

Are You An 'R12 Christian'?

[The Apostle Paul said] Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:1-21)

Romans 12 provides a relational profile of a genuine disciple of Christ, someone who is:

- Surrendered to God
- Separate from the world's values
- Sober in self-assessment
- Serving in love
- Supernaturally responds to evil with good

Having a real relationship with Jesus Christ will produce a mature follower whose life looks progressively more like His and points others to Him. Christians who live out this kind of authentic lifestyle are what is called an "R12 Christian."

Living an R12 life involves consistently coming "before God" on a regular basis through corporate worship with a body of other Christ-followers, as well as through daily prayer and Bible reading for personal spiritual growth as individuals. Living an R12 life involves experiencing authentic Biblical community with other Christians in casual, small group settings. Living an R12 life involves serving the family of God within the church (as deacons), as well as serving others locally and globally (as missionaries), expressing God's love in action.