



ONLINE GROUP PLAN

Spring 2020 // Romans // Session 11: Sacrifices

Suggested Use Date: 5/10/2020

For use with Explore the Bible Leader Guide, Personal Study Guide, and Daily Discipleship Guide



PREPARATION

Best Practices for Leading an Online Group



PRAY for your group members and for God to grant you insight as you study and prepare your Bible study session. Do this throughout the week.



SCHEDULE your group's online Bible study using the online meeting tool you prefer. Invite group members and guests to participate using a meeting ID if required by your online meeting tool. [Click here](#) to view a Best Practices document for online groups.



SEND digital copies of the next session to group members who do not have a print copy. If using the *Personal Study Guide*, encourage group members to read the passage and comments for the next session. If you are using the *Daily Discipleship Guide*, encourage your group members to follow up your session by engaging with the five daily Bible readings.



CONNECT with your group via email or text messaging early in the week.

Create your own message:

- Briefly tell the group the title of your next Bible study, why it is important, and what they will learn.
- Challenge group members to study before the group session if your group uses a *Personal Study Guide*; remind group members to follow up your online study with their daily readings if your group uses the *Daily Discipleship Guide*.
- Remind group members when your group will meet online.

Or copy and paste this suggested wording into the email or text message to your group:

When have you sacrificed something important to you for a higher cause? We celebrate people who willingly sacrifice for a greater cause. Paul told the Roman believers that Christians were also called to live as sacrifices. Focus on Romans 12:1-2 and 9-18 in your Bible and read the comments for Session 11 in your Explore the Bible *Personal Study Guide* or *Daily Discipleship Guide*. How does a person's attitudes, actions, and desires demonstrate a commitment to Christ?

We will meet at (add time) using (name of online tool). Here is the link to our meeting: (add meeting ID if your online tool doesn't do that automatically)



PREPARE to lead your group's Bible study.

- **Study** Romans 12:1-2,9-18, identifying the specific commands given.
- **Listen** to the Explore the Bible Adult Leader Podcast. Go to goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training for an overview of the main points and key ideas from each session.
- **Visit** the Explore the Bible blog for additional leader helps at goExploreTheBible.com/Leader-Helps
- **Create** your teaching plan for guiding your group's online Bible study experience. Use the Online Group Plan on the next pages as a starting point, modifying it for your group as needed. Consult the *Adult Commentary*, *QuickSource*, and *Leader Pack* for additional ideas and resources.



REMINDE your group members to study and prepare via another email or text message closer to the day your group meets.

- Include a quote from the *Personal Study Guide*, a question, or an insight you plan to discuss with the group when you meet online.



HELPFUL LINKS

- Explore the Bible main landing page: goExploreTheBible.com
- Digital version of Explore the Bible: curriculum.lifeway.com
- Explore the Bible leader helps: goExploreTheBible.com/Leader-Helps
- Explore the Bible Podcast: goExploreTheBible.com/Adults-Training
- Free Coronavirus links and leader helps: lifeway.com/coronavirus



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GREET people as they join and remind them of the story of Polish military officer Witold Pilecki (PSG, p. 95; DDG, p. 89). Invite the group to recall similar stories of individuals who sacrificed for the good of others. Ask: **Why are those stories important, and what can they do for those who hear these kinds of stories?**

TRANSITION: Paul introduced Romans 5 and 8 with “Therefore” to identify the coming connection of what he had been teaching to what he was about to teach. In Romans 12, Paul used “Therefore” to signify a major shift separating the first half of Romans with the remaining chapters. In Romans 12, Paul transitioned his message from a philosophic journey through the theology of sin and salvation to the practical application of salvation. With the theological foundation firmly set, Paul challenged his readers to live out their faith practically each day. *Option: Use the Extra! idea. See goExploreTheBible.com/LeaderExtras*

READ Romans 12:1-2. Review the paragraph beginning “In the Old Testament, sacrifices were to be holy ...” on page 97 of the PSG or under Day 1 in the DDG, page 93. Explain that to be conformed means a person takes the shape of the surrounding culture but to be transformed means a person experiences complete change from one thing to another. Guide the group to share examples of each.

DISCUSS: How does salvation change the way a person thinks? What impact does salvation have on what a person values? (PSG, p. 99; DDG. P. 91)

HIGHLIGHT: Romans 12:2 is the memory verse. Instruct the group to memorize it in the days ahead as an encouragement for daily living.

READ: Stress that salvation changes how a believer relates to other believers. Read **Romans 12:9-18** and instruct the group to underline key words in each of the directives Paul gave his readers. Review the words you underlined in preparation for the group time.

REVIEW: *Instruct the group:* Identify the actions you do well and the ones you struggle to follow. **How can you improve in relating to all people, especially those who seek to harm you?**

DISCUSS: **What can believers do to foster peace with others? How does the phrase “as far as it depends on you” change the limits believers should go to foster peace?** (PSG, p. 102; DDG, p. 91)

REFLECT: *Call attention to the summary statements and questions on page 103 of the PSG or page 92 of the DDG. Lead the group to respond to the questions, giving particular attention to the second set.*

What would becoming a living sacrifice look like in your life? What would you need to give up? What would you need to add?

Review the commands given, identifying the actions you do well and the ones you struggle to follow. **How can you improve in carrying out each action commanded?**

As a group, identify people who suffer for the gospel. **How can your Bible study group support those individuals? What can your group learn from their example?**

PRAY: *Close the session in prayer, using the lyrics of “I Surrender All” in the Suggested Music Idea.*

RELATE: *Invite the group to share prayer requests. Lead in a prayer of commitment to be living sacrifices.*

If using the Daily Discipleship Guide, remind the group to complete the Daily Explorations this week.

RESPONSE: Ask them to share through the week (using a group text or an app) ways the truths of this session impact them in the week ahead. (If using the Daily Discipleship Guide, let them know that you will be sending the Talk It Out questions throughout the week to the group for response.)

NOTES

NEXT STEPS



- Contact the group and encourage them to memorize Romans 12:2 with you.
- Send digital copies of the next session to group members who do not have a print copy. If using the Personal Study Guide, encourage group members to read the passage and comments for the next session.
- Repeat the process outlined in the Preparation section of this document.