

DEEPER LIFE BIBLE CHURCH NL | SUNDAY SERMON | 18 MAY 2025

EXPECTED LIFESTYLE IN GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

Bible Reading: Romans 12:1-21; 13:1-14

When we come into God's fold, He teaches us His word to transform our lives. His purpose is to conform us to the lifestyle in His Kingdom (Rom 8:29). That is why we need to learn the pattern of life He has designed for us. These two chapters of Romans instruct us on how to live practically to please God (1 Thes 4:1,2).

ENTIRE CONFORMITY IN HOLINESS AND FELLOWSHIP Romans 12:1-21

The beauty of the call into God's Kingdom is that we are expected to be formed after the image of God. God appeals to your will and judgment as a believer, so He can work in you and use you in His fold. You must willingly yield yourself to Him. Chapter 12 focuses on practical attitudes in your walk with God:

- **Rom 12:1,2: An appeal to consecration:** Present your body a living sacrifice. Animals to be offered to God in the Old Testament were to be without blemish. As the priest presented (the blood of) the animal before God, so should you present your own body do to God while you are still alive. In other words, you belong to Him completely. Holiness is the beginning of acceptable service. Do not seek to copy the world around you but get transformed through the renewing of the word of God.
- **Rom 12:3-5: A mentality of humility:** Renew your thinking also. Self-centred, self-elevating thinking should give way to humble, sober thinking. To condescend is a conscious, intentional and active choice to humble yourself. You receive God's word meekly and obey it cheerfully. Also, understand that there are many members in God's household; esteem others and be joined with others in the Body.
- **Rom 12:6-8: Focus on ministry:** You are not expected to be a busybody in the fold. Focus on your appointed duty and do it well. God will equip you to do what He has called you to do. Your gifting is as important as that of your neighbour. Fulfil your ministry earnestly. Envy no one, despise no one.
- **Rom 12:9-17: Attitude in fellowship:** Love others without pretence, with a pure heart fervently. Shun evil like gossip, backbiting, planning to hurt another, etc. Cleave to the good at all costs. Deny yourself to delight another. Do not project yourself or please yourself at the expense of others. Look for the good of your brother or sister. Work hard. Serve with enthusiasm. Be patient. Make prayer your natural language. Give for the benefit of other members. Do not reward evil for evil. No curse, no verbal attack, but blessing. Help those in need, unite with the body. Live honestly: no hypocrisy, no deceit.
- **Rom 12:18-21: Relationship to people outside the fold:** Strive towards a good report among unbelievers. Follow peace. Never compromise your faith, retaliate or avenge. Overcome evil with good.

EXEMPLARY CITIZENSHIP WITH HEAVENLY FOCUS Romans 13:1-14

Romans 13 instructs us on how to live as Christian citizens. Members of God's Kingdom ought to distinguish themselves in the world with a lifestyle that adorns the Gospel so that God's name is not blasphemed. How?

- **Rom 13:1-4: Subjection to rulers in God's stead:** The command to be subject to rulers or leaders is for "every soul". Rulers operate in God's stead, for "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Whether spiritual or secular, if rulers do not compel us to do evil, sin or deny our faith, we should not resist. Resisting rulers is resisting God Himself; it brings damnation.
- **Rom 13:5-7: Our duties as exemplary citizens:** The need to obey rulers is also for our own conscience. Rebellion defiles the conscience. Be not part of those who rise against leadership. Moreover, you should pay your dues as a citizen: tax, customs, fear, honour. Tax evaders and the like are sinning.
- **Rom 13:8-10: The primacy of love: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another..."** A believer should have a clean sheet as far as debts are concerned; but the debt of love is a perpetual one. You should love your neighbour as yourself. That way, you will fulfil the entire law.
- **Rom 13:11-14: Consciousness of heaven:** The chapter closes with a call to focus on our destination. Heaven is the focus of meaningful religion. He who aims at heaven should walk honestly, soberly and peaceably. Putting on the new man means we no longer walk in the flesh or fulfil its lusts.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" – John 13:17