

# Your Personal Christian Life

By W. Madison Grace II

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Use an online Bible dictionary such as the one at [www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com). Or use a printed Bible dictionary from your pastor or church library. Look up the word *body*. List the passages used in the New Testament and provide what you think is the best definition of *body*. Prepare to share your findings with your group.

### Assignment Two

Use an online Bible dictionary such as the one at [www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com). Or use a printed Bible dictionary from your pastor or church library. Look up the word *worship*. List some major passages used in the Bible and provide what you think is the best biblical definition of *worship*. Prepare to share your findings with your group.

### Assignment Three

Suppose a small child thought that  $2+2=5$ . Later a teacher taught the child to replace that mental error with the fact that  $2+2=4$ . In the brain, what is happening as a child erases the thought that was in error and replaces it with the thought that is correct? Do an online search regarding what is happening on a cellular level. Prepare to share your findings with your group.

### Scripture to Memorize

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

### Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand they are to seek daily the spiritual worship God requires.

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## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

Imagine you are at a baseball game with a bunch of friends. A few seats up, friends are making plans to pull a prank on others. The prank they are planning is intended to embarrass and ridicule. You had been invited to participate in the prank, but declined.

Now you have another friend asking you why you decided not to participate. Your first answer is, "Because I'm a Christ follower." The friend's response is, "What does that have to do with it?" How should you finish the conversation?

**Read** Romans 12:1–2 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

This lesson focuses on your personal Christian life and how that life should be lived under Jesus. The book of Romans has much to say about how we are supposed to live. The letter explains the power and importance of the gospel and how it applies to all people, both Jews and Greeks.

**Verse 1. Therefore.** The previous chapters of Romans explain how we are saved in Christ Jesus. **present your bodies.** Paul said that since we know we have a great salvation, we are to present our bodies as living and holy sacrifices.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week may now share what the word *body* means in the New Testament.

### Discussion Question

Paul referred to the body in Romans 12:1–2. What are some of the implications of that teaching for disciples today?

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 1. present.** When we "present" our bodies, we are supposed to do so in the following ways: **a living sacrifice.** Disciples present their bodies as a "sacrifice." Paul used imagery from the Old Testament sacrifices at the tabernacle and later on at the temple. These sacrifices were meant to cover sins, but more importantly were gifts offered up to God. **living.** Disciples continually offer themselves to God, which is why the word "living" is used. The sacrifice is ongoing. **holy.** Disciples also seek to present themselves as a sacrifice that is "holy," which means "without sin." Though we cannot become sinless this side of heaven, we should continually offer ourselves to God and strive to be holy. **acceptable to God.** Proving to be "acceptable to God" is the goal of every sacrifice. **spiritual worship.** Worship takes on many forms. When we present our bodies as living sacrifices to God, we are offering a "spiritual worship." The way we live our lives becomes one of the ways we worship God.

### Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week may now share what they learned about what *worship* means in the Bible.

### Discussion Question

If we are supposed to live a life of continual worship to God, what are some ways we can do this in everyday life?

### On Your Own

Because of your adoration of Jesus, write some specific ways you want to practice “your spiritual worship” in your daily life.

### Studying the Passage

The second verse of this passage provides more clarity on how we are to live out the life of a disciple. Paul provided what we are *not* to do and then lets us know what we *are* to do.

**Verse 2. do not be conformed to this world.** Simply stated, this means we are not to follow the patterns of those who are not believers. Our disciple life should look more like Christ and less like the unbelieving world around us. **be transformed by the renewal of your mind.** If Paul were writing today, he might challenge disciples to reprogram their minds by deleting what is untrue and overwriting it with what is true. **good and acceptable and perfect.** Paul said such transformation would prepare disciples for the acceptable spiritual worship that verse 1 called for. Renewal of the mind is a key to the disciple’s life. Such a life is found by not looking to the world but continually looking to Christ.

### Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share what is happening in the brain as someone erases a thought that was in error and replaces it with a thought that is correct, even on a cellular level.

### Discussion Question

What are some of the ways disciples can be conformed to the world? What are some ways disciples can renew their minds—and even their brains?

### On Your Own

Think about your gratitude for “so great a salvation” (Hebrews 2:3) and your adoration toward the King who died in your place. Out of your gratitude and adoration, think of new ways to offer yourself as a living sacrifice to your King. In the space below, write several specific changes that would make this possible.

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something life for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below, and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

In this lesson we looked at Romans 12:1–2 to discover more of what the life of the disciple is supposed to be like. We first noted that the foundation of the Christian life is the gospel. What God accomplished for us through Jesus Christ is essential to understanding who we are as believers and also how we are to live.

We looked at Romans 12:1 and discovered that we are to practice spiritual worship daily. Worship takes many forms, but one type of worship is a righteous life. We offer this spiritual worship as a joyful sacrifice to our King. When offered with a pure heart, that sacrifice makes us holy, acceptable and pleasing to God.

Next we looked at Romans 12:2 that elaborated on this idea. We discovered that we are not to be conformed to this world. This means we are not to think and act as unbelievers. Then we discovered that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. The life of the disciple is one that continually seeks to be changed by Jesus, in order to think and act like Jesus, for the glory of Jesus.

Disciples who properly follow the principles of Romans 12:1–2 are able to embrace a life continuously focused on Jesus Christ and the coming of His kingdom on earth.

### **Follow up Question**

*None of us is perfect, but you clearly have areas of your life that are righteous. What is one area of righteousness that costs you something and thus is a sacrifice you offer to Jesus?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.