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Living Lives of Transformation

ROMANS 12:1-2

Introduction

1. I love restorations.
2. I thoroughly enjoy seeing someone take an old automobile, an antique tractor, a house, a piece of furniture or whatever else it may be and restore it to the pristine condition it was in when new.
3. I am amazed at those who are able to change their diet and persevere with a safe and healthy exercise program until they are able to lose the weight they desire.
4. I imagine many of us have seen some of the shows on TV in which someone completely transforms a house to become something totally different from what it once was.
5. The problem with restorations is that whatever is restored will never be better than it was.
6. Diet and exercise plans, too, have their limits.
7. The homes that are renovated will one day cease to exist.
8. However, there is a transformed life to which we are called by our Lord that has eternal benefits.
9. Not only will it transform us in the here and now, it prepares us for what Paul called “an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison” (2 Corinthians 4:17).
10. Today, I want us to look at this transformed life which Paul speaks of here in Romans 12, and consider three things:
 - a. What is it that motivates us to live transformed lives?
 - b. What is the nature of such a life?
 - c. How do we know we are living transformed lives?

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I. The Motivation For Transformed Living

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God . . .” (*Romans 12:1a, NASB95*).

A. WHAT ARE THE MERCIES OF GOD?

1. The word which Paul uses here can mean compassion, pity or mercy.
2. It is the sympathy of God which is ready to help us in time of need.
2. In 2 Corinthians 1:3, Paul called God “the Father of mercies.”

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3. In Psalm 24:6-7, David wrote,

⁶ Remember, O Lord, Your compassion and Your lovingkindnesses,
For they have been from of old.

⁷ Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
According to Your lovingkindness remember me,
For Your goodness' sake, O Lord.

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4. In Psalm 40:11, he wrote,

¹¹ You, O Lord, will not withhold Your compassion from me;
Your lovingkindness and Your truth will continually preserve me.

5. And in Psalm 51:1, a psalm of confession and repentance, he wrote,

¹ Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness;
According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

6. God's mercies include . . .

- a. His sympathy toward us in the midst of our sins,
- b. His compassion and lovingkindness, goodness and truth
- c. Which blot out our sins and transgressions, and remember them no more.

7. It is on the basis of these mercies that we are motivated to respond to Him.

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B. HOW HAVE THESE MERCIES BEEN EXTENDED TO US?

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⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Romans 5:6–10 (NASB95)

1. In Romans 5:6-10, the apostle Paul paints a very vivid picture of where we were in our lives and what God did for us through Jesus Christ.

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2. God demonstrated His mercies toward us . . .
 - a. “While we were still helpless” (v. 6).
 - b. “While we were yet sinners” (v. 8).
 - c. “While we were enemies” of God (v. 10).

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3. It was “at the right time” in history . . .
 - a. “while we were still helpless” and could do nothing for ourselves that “Christ died for the ungodly” (v. 6).
 - b. “while we were yet sinners” and doomed to suffer the penalty for our sins, that “Christ died for us” (v. 8).
 - c. “while we were enemies” and “hostile [in our minds] toward God ” (Romans 8:7) that “we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” (v. 10).
4. God acted on our behalf, when we were incapable of doing so, to save us and draw us back to Himself.

5. We owe Him a greater debt than we could ever repay.
6. Stop and consider what God has done for you and me.

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II. The Nature of Our Transformation

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB95)

A. IT IS A COMPLETE AND RADICAL CHANGE

1. Paul exhorts us to “be transformed”.
2. The word he uses in Greek is a compound word which means “*to change into another form.*”
3. It is the word from which we get our English word “*metamorphosis.*”
4. Merriam-Webster in their online dictionary define this as “a major change in the appearance or character of someone or something.”
5. It is the word we use to describe what happens when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly.
6. The change is radical and complete.
7. There is no comparison between what was and what now is.
8. This is the change which God looks for in each of us.
9. It is a change which can only be brought about by Jesus Christ.

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B. IT IS A CHANGE WHICH IS OBVIOUS AND REAL

1. We see an example of this kind of change in chapter five of Mark’s gospel.
2. Jesus and His disciples have come by boat to the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.
3. They are instantly met by a demon possessed man who made his dwelling among the tombs in a nearby cemetery.
4. Mark tells us that this man was constantly screaming, night and day, among the tombs and in the mountains (v. 5).

5. He “had not put on any clothing in a long time (Luke 8:27) and continually cut himself with stones (v. 5).
6. Though different people had tried to bind him with shackles and chains, he tore them apart (v. 4).
7. “No one was strong enough to subdue him” (v. 4b).
8. However, after Jesus cast the demons out of him, the people all around who knew of him came to see for themselves.
9. What they found, according to Luke account (Luke 8:35), was a man “sitting down at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.”
10. In much the same way, God will transform us by “the renewing of our minds:”
 - a. Selfish people become selfless
 - b. Negative people become positive
 - c. Sad people have joy
 - d. People of despair find hope
 - e. Those who have been hurt mentally and emotionally find healing
 - f. Alcoholics and addicts find strength to stay clean

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III. The Evidence of Our Transformation

“... present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship” (Romans 12:1b, NASB95)

“... be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB95)

A. WE ARE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF OUR MINDS

1. We think correctly of ourselves (Romans 12:3).

“For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have

sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.” (*Romans 12:3, NASB95*)

- a. **Instead of putting ourselves on a pedestal, we humble ourselves before God.**
 - b. **He then will exalt us at the proper time** (*1 Peter 5:6*).
2. **We think clearly about the church** (*Romans 12:4-5*)
- “For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” (*Romans 12:4-5, NASB95*)
- a. **As Christians, we are part of a spiritual body composed of many members.**
 - b. **We each exist in this one spiritual body to serve one another.**
3. **We recognize the spiritual gifts which God has given us and use them to His glory** (*Romans 12:6-8*)

“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” (*Romans 12:6-8, NASB95*)

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B. WE BEGIN PRESENTING OUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE (ROMANS 12:9-21)

1. **Our love is genuine** (v. 9a).
“Let love be without hypocrisy” (*Romans 12:9a*).
2. **We hate what is evil and cling to what is good** (v. 9b).
3. **We demonstrate our devotion to one another by honoring each other** (v. 10).
4. **We develop a good work ethic, fervently serving the Lord** (v. 11).

5. We rejoice in hope, persevere in our tribulations and devote ourselves to prayer (v. 12).
6. We become benevolent and hospitable people (v. 13).
7. We treat our enemies in the way that God would have us (vv. 14-20).
8. We seek to overcome evil with good (v. 21).

Conclusion

1. Are you a person who is sick and tired of sin in your life — the lies, the despair, the guilt and hurt?
2. Do you want to live a transformed life with a renewed mind and true purpose?
3. Perhaps you are a Christian, but you have been living a lie, and you are tired of it.
4. You want to be real. You want to live a zealous, productive and blessed life as someone who has been saved from his or her sins.
5. What should you do?
 - a. Believe in Jesus as God's only Son who came into this world to take away your sin (John 8:24).
 - b. Repent, turn away from the sin in your life and turn toward Christ (Acts 3:19).
 - c. Be saved by what the apostle Paul called "the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).
 - d. Live out your life by daily walking "in the same manner as [Christ] walked" (1 John 2:6).
6. If you are already a Christian, come home, ask God to forgive you and help you to live a new life that is pleasing to Him.

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