

Transformed by Renewing Our Mind (Rom. 12:1-2)

I. THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

- A. We are called to enjoy our relationship with Jesus and experience His transforming grace by giving ourselves to Him in a wholehearted way and by renewing our mind with the truth.
- ¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1-2)*
- B. ***Present our body to God:*** We are to actively give our body or our whole person to God. The Lord desires communion and partnership with His people. He wants us to give ourselves fully to Him.
- C. ***By the mercies of God:*** Paul presented the truths of grace and mercy throughout Romans 1-11. He especially developed these truths in Romans 5-6. We are in a new position before God referred to as being under the *reign of grace* with glorious new privileges in Christ (Rom. 5:21). We are accepted and enjoyed by God. We have the authority of Jesus' name and the indwelling Spirit, which enable us to resist sin, sickness, and Satan, and we have a significant destiny in God because of His mercy.
1. We are to stand boldly on the truth of God's mercy that makes us acceptable to God knowing that He delights in mercy (Mic. 7:18) and that mercy triumphs over judgment (Jas. 2:13).
¹⁸...because He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)
¹³...Mercy triumphs over judgment. (Jas 2:13)
 2. We present ourselves to God "as alive from the dead" or through the lens of His grace and mercy (instead of as those who are spiritually dead, under condemnation and shame).
¹³...but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead... (Rom. 6:13)
¹There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.... (Rom. 8:1)
- D. ***Acceptable:*** He accepts the offering of our life and service even in our weakness. Many live with despair thinking that the offering of themselves is not really accepted by the Lord. There is great joy and strength in believing that our offering is acceptable and holy.
- E. ***Will of God:*** The Lord has a glorious plan for our life. We do not need to sit in the audience of life and watch others follow God. It is never too late to start following the Lord in a wholehearted way.
- F. ***Prove:*** Our lives are to give evidence that God's will is good, acceptable, and perfect. Our lives are to display the goodness of God's will.
- G. ***Not conformed to the world:*** we identify and resist the spirit of the world and its values (1 Jn. 2:16).
⁴...Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (Jas. 4:4)

II. TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF OUR MIND

- A. We are transformed by changing how we think. It begins by *knowing* what God is like and who we are in Christ (seeing ourselves in the way God sees us in Christ). As our mind is renewed, our emotions are transformed, and thus our behavior changes. Our emotions are not transformed by *trying harder*, but by *seeing more clearly* as we invest effort to fill our mind with the Word.
- ² ***...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind... (Rom. 12:2)***
- B. We have to think and speak what God says in order to feel and act in the way God wants. Where our mind goes, our emotions and life follow. When condemnation, shame, fear, or hopelessness rise up in us to challenge what God promised in His Word about loving, forgiving, directing, providing for us, etc., then we must apply the Word by *confessing the truth* and *resisting lies*.
- C. Satan works to build strongholds in our mind. He plants lies in our mind, seeking to bring us into bondage by his ideas. Wrong thinking causes people to live and feel in negative ways.
- ⁴ ***For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,***
⁵ ***casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,***
bringing every thought into captivity [agreement] to the obedience of Christ... (2 Cor. 10:4-5)
- D. Strongholds in our mind are a collection of ideas that are in agreement with Satan. These lies first accuse Jesus and His leadership, then our standing before Him. They are arguments or lies about His character, power, and wisdom and about our relationship to Him.
- E. ***Every high thing***: demonic lies that attack the truth about God and who His people are before Him. Renouncing wrong ideas or lies about God is foundational to dismantling personal strongholds.
- F. ***Pulling down***: We must pull down, cast down, or dismantle these mental strongholds built on lies. We cast down lies by bringing our thoughts into captivity to God, into agreement with His Word. We fill our mind with the Word and make it a slave that is captive to the truth.
- G. Many assume that what they think does not really matter. Whatever comes to their mind is what they think on. They do not understand that they must take charge and set the course of their thinking. If they think they are afraid or depressed, they assume it is just an expression of who they are, so they do not resist such thoughts. They do not know they have power to cast them down
- H. It is a glorious day when it dawns on you that you do not need to dwell on whatever comes to your mind. We are not captives to random, negative thoughts; we can renew our mind. Many are passive in this because they have not been taught the truth about the value and power of renewing the mind.
- I. God's people must take authority over the spirit of fear and resist it or it will increase. Our words are powerful in causing either faith or fear to grow in us. If our words agree with God's Word, we release His power in our life. If our words agree with Satan's lies, we allow darkness to continue. Many have "faith" in Satan's words. The war of words determines who has dominion in our heart.
- ⁷ ***Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (Jas. 4:7)***
- ⁷ ***God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power...and of a sound mind. (2 Tim. 1:7)***