

Title: Our Commitment to God

Text: Romans 12:1-2

Take your Bibles, please, and turn to Romans chapter 12. Please remember that the book of Romans is teaching us about the Righteousness of God. We have learned, so far, that God's righteousness involves four principles: the principles of CONDEMNATION, JUSTIFICATION, SANTIFICATION, AND SECURITY. And we have learned that God in His love and Grace will pronounce a person righteous (which is what we need in order to be saved) based upon his/her faith in Jesus Christ and not because of one's performance. We are saved by the wonderful GRACE of God and not by works.

Now, in the next few weeks I want to study the final section of the book of Romans. This fourth section deals with (4A) INSTRUCTION AS TO THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS. How do we apply the righteousness of God to Christian living? That is what chapters 12 through 16 is all about. The application of the principles of God's wonderful righteousness.

(1B) And Paul begins this fourth section by saying that the righteousness of God is demonstrated in certain christian duties. That is the theme of chapters 12 and 13. In order to experience these principles of God's righteousness there are certain responsibilities that we all have.

(1C) AND OUR FIRST DUTY OR RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNS OUR COMMITMENT TO GOD.

What does it mean to be commitment to God? What is involved in COMMITMENT?

Romans chapter 12 verses 1 and 2 (READ)

Prayer

I wish by way of a visual aid that I could have constructed in the front of our sanctuary a large altar. The kind that the children of Israel used in the wilderness. Then, I wish we could have had every individual christian walk single file up in front of that altar and determine whether you were going to climb up on it, lay down flat, and say, "FOREVER, O LORD, I COMMIT MY LIFE TO YOUR WILL." I wish we all could do that. Walk in front of that altar and face in that one moment of time the issue of our commitment to God. PRESENT your body as a living sacrifice to God. WHAT DOES COMMITMENT INVOLVE?

going to climb up on it, lay down flat, and say: "Forever, God has my life
 for his will. I wish I could do that. That each one of us would have
 the freedom of that altar and find in that one moment of time the issue
 of our commitment as to whether we would present our bodies as a living
 sacrifice to God. I believe that is absolutely necessary. And we are going
 to look at that issue today." *(1D)* *Learn For Yourself* *Committed* *(long)*

(1D) First of all, I would like you to notice the motivation behind such a commitment to God. According to Vs 1 of chapter 12 it says "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God."

Now, I *believe that I* could motivate you today by saying, "that the world is *is* great need of christian workers to spread the Gospel of Christ. And, therefore, you should present your bodies as a living sacrifice to God. While that is good, that is not what the Bible is teaching here.

OR ~~Secondly,~~ I might say to you something like this: "I urge all of you to present *your* life to God because you will be much happier if you do." That also is true. But that is not what *Paul* is saying.

I might suggest that there are problems in our midst and if we would only be committed to God, some of these problems would be solved. But again that is not the motivation of Vs 1.

The motivation is the mercies of God. That because God in His great wisdom has pronounced you and me righteous who know Christ, not because of anything we have done, but because of what Jesus Christ *has* done. That is the *mercy* of God.

Because God is making us different through the process of sanctification, which begins the moment you become a Christian, and God continually makes you different, he is continually setting you apart for himself, that is his mercy, that is *His* work, he is doing it. AND BECAUSE OF THAT *WE SHOULD* *Commit* ~~WE NEED TO~~ *CONSECRATE* OURSELVES TO GOD...

I might also emphasize from Romans 8 the matter of security when God says that nothing can separate us from the love of God. That again is another one of *his* mercies *that ought to cause commitment in your life*

I might, also, emphaize to you that God taught in Romans that all of us are under condemnation. We deserve ~~God's~~ ^{God's} judgment. But because of his mercy, he wholes ~~it~~ ^{judgment} back from us. He loves us.

The Bible says in Lamentations 3 that ["]his mercies are new every morrowing And great is his faithfulness. And it is because of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed. Because ["]his compassion fails not. Therefore, my brethren, because of God's mercies, let us present our bodies to God.

It is a logical thing that any believer should do. If we understand that we are heading towards heaven, not because of our own abilities or merits but we are going to heaven because Christ saved us by His grace. Then present you bodies as a living sacrifice to God. THAT IS THE MOTIVATION.

It is the mercies of God that ought to lead the ~~believer~~ ^{Christian} to say without any hesitation, "I now willing present my body as a lving sacrifice for God to use."... *And I hope you will make that commitment today 1982*

(2D) I would like you to notice, secondly, the manner inwhich this is done.

There are two things that I would like you to see concerning the manner in which this is done.

(1E) First, according to Vs 1, we are to regard our body as a sacrifice.

The Bible says "present your body." Not your soul....but your body as a living sa~~vr~~ifice to God.

The word "present" or ~~yield~~ means to "stand along side of."

and Present your body to God as a sacrifice, we have to go back into the O.T. to understand it.

and When the individual Jew brought his animal to the altar to be sacrificed, he understood that it was an atonment for his sins. It was necessary to offer that animal and the blood was shed, a life was taken, death was necessary, inorder for it to have any benefit towards anyone else.

and ^{Now} And God is saying the same thing to us when he said, "If any man will denie himself and take ~~up~~ his cross daily and follow me, ["] He was not ~~saying~~ talking about bearing an unusally burden.

People often say, "take ~~up~~ up your cross" meaning you have a physical trail...your left foot hurts or something like that....

That is not what the Bible means. When a person takes up his cross he goes out to the hill to die. It is done. It is finished.

Or, as the song writer says....

"I believe in a hill called Mt. Calvary."

We believe that in terms of salvation. But we also need to believe it in terms of comitment. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice. (God is not asking you to be a martyry, necessarily. It might involve that. But not now. God is asking you to be a living sacrifice. Take up your cross daily. ~~Be to all of your dreams and plans.~~ Surrender ~~all of them~~ ^{daily} to God and say, "God, what ever you want in my life, that is what I want."

One of the reasons why christians are not ^{servicing} ministering as they should is because we have not faced the issue of Romans 12:1-2. He is not talking about dedicating your life to the mission field. That is not the issue in Romans 12. He is talking about what ~~every christian~~ ^{every christian} ~~believer~~ ought to be doing. Everyone of us ought to present our bodies to God, ^{daily}

My hands ought to be God's hands.

My feet must be his feet.

What I say, must be his words.

I must see what He wants me to see.

Present your bodies as a tool, as a channel, so God can use ^{you} to manifest ~~Jesus~~ the life of Jesus ~~through you~~ ^{through} to a world that needs to see ~~Jesus~~ ^{God's love}.

Present your bodies to God. You must regard it as a sacrifice and all that that means.

I have never read of a animal being killed and then standing up saying: "what are you guys doing.".."You know, I agree to this sacrifice in principle. But there are a few things we must get straight. Let's put some conditions on this sacrifice."

Now, all of this is ridiculous because those animals had no choice. But you see, we must understand that Romans 12 is saying the same thing. That my body is to be a sacrifice to God.

Now, what rights do I have? We like to think that we have certain rights But we don't. We are surrendering those rights to God.

So, whatever God wants to do with my life, I must let him do it. Sacrifice means just that. Taking up your cross daily means just that. It means going to the hill to die.

(2E) Now, the second thing that is necessary is to recognize ~~the~~ the kind of sacrifice that is involved, There are three things that I would like you to notice in Vs 1.

(1F) The Bible calls it a "Holy sacrifice." The word "holy" means "separate." God is actually separating you. Now, the moment you come to present your body as a living sacrifice to God, He is setting you apart for himself. And He is setting you apart from everything that is evil and working against that commitment. It is a holy sacrifice that God can use because it is separated to himself.

(2F) The second thing that I notice in Vs 1 is that it is acceptable to God. The word "acceptable" means "well pleaseing." God is pleased ^{when you commit yourself} with it.

Now, I would like you for a moment to reflect upon the sacrifice and death of Christ. In Ephesians 5 verses 1 and 2, it tells us to be imitators of God and to walk in love, and to remember that Christ is the best example there is of love because he offered himself as an offering and as a sacrifice to God. And the Bible says that it was a sweet smelling sacrifice to God.

And according to Vs 1 of Romans 12 we are to come in the same way, recognizing that what pleases God, what is a sweet smelling sacrifice is the fact that we present ourselves to God. That is sweet to the nostrils of God. It is well pleasing to him. That is what God wants.

Do you want to please the Lord in your life? Then present your bodies as a living sacrifice to him.

(3F) The third thing that I notice in Vs 1 is that it is called our spiritual ~~or reasonable~~ service. ^{of worship} The word "reasonable" means "logical." It is the logical thing to do.

The word "service" is the same word used in the ~~the~~ Greek translation of the O.T. when it talks about ^{the} priests who are ministering in the Tabernacle. It is talking about priestly service.

when we do this we are truly worshiping God. That is true worship

Now, think with me for a moment about this point. Jesus was called our high priest. (Hebrews 7) In Hebrews 8 and 9 the sacrifice which our high priest, Jesus Christ, brought to God was his whole life. And the same thing is ask of the believer, here in Romans 12.

Now, every ^{Christian} believer is a priest according to I Peter 2:9. It says that we are a royal priesthood. We do not need a mediator between ourselves and God. There is one mediator and that is Jesus Christ.

And all believers are called Priest. / God has designed a great kingdom of Priest *called The church.*

Now, what is our priestly service? ARE YOU READY FOR THIS? ...It is not to say: "Here am I, send my sister"... It is not to say: "Lord, I am ready to do my service as a Priest, but don't expect me to give to much time."

The issue is that as a Priest you offer yourself, as the sacrifice.

Nothing else is brought but yourself. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice. This is your reasonable priesthood service. To say to God, "God you can use me in any way you see fit."

(3D) Now, looking at Vs 2 I want you to see the methods by which this is made real in our lives. Vs 2 is very important to understanding Vs 1.

And he describes to us the methods by which this commitment to God is made real in your life and in mine.

we need to do is not to conform to the world
(1E) The first thing that I would like you to notice in Vs 2 is the problem of conforming. ~~The problem of conforming.~~

The Bible assumes that believers are involved in conforming to the world. Because in the thought of Vs 2 we could say, "Stop! being conformed to the world." It assumes that the practice is going on.

~~And~~ this word "conform" is in direct contrast with the word "transform." The one deals with external. And other deals with internal.

The word "conform" has the idea of "putting on a front." Stop putting on a front of the world, Paul says. You are a believer. You are a christian. You have a new nature. Stop trying to act like the world or non-believer.

Now, what is the world? If we must stop conforming to the world, what is the World? We all have a problem with this...

and Paul is assuming that all the believers have this problem of conforming. And he is telling us to stop doing it. WHAT IS THE WORLD?

This ~~word~~ word "world" is basical *dealing* with a philosophy of life. A philosophy of life that is common to those who do not know Christ. It is something that you and I will breath every single day of our life. And we will exhale it also. It comes in and it comes out constantly. It is what the average man of the street thinks, his ideas, what he says, what he does. The world system that is dominate, according to the Bible, by Satan. And that world system is a part of everything that God does not want. *in your life*

must → Now, what ever God wants in your life, it is being affected by the world. *What is* The philosophy of the world?

M For example...the world says it is alright to have sex before marriage... The world says if you do not drink you are not a man... The world says it is alright to cheat ~~on~~ on your income tax because the government take to much money anyway. The world has a language that takes the Lords name in vain and it is alright. The world says that you can be a christian and never go to church. And on and on and on I could go. ~~We turn our backs on it.~~

And Paul is saying to Christians...stop trying to conform to the world when you are a christian. WHY?...Because we are not in the world. We are in the world by way of location. But we are not in the world by way of ~~position~~ position. We are in Jesus Christ. This world is not my home, says the song writer, I am just passing through.

I am heading towards heaven. I am a citizen of heaven.

Now, what does this mean to you and to me? It means that all the things that come from the average man of the street, the man who is not a christian, the man who thinks apart from God, we are to stop doing.

The reason we find it hard to be committed is because we are affected by the world system. It involves what we buy, what we think is important in life. It involves issues of security. It involves our patterns of living. And ~~the world is~~ *we are* very much aware that it is very difficult to spot the christian. *Because we are caught up in the world*

Now, the point is simple. God wants us to be separate from this system. In order that Christ may be seen in your life. But the more that system affects us the less we see our commitment to Christ.

Present your bodies as a living sacrifice and stop conforming. Stop trying to be something that you are not as a believer.

Now, let me give you a simple little illustration. You have a caterpillar. Now, the outward shell of that caterpillar is the first word in Vs 2 "conform." It is not its true nature. It is just an outward shell. Inside of that caterpillar a process is going on called metamorphosis. And this word "metamorphosis" is the word "transformed" in Vs 2.

Now, what is metamorphosis? Metamorphosis means that the true nature of that caterpillar is a butterfly. And it goes through a process that one day changes the caterpillar into a butterfly.

Now, we, as spiritual butterflies, will never come forth until Christ comes again. Then, we shall be like him, as the Bible says, for we shall see Him as He is. But from the moment of conversion until ~~that~~ that moment there is a process going on in which we are being changed into the likeness of Christ. And this will come forth at the second coming of ~~Christ~~ ^{Jesus}. [But in the mean time God ^{wants to put} ~~is~~ you through a process of transformation. ^{And in order for Him to do that} ~~And~~ you must stop conforming to the world. The more you conform to the world the less we see of the true nature.

That is so true about all of us. The more we are like the unbelievers around us, the less Christ can be seen ^{in us}.

We talk about being "cool" and "being ~~you~~ where it is at". Kids speak like this all the time. We have the attitude that we are trying to be like the world in order to ~~communicate~~ communicate more effectively. And that is pure nonsense. Christ wants to be seen in every life. It has nothing to do with being MANCHO or COOL...

Christ can be seen through your life ^{only} when you stop conforming to the world around you. ^{and you start acting and living like a Christian}

((2E) Now, the second thing that I want you notice is that this process of transformation is done by the "renewing of your mind."

First, we had the ~~problem of conforming~~. We are to stop conforming to the world. Secondly, we have this process of transformation by the renewing of our minds. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

It means that God ~~is continually~~ ^{would like to change} changing you into attitudes and thoughts and ways and words and deeds that are like ~~Jesus~~ ^{Christ-Like}. God wants to do that in every believer's life. But it is done by way of renewing your minds. Not anything else but renewing your mind. *How do you renew your mind?*

Now, take your Bibles and turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 18. ^{we read} ~~we read~~ "But we all, with unveiled face"....There can't be any dishonesty here...."we all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image"... WHAT IMAGE?....THE GLORY OF THE LORD...You are being changed into the likeness of Christ....."from glory" meaning "his".."to glory" meaning ~~"ours"~~ ^{"ours"} just as from the Lord, the Spirit."

Now, the Holy Spirit, you see, as I am looking into a mirror, as I am renewing my mind, is transforming me into the beauty of the life of J.C... in what I say, in what I do and in what I think..

And this is done by the Holy Spirit of God.

Now, with that in mind turn over to the book of James chapter 1.... We are told that as we look into this mirror we see the beauty of Christ in the glory of the Lord and we are being transformed into it. The Holy Spirit does it. That is His responsibility. Our responsibility is to renew our minds. And then we will be ~~tr~~ transformed.

James chapter 1 beginning with verse 22....."But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."

Now, according to this verse you are being deluded if think that the only think necessary in your chirtian life is to hear the Word, ^{preached once in while}

out Are you living for Christ? Why sure I go to Church on Sunday ^{once in} ~~and hear~~ ^{a while} the word. You are deluding yourself, if that is your attitude.

Vs 23.....(Read Vs 23-25)

In orther words, whatever you do you will be effective. WHY?....Because your are renewing your mind ^{daily} in the Word..07.62

Now, notice the problem here. "Human limitation"...If you don't keep at it, every day, every day in God's Word, the Bible says you are going to forget what kind of person you are. You are going to forget what the Bible says. I remember once talking with a woman who was praying about the will of God in a certain decision that she needed to make. She said that this is what God wants her to do. ~~Her~~ ^{But} her action violated the Word of God. And I pointed out to her what the Word of God had to say. And she responded that this certainly changed her decision.

You see, friends, if we are not in the Word every day we can easily forget. We have human limitation. So, we are to renew our minds daily in the Word of God. Thus, we can be transformed into the image of Christ.

Now, this is very practical Christians. Because the one thing that the Devil wants you to do is to stop reading ^{God's} ~~his~~ Word. He doesn't want you to get into the Bible. Because that Bible can transform your life. You renew your mind with the Word. And then the Holy Spirit brings that to your attention in the hour when you need it. He transforms us into the image of Christ.

How, do I know in a certain situation what Jesus would have me to do, if I have not studied the Word?

And even if I have studied it years ago, if I have not renewed my mind daily in God's Word, I will not know what to do.

And this is very important. It is the reason why humanism has taken over in this ~~the~~ land. It is why the Bible no longer has a place of respect in our institutions and our homes and our businesses. ^{and our schools}

Transformation in our lives, in our church, in our nations, does not happen if we are not renewing our minds.

Christian I would like to ask you a question. WHAT ARE YOU DOING RIGHT NOW TO RENEW YOUR MIND IN GOD'S WORD?

Let me ask you another question. HOW CAN CHRIST BE SEEN IN YOUR LIFE, WHEN YOU IGNORE HIS WORD?

Now, a lot of people try to act like Jesus. But it is not going to work. It happens because the H.S. transforms you.

And that transformation takes place as you renew your minds in the Word....

Let me give you an illustration. ~~Sometimes when I'm studying the Word.~~ This is a true confession. *I don't want it* ~~You can~~ broadcast ~~it~~ all over town. It is a true confession just between you and me. -O.K.

Sometimes when I study the Word of God I am in a carnal state. That is right. Absolutely carnal.

Now, I know that is going to shock you. Because there are super saints around who never have that problem. But I have that problem. Sometimes when I study the Word of God I am carnal.

But *I* still study it. *I* Still renew ~~your~~ *my* minds in it. Because I have discovered something that is really ~~great~~ sort of funny.

Do you know that when you renew your mind in the Word of God constantly, the H.S. is going to drive you crazy until you are spiritual? He really does. He takes that Word and drives you bats with it.

any I mean, even when you want to sin. Here you are working up to a good sin. And you really want to do it. But, if you have been studying the Word of God, the H.S. will drive you nuts. You are trying to sin, but the H.S. is there saying "Hay, you have been renewing your mind. And ~~he~~ throws another verse at you."

And those verses that you have been studying every day, God brings to your attention in the hour that you need them. *That word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against*

Don't you ~~know~~ understand that the perfect law of liberty, everything that is the beauty of Christ's life is in His Word. To think his thoughts, to do what he would do, to say what He would say in the right situation, is all based because his word is in your life. *We would never have the problem of being delinquent church members, if Christ's word would apply the Word to those life*

God continually transforms us as we go daily to His Word. And the Holy Spirit will use that Word in our lives *in the hour of need*

(3E) Now, come back to Romans 12. The third thing that I want you to notice IN Vs 2 ~~of~~ is the proving of God's will.

Wouldn't you like to prove to yourself that you are really in the will of God? *Would you? Sure you would*

STOP Conforming To The world

Will here is the way! Present your bodies to christ. Be constantly transformed by the renewing of your mind. And you will prove to yourself what is the will of God.

There are three things that are said here about God's will.

(1E) Number one, I will prove that God's will is good.

All things work together for the good of those who love God. Do you know why some people see that and some people don't? The difference is in the amount of the Word that is in their life. It ^{sure} is!

Some great ~~tragedy~~ tragedy happens. One person looks at it and says: "Why isn't that alfull." Another person looks at it and says, "PRAISE THE LORD."

OK WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? The difference is the Word of God, the understanding of the scriptures that is in the heart of that person. You will prove that the will of God, whatever is happening in your life, is good. You will prove it to yourself. That is a beautiful thing.

(2F) Number two, you will prove that it is acceptable., or again, well pleasing

Same word that is found in Vs 1. I want to be pleasing to God. I want my life to be pleasing to God. And the Bible says that you will prove it to yourself that your life is pleasing to God when you are renewing your mind resulting in constant transformation.

(3F) The third thing is that I will prove that the will of God is perfect

for me. The word "perfect" means "complete." It is just what I need. And I will see that. I will prove it myself by letting the Word of Cod just fill my mind and my heart.

^{Dear} Now, friends, I hope you understand the importance of these two verses.

And it begins with presenting your bodies, your life, to Christ.

Would you do that today? *And make Trust Commit for 1992*

Let us close in prayer