

Transformation

Romans 12:1-12

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Intro

In Romans 9-11, Paul is giving us God's heart for Israel. They had rejected Christ and so were cut off from the tree. And we, the wild olive branches, have been grafted in.

But though Israel had rejected Him and missed out on all the blessings which God has in store for us, he wrote that God is faithful and true. He is not through with Israel; they will be grafted back into the tree which is in God through Christ Jesus.

How marvelous, how wonderful, Paul says, are the plans of God! **From Him and through Him and to Him are all things!**

Therefore, Paul says, we need to be living as unto the Lord as those branches which have been grafted in. Live as those who are receiving their life, their sap, from God.

These are insights into transformation; we are changed because we receive life from God.

I. Be a Living and Holy Sacrifice

A. By submitting our bodies

- God is saying here that we need to use our bodies for His glory.
- The drives of our bodies are very strong and if they are allowed to be control, we will be in trouble.

Romans 6:13-14, “and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you,”

- Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, as an offering to God.

I Corinthians 6:12-13, “All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.”

Illus – Training Arabian horses by depriving them of water...

B. This is our service of worship

- Paul says that to offer our bodies to God is an act of worship unto the Lord.
- We often think of worship as that which is musical or perhaps in prayer, but worship has a much broader meaning.
- Whatever you do as unto the Lord, is spiritual act of worship. If you've done it unto the Lord, it is then worship.

Illus – We call our services worship services meaning that everything we do is for the purpose of worship. But Paul is referring to much more than just what we do in church.

Matthew 25:34-40 – What you’ve done to the least...

Illus – When Sasha was telling us about his trip to Mexico. He saw in the faces of the children the face of Christ.

C. Pleasing to God

- There were many sacrifices that were not pleasing to the Lord in the Old Testament.
- They offered dead sacrifices, but what He wanted most of all was their heart.

Isaiah 1:11-12, “I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who requires of you this trampling of My courts?”

Psalm 51:16-17, “For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.”

II. God is Changing Us

A. Do not be conformed

- The Greek word means to be molded, to be changed by outward pressure.

Illus – Like a lump of clay that is shaped and molded by pressing and pulling and eventually hardened into that shape.

- Paul says to be very careful about this conforming. The pressures of the age are very clever and powerful.

Illus – The word for world is not the common “cosmos.” Instead, it is the word “eon” which mean, ‘the age in which we live.’

- The age in which we live is powerfully bringing pressure through outward courses; the eyes, the ears, etc.

I Corinthians 15:33, “Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals.’”

Deuteronomy 18:9, “When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.”

- But what if you were born into a culture which does these things? What we need to is be transformed, not just changed.

B. Be transformed from the inside

- The word for transformed in the Greek is the English word, “metamorphosis.” It means to be changed from the inside.
- This is in direct contrast to being “conformed,” or changed by outward pressure, the spirit of the age.
- We are changed by having the Spirit of God within us, by having the mind of Christ.

I Corinthians 2:14-16, “But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. For “Who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”

- There is the key that Paul gives us, we are transformed by the renewing of the mind – the changing of our mind.

C. By the renewing of the mind

- If you can change the mind, you can change the world.

Illus – Muslims schools succeed only when they can keep their students from knowing the truth.

Illus – The Soviet Union began to lose its power over the people when knowledge of the world started coming to the people.

- Renewing the mind means to see life as God sees it.
- How does this happen? By abiding in God’s Word and letting it abide in us.

John 8:31-32, Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

III. Proving the Will of God

A. By giving God our agreement

- The word “prove” in the Greek means to tested, examined and found worthy.

Illus – God tests as He did in the days of Belshazzar (Dan 5:22-28)

- We will find that the will of God is good, what God wants is for us to give our hearty agreement to His will, which is found in His Word.

Philippians 1:9-10, “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;”

Illus – This is a critically important point when raising children. There is a vast difference between obedience and agreement.

Amos 3:3, “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”

B. That which is good, acceptable and perfect

- The will of God is good for us, is well pleasing to God and is complete in every way.
- It is worthy of our agreement and the desire to be changed by it.

I Thessalonians 5:21-22, “But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.”

Micah 6:8, “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Illus – When God directs our lives and whistles for us to stop dead in our tracks, when we strongly want something; that is where we need to agree with God that this is good and that Gods’ will for us is good, well pleasing and complete.

Conclusion

Worship God with your soul and with your body. But this happens when we give God our heart and let Him change us from the inside. We are transformed when we have the Word of God living in us even as we live in it.