

# ROMANS 12-16: Putting Your Faith into Action

## You Can Make an Amazing Contribution!

Rough Transcript

Patrick Morley

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Hello, men. Welcome to another episode of the Man in the Mirror Bible study. I'm Pat Morley. Today, we're going to start a new series on Romans chapters 12 through 16, called **Putting Your Faith into Action**. Please turn in your Bibles to Romans 12:1. The title of today's message is, **You Can Make an Amazing Contribution**.

There are two kinds of people in the world, those who want to make a contribution, and those who don't. You are here in this Bible study because you do. Here's how. I want to tell you how the title of the talk came about. Jim Long, one of our leaders, when the pandemic started, really ramped up his food distribution ministry. And he sent me an email last week, and last month, they distributed 200,000 pounds of food to needy families here in central Florida. And he's praising God for not only the work that they're doing, but just for the privilege of being able to get up and have a reason to get out of the house and make something happen to make a contribution.

Then he finished up by talking about how they went up to Sanford, Florida, just north of town, the Sanford Resource Center. They took 5,000 pounds of food last weekend, and they did a cookout. They did chicken. They did hot dogs. They did hamburgers. Then they gave out free haircuts. They had a free yard sale. At this free yard sale, free yard sale, they handed out clothes, diapers, and microwaves. And he ends up with his email by writing the words in all caps, ABSOLUTELY AMAZING.

That's why this talk is entitled, you can do something amazing. You can make an amazing contribution. You can do an amazing thing like Jim has done too.

### **THE WORLD IS TRYING TO GET INSIDE YOUR HEAD**

But we have a problem, and that problem is our first circle. That is that the world is trying to get inside your head. There's a pattern to the world. Romans 12:2 says, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world."

A lot of the way that people are responding to the crises that face the world today, whether it's health or economic, or racial injustice, or whatever it is, they are taking a militant approach, or they are taking a very selfish approach. "I just need to worry about myself. What's in it for me? I've paid my dues, I don't want to get involved any more." They don't really want to make a contribution, or they want to take advantage of the situation in such a way that they enrich themselves. Or whatever the case may be, they are conformed to the pattern of this world.

Christians, by the way, in this very season are under more siege than they have ever been for their faith. The more you actually walk with God and serve God, and are open about that, the more the world is going to take notice and try to shut you down. What I've learned over the years is that, and this is a very significant principle, the world doesn't mind if you become a Christian as long as you keep living like

you're not. But as soon as you start living out to your fingertips for Christ, then the world will pause to put you down.

So you may or may not have changed the world. The point of this message is, don't let the world change you. I remember my dad, when the evening news would come on, he would sit there and he would get so angry at the way things were going in the world, and he would yell at the TV. And he would scream at the TV. I swore I never wanted to be like that, and I don't do that myself, but how is it that people get to feel that way? They get to feel that way, they get to feel so angry because they feel powerless.

You and I, we are not powerless. The Big Idea today, **don't get mad, get involved**. Don't get mad, get involved.

### **GOD WANTS TO GET INSIDE YOUR HEAD – HERE'S HOW**

Now I want to show you how you can do that. The second circle today, God wants to get inside your head. Here's how. Romans 12:1, I'm going to give you seven ideas here from this text about how God wants to get inside your head. Verse one, "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."

He's talking about the body, but he's also talking about living a sacrificial life. This is a life of full, total, complete surrender to the Lordship of Jesus. Whatever, just saying, whatever it is that God wants from me, that's what I am going to offer him. I'm going to offer my body as a living sacrifice. It's not going to be about me.

Verse two, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." These are really two sides of the same coin. So if you're not being conformed any longer, the other side of the coin is, you're being transformed by the renewing of your mind. This is discipleship. That's what we're doing right here in this Bible study or in your other small groups, or in the church that you're a part of, or in the one-on-one meeting that you have with a man that you're mentoring or he's mentoring you.

Discipleship. Discipleship basically involves helping people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, then growing in that faith and learning how to live it out, and then going to serve God in love and good deeds. The first thing was the body, now the second thing is the mind. So we're making this surrender of our body. We're making this surrender of our mind. We're letting our mind be transformed. Then in verse three, what happens? Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Who doesn't want to know God's will? In fact, if you think about it, everything just really boils down, if you can figure out what God's will is, then your life is going to go the way that you want it to go, because it's going to be going the way that God wants it to go. So through the word of God, through prayer, through listening to the Holy Spirit, through the council of friends to have our minds renewed so that we can know God's will. Don't miss this. He has a good, pleasing, and perfect will. And we can know that through our discipleship and through our surrender.

Verse three. "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.'" The next thing we see in how God wants to get inside your head is, he wants you to be humble. He wants you to have a sober assessment of yourself in accordance with the faith that you have. But the idea is to be a humble person and not to be proud.

Verse four, "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." Another way that God wants to get inside our head is, he wants to understand that we are a

community. God puts us in communities of faith for a reason. There is no such thing as a lone-ranger Christian. If we've learned anything during the pandemic, is that you can't do this alone. So God wants to get inside our head so that we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice in full surrender, that we renew our minds through discipleship, that we discern his will, that we are humble, that we live in communities.

Then in verse six, we have different gifts according to the grace given to each of us. God gives men spiritual gifts, special abilities to do things. Notice however, this comes at the end of this progression of surrendering our body and our mind, and renewing our minds and knowing his will, and humbling ourselves and gathering in communities. Then God gives us gifts.

Reading on. "If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith. If it is serving, then serve. If it is teaching, then teach." Remember here, we're talking about how you can make an amazing contribution with these gifts. "If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith. That would be preaching. If it's serving, then serve. If it's teaching, then teach."

Verse eight, "If it is to encourage, then give encouragement. If it is giving, then give generously. If it is to lead, lead diligently. If it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully."

God wants to get inside your head so that he can build his kingdom through your contribution. I was talking this morning how you can make an amazing contribution. One of our other members, Al Gibbons, is 62 years of age. Al and his wife just adopted three young girls, because they had no one else to take care of them. 62 years old and he just adopted three young girls. Talk about amazing. He's making an amazing contribution. We have another man in our Bible study. Every time he has a conversation with anyone, he's talking about his faith in Jesus. He's making an amazing contribution. You can make an amazing contribution too. The Big Idea today is, **don't get mad, get involved**.

#### WHAT DOES YOUR AMAZING CONTRIBUTION LOOK LIKE?

The last thing to talk about this morning, what does your amazing contribution look like? What does your amazing contribution look like? During World War II, during the resistance to Adolf Hitler, a number of pastors in Nazi Germany, who maybe had not been speaking out at the base beginning, began to criticize Adolf Hitler towards the end of his reign. One of them was a man named Martin Niemöller, and he was arrested because of his resistance, because of his speaking out, and spent seven years in prison.

Later when he was released, he famously said, he famously wrote, "First, they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak up because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak up." It's time to make your mark. It's time to make your contribution, whatever it is. This is not a time to withdraw and say, "Well, I've done all I can do. Now it's up to somebody else." Now is the time to lean in to the problems that are facing the world today.

Understand that yes, the world is trying to get inside your head, but God is trying to get inside your head too. And getting mad is not going to change anything. What's going to change the world is for us to use these spiritual gifts and get involved.

If you want more information on how to figure out what your spiritual gifts are, I want to encourage you to go to, let's see, it's [maninthemirror.org/mentor](http://maninthemirror.org/mentor). There you can download a free copy of the Christian Man Coaching Guide. On page 14 begins a section on how you can determine your spiritual gifts. In this free coaching guide, all four of the texts in the Bible that referred to the spiritual gifts are mentioned, and then all the spiritual gifts are listed out one by one.

And there's a little guide there to help you think through what yours are. Because, I know that you want to make an amazing contribution too. In fact, I can't wait to hear about how God might use you in the year ahead to make some kind of an amazing contribution. Yes, it's been frustrating what's been happening. But the Big Idea here today, **don't get mad, get involved**.

Let's pray. Our dearest father. Thank you for your scripture here, which gives us the way that you want to get inside of our head so that we can know what our gifts are and that we might make an amazing contribution. Maybe like Jim, or maybe like Al, or maybe like someone else that we know. Maybe some of the men who are listening to this message today, they are already making an amazing contribution. I pray that God, you would use them as a witness to other men that they might also figure out how they could, they themselves, not just get mad, but get involved. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you so much, men.