

1. The Church as a Worship Community (Usually when we think of church and worship it is about what goes on here together for this hour or so. We come, we participate and we go home--expressing it in words like, "I went to church today." And certainly this time together is essential and significant--it is God designed for all kinds of beneficial reasons. So as a result we tend even to overemphasize corporate worship--lots of resources go into it and so for many, church is just about the worship that happens each Sunday morning and not really a great deal else--worship then becomes a compartmentalized life to be experienced on Sunday and that is it. Yet--that is not how the Bible portrays it--the church as a worship community is simply about more)
2. (Specifically in) Romans 12:1 (context of Romans leading to text and how verse connects and meaning of textual phrase--spiritual worship/reasonable service--better way to say it could be)
3. "Reasoned Worship" (indicating that first worship really does go beyond what we do on Sundays and second, doing what formulates this kind of worship is a reasoned choice. It is a decision made based on all the evidence presented--in this case Romans 1-11 which leads to putting into practice in real-time what that means--offer up personal sacrifices of service to God in ways he accepts and changes who we are--all of this is called "worship" and it is mostly done outside of what we do together on Sundays. Contextually this would mean Jews and Greeks would get over themselves, work out their differences, using their gifts to serve one another while not sweating disputable matters in order to accept each other as Christ accepted them. This was what could be reasoned out of Paul's teaching and he called it a form of worship--the result of which would be God be glorified, praised and honored--with a church transformed, dynamically living it out for him. All contextualized as "worship." So how would that all play out for us now?)
4. (The church as a worship community--from this text is set in the setting of) God's Mercy (do not overlook--powerful message contextually--mercy was essential to move them past their differences to become one body--so mercy becomes a major driving force behind a worship community. It sets the agenda, which is beautiful, accepting, forgiving, welcoming--godly. Then this happens)
 - a. We come with offerings (from the get-go worship includes gifts and offerings--presented to God. In this case the offering is us--our own bodies. This completely demolishes a view of worship only as a compartmentalized Sunday thing. In this reasoned worship what we give to God is us--all of us first and foremost--all of the time)
 - b. We come with energy and sacrificial spirits (As opposed to the dead animal offerings in the OT or the dead law approach of 1 century Jews--what we offer in reasoned worship is active, alive and energetic faith--it is not static or stale--we give the best of us; we grow to offer even more and we are willing to give up whatever gets in the way. It is a daily transformation--all kinds of spiritual acts of worship that change who we are in order to be like Christ--nothing dead; nothing numbed out; no sleep-walking through Sunday service type thing)
 - c. Our offerings are holy and acceptable (one has to do with the other as God only accepts what is holy--but holy? Too big a bar to jump over, right? Yes--if holiness originates within us, but it doesn't--it comes to us through Jesus and this whole transforming process. What are some of our holy and acceptable sacrifices--keep reading in ch. 12--serving one another with our gifts; loving each other as God loves; express joy, ; share God's gifts, do right, live at peace, even pay taxes, etc)
5. "Wake up from your slumber"--Romans 13:11 (rethink what worship means)