1. First, look back at Mark 6:14-29 to understand the context. All four gospel accounts of the feeding of the 5000 were preceded by the same event, so we can know that it happened chronologically.

a. What had taken place right before the event in vs. 30-44?

b. How do you think Jesus would have been dealing with the loss of His cousin, John?

2. Please take a good look at the scene of what is taking place. What phrases or words from vs. 30-44 can you point to that describe Jesus' attitude toward the people?

3. *How do you see Jesus both modeling and teaching the disciples about caring for people's needs and showing hospitality? Why do you think this was an important lesson for Him to teach them?

4. In a biblical context, contributing to needs refers to believers. Meanwhile, seeking to show hospitality refers to providing help for "aliens" or strangers. What are some practical ways that God can use your gifts and talents to...

a. contribute to other believers' needs?

b. show strangers hospitality?

5. *What is the difference between obeying this command as an act of worship to the Lord versus doing it from some other motivation? What other motives could there be?

Please close this time in prayer. Tell the Lord what you learned from Jesus' example today, and confess any motives you can see in your own life that aren't stemming from worshiping Him.

DAY TWO

PRAY: Please offer this time to the Lord, asking Him to show you what it means to care well for those in your life.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:2b. Please complete the verse by filling in the blanks.

that by _____ you may _____ what is the _____ of _____ what is _____ and acceptable and _____.

STUDY: Today's passage is a hard one. It is one thing to say we're going to follow God's word. It is a whole other thing to follow through when the circumstances around us are hard. But Jesus never asks us to do anything that He hasn't first modeled to us. As we remember Romans 12:14—"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them"—let's take a look at some ways Jesus modeled this very difficult command.

1. Please read John 13:1-5, 21-28. Imagine being Judas, having already received the 30 pieces of silver to betray Jesus.

a. *How did Jesus model Romans 12:14 to Judas?

b. What do you think Judas would have been thinking while Jesus was washing his feet?

2. Please read Luke 22:39-51. After washing the disciples' feet and having supper with them, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.

a. How did Jesus model Romans 12:14 to the soldier?

b. *Please think of all the people mentioned in this passage. Which person do you most see yourself in? Why?

3. Please read Luke 23:26-43. To whom and how did Jesus model Romans 12:14?

4. *Who in your life is God calling you to model Romans 12:14 to, and what is one step you can take toward blessing them?

Please close this time in prayer, telling the Lord who you're going to bless rather than curse, even when they are persecuting you.

DAY THREE

PRAY: Please open this time by thanking the Lord for what He is teaching you this week and asking Him to show you what He would like you to learn today.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:2b. Please write out the verse by unscrambling the phrases below:

what is and acceptable and that by testing you what is good may discern perfect. the will of God

STUDY: Today, we read the passage from Romans 12:15—"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." We'll continue with our plan to see how Jesus modeled this for us. Please read John 11:17-44. John 11:4 and John 11:11 make it clear that Jesus knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead.

1. Notice how Martha and Mary approached Jesus. Do you think they were afraid or unafraid to talk with Him? What in the passage helps you draw that conclusion?

2. What words or phrases in this passage help you to see that Jesus was weeping with those who wept?

3. *How does the fact that Jesus already had a plan to raise Lazarus from the dead impact your understanding of God’s view of your own sorrows?

4. *Think about living out Romans 15:14.

a. What effect does our pride have on it?

b. What effect does our humility have on it?

c. What effect does the pride or humility of others have on it?

Please close this time in prayer, and tell the Lord where you need help in weeping with those who weep or rejoicing with those who rejoice.

DAY FOUR

PRAY: Please open this time in prayer, asking the Lord to help you better understand what it looks like to live in His Upside Down Kingdom.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:2b. Please review this verse and rewrite it on the lines below.

STUDY: Today we’ll see one passage that will show how Jesus modeled Romans 12:16—“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.” We’ll look at His example in John 5:19-30. This passage came right after Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, which upset many of the Jews. They were seeking to kill Him because He called God “His own Father, making Himself equal with God” (vs. 18). And yet, we still see in this passage His humility as He lived out Romans 12:16. Please read John 5:19-30 and answer the following questions:

1. *Please look at John 5:19-20, 25-27. What evidence do you see of Jesus and the Father living in harmony?

2. From this passage in John 5 and the other passages you've read about Jesus this week, how do you see Jesus not being haughty but rather associating with the lowly? Who are the lowly?

3. *Please note John 5:30.

a. How is Jesus, who is God, choosing not to be wise in His own sight?

b. How were the Jews choosing to be wise in their own sight?

4. What aspects of Romans 12:16 do you see Jesus wanting to help you do better, and why do you think that?

Please close this time in prayer, taking some time to worship the Lord for always modeling to us what He calls us to do.

DAY FIVE

PRAY: Please offer yourself to the Lord today, asking Him to guide you in understanding His words for you today.

MEMORIZE: Romans 12:2b. Please review the entire verse today and write it on the lines below.

STUDY: Today let's turn our attention to the Lord and tell Him what we've learned about Jesus and ourselves this week. Before completing the following sentences in prayer to the Lord, please read Romans 12:13-16, and look over your homework from Day 1-4 once more.

Complete the following sentences in prayer to the Lord:

1. Lord, You tell me to contribute to the needs of the saints and to seek to show hospitality to the strangers. I can see one way You're leading me to do this better by.....

2. Father, Jesus modeled both weeping and rejoicing with us so perfectly. When I compare rejoicing with those who rejoice to weeping with those who weep, I find it easier to.....because....

3. Father, living in harmony with others can be hard. We are all so different and sometimes our personalities clash. Please help me to pursue living in harmony with.....One step I'll take in pursuing harmony is.....

4. Father, I am the lowly. Jesus was not haughty with me, but associated with me. I worship You for.....and I ask You to help me to take this to heart with (person's name).....

5. Proverbs 28:26 says, "Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered." Father, I confess to You that I have confused Your wisdom with my own opinions and thoughts. Please forgive me for trusting in my own mind by...

Please close this time with one more prayer, telling the Lord how living out Romans 12:13-16 will be your spiritual form of worship as you are a living sacrifice for Him.

Week Five: Discussion Questions

UPSIDE DOWN CARE: HUMBLE PURSUIT

ROMANS 12:13-16



1. What impacted you from last week's message.
2. How do you see Jesus both modeling and teaching the disciples about caring for people's needs and showing hospitality? Why do you think this was an important lesson for Him to teach them?
3. What is the difference between obeying this command as an act of worship to the Lord versus doing it from some other motivation? What other motives could there be?
4. How did Jesus model Romans 12:14 to Judas?
5. Please read Luke 22:39-51 and think of all the people mentioned in this passage. Which person do you most see yourself in? Why?
6. Who in your life is God calling you to model Romans 12:14 to, and what is one step you can take toward blessing them?
7. How does the fact that Jesus already had a plan to raise Lazarus from the dead impact your understanding of God's view of your own sorrows?
8. Think about living out Romans 15:14.
 - a. What effect does our pride have on it?
 - b. What effect does our humility have on it?
 - c. What effect does the pride or humility of others have on it?
9. Please look at John 5:19-20, 25-27. What evidence do you see of Jesus and the Father living in harmony?
10. Please note John 5:30.
 - a. How is Jesus, who is God, choosing not to be wise in His own sight?
 - b. How were the Jews choosing to be wise in their own sight?

Week Five: Listening Guide

UPSIDE DOWN PEACE: PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONAL PEACE
ROMANS 12:17-21



I. Principle 1: Live _____ with all people. (17-18)

II. Principle 2: Leave _____ in the Lord's hands. (19)

Lined writing area at the top of the page.

III. Principle 3: Overcome _____ in and around you by doing _____. (20-21)

Lined writing area for notes under Principle 3.

Week Five: Homework

UPSIDE DOWN PEACE: PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONAL PEACE

ROMANS 12:17-21



DAY ONE

PRAY: As you begin studying today, ask the Lord to show you the steps that you can take this week to seek peace in all your relationships.

MEMORIZE: This week we will be reviewing our memory passage from the study. Let's begin with Romans 12:1a. Look back at the verse from week 1 homework and try to say it from memory. Thank the Lord for His great mercies and tell Him of your desire to live as a sacrifice for Him.

STUDY: As we close out our study of Romans 12, we come to a challenging passage. Paul has been calling us to live as sacrifices to the Lord as we relate to others: to those in the church, to our family and friends and to those we have daily contact with, and even with our enemies. How do we as believers respond to hostility and mistreatment from others? Begin by reading our passage this week, Romans 12:17-21, and then answer the questions.

1. Thinking about verse 17, what is our natural instinct when dealing with people who have hostility toward us?

2. Verse 18 could be translated: "Give thought in advance to do what is good in the eyes of all people". How would doing this help you to live peaceably with everyone and respond in a way that honors the Lord?

3. Why do you think that, "vengeance belongs to the Lord" (vs 19)?

4. How are we to treat those who mistreat us according to verse 20? Why do you think we as believers are called to do good even when we are mistreated?

5. *Read 1 Peter 2:20-23. How did Jesus respond when he was reviled and hated? How can Christ's response help you in dealing with hard relationships and hurt?

Close your study time with prayer, telling the Lord one aspect of Romans 12:17-21 that you are thankful for.

DAY TWO

PRAY: As you begin studying today, meditate on Matthew 5:9, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Ask the Lord to give you wisdom and understanding to know how you can be a peacemaker that honors Him.

MEMORIZE: Refer to Romans 12:1b from week 2 homework. Try to say the verse from memory. Thank the Lord that because of Christ you can worship Him in spirit and truth.

STUDY: Have you ever desired payback when you’ve been hurt or mistreated? Maybe you didn’t act on those feelings, but you secretly hoped the person who harmed you would suffer just like you suffered. God calls believers to a higher standard of living when we relate to people who have hurt us, He calls us to pursue peace. How can we live as sacrifices to the Lord and live peaceably with all people? Begin by reading Romans 12:17-18 and then answer the questions.

1. Notice vs 18, “if possible, so far as it depends on you”. What does this signify about the peace that Christ calls us to?

2. *What kind of behaviors should you go after to promote peace in your relationships? What do you think it looks like to be a peacemaker?

3. Read James 3:17-18. How does this passage help you to better understand what it means to be a peacemaker?

4. *Is Paul advocating peace at any cost in this passage? (To help answer this question, again look at James 3:17-18 and note that the wisdom from above is first pure and then peaceable.)

5. Are there any steps that you need to take today to be a peacemaker in your relationships? What specific steps do you need to take? (This includes close relationships like family and friends, relationships in the body

of Christ, work relationships, relationships with acquaintances, your presence on social media, strangers that you come into contact with, etc.)

Close in prayer, telling the Lord one step you will take today to pursue peace in your relationships this week.

DAY THREE

PRAY: Meditate on Romans 5:8, “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Begin by asking the Lord to open your eyes to how you can love others, even those who hurt you, just as Christ has loved you.

MEMORIZE: Refer to your memory verse from week 3, Romans 12:2a. Try to say the verse from memory. Thank the Lord for the transforming work that He is doing in your life.

STUDY: As we continue studying peace today, Paul challenges us with 2 specific commands. If you were to obey these commands fully, how would your relationships change? How do these commands help you in your pursuit of being a peacemaker in God’s upside down kingdom? Read Romans 12:17-18 again and then answer the questions.

1. From verse 17, what two steps does Paul tell us need to be taken if we want to pursue peace? After writing these directives, circle the actions that you are to take.

2. *The first command Paul gives us states, “Repay no one evil for evil.” This command is not only talking about our behavior, but also our words and thoughts and attitudes. How are you doing at forgiving others by not repaying them evil for the hurt they cause you: in your action? In your speech? In your thoughts? In your attitudes?

3. Read Colossians 3:13. Why do we forgive this way, completely and from the heart?

4. Romans 12:17b gives us Paul’s second directive. It states, “...give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.” What are some standards of good that would be right in the sight of all men? Where do these standards of good and right come from?

5. *What is the difference between doing what is honorable before all men and being a people pleaser?

Close in prayer. Ask the Lord to help you to live according to His standards as you pursue peace, love, forgiveness, and right living.

DAY FOUR

PRAY: Meditate on Proverbs 20:22. Thank the Lord that he is the God of justice. Ask the Lord to give you a better understanding of his vengeance and justice as you study today.

Proverbs 20:22, “Do not say, “I will repay evil”; wait for the Lord, and he will deliver you.’

MEMORIZE: Refer to your memory verse from week 4, Romans 12:2b. Try to say it from memory. Thank the Lord that His will is not hidden but that it is knowable as you seek Him.

STUDY: What does it mean that God is the God of vengeance? How can this truth help you as you deal with hurt and strive for peace in your relationships? Begin by reading Romans 12:19-21. Then answer the questions below.

1. What are we to never do according to verse 19? Knowing that God calls us not only to right action but also right thinking and a right heart, what do you think this command looks like?

2. *The next phrase in verse 19 is actually a quote from Deuteronomy 32. Read Deuteronomy 32:34-36. How does this passage help you to understand God’s wrath, vengeance, and justice?

3. *Do you find it hard to leave justice and wrath in God’s hands when you have been wronged? Why or why not?

4. On Day One we looked at Jesus’ example in 1 Peter 2:23. Look at this passage again. What can you learn about how to respond when you are wronged? What can you learn about leaving vengeance in the hands of the Father?

5. Not only are we called to not seek vengeance, we are called to take our response a step further. What does verse 20 tell you about how you should respond when you are wronged?

Close in prayer. Ask the Lord to help you trust him as the just judge and commit to prayerfully seeking the good of those who might be considered your enemy.

DAY FIVE

PRAY: As you begin studying today, ask the Lord to help you to obey and put His word into practice, remembering that “the word of the Lord is right and true” and “He is faithful in all He does” (Psalm 33:4).

MEMORIZE: Let’s put together all we have learned over the past few weeks. Try to write Romans 12:1-2 from memory. Ask the Lord to help you live as a sacrifice to Him as you obey His word.

STUDY: What does it take to live in victory over evil? Maybe some would answer prayer, godly leadership, or godly training. But what does God’s word tell us it takes to conquer the evil we find in ourselves and around us? Today we will continue to study Romans 12:19-21, as we look at our call to do good and gain victory over evil. Begin by reading the passage and then answer the questions.

1. *How would doing good to your enemy overcome evil...

a. In your own heart?

b. In the heart of your enemy?

c. In the world around you?

2. *In Romans 12:20, Paul quotes another Old Testament passage, Proverbs 25:21-22. How does giving our enemy what he needs instead of what he deserves “heap burning coals on his head”? What should be our

motivation behind this action, remembering that we are called to love our enemies?

3. *Read Luke 6:27-36. List specific ways that you can overcome evil with good from the examples that Jesus gives.

4. What actionable steps could you take today to apply one or two of these examples to your life?

5. What's one take away that you need to apply to your life from the passage this week?

The call to us this week is difficult, but because of God's Spirit and strength in us we can walk out these directives with power and victory! This is what it means to lay down self and live as a sacrifice to the Lord. Is there a specific person that you need to love in a fresh way today?

Close in prayer, asking the Lord to empower you to live as a sacrifice as you seek to overcome evil with good by loving others as He has loved you.