

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God’s holiness – man’s sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical: 12:1-15:33** (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

In our study of Romans we now come to a pivotal point in the book and yet it is based on what has gone before. This is how Paul commonly writes. He often lays down a **doctrinal foundation** in the first part of the book and then builds **practical instructions** on top of it (cf. Eph; Col). Doctrine first and then duty! And he does this in Romans as well.

But it is important to note that what Paul says here ties in with the emphasis he has just been making in relation to the **mercy** of God. Paul now in chapter 12 challenges the believers to live all out for God in view of the mercies of God that have been extended to them.

The mercy of God is HEAVY on Paul’s mind. Chapter divisions, although often helpful, are not inspired. Paul’s train of thought regarding God’s mercy, begun in the previous section, now continues on into Romans 12 by way of application.

We should note that in Romans 9-11 there is a very close thematic connection between the **mercy** of God and **faith**.

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Romans 9:15–16 (NKJV)

15 For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.”

16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Mercy is the God side of the equation (so to speak). God is totally in charge of His mercy! He alone decides on whom He will have mercy. This is totally according to the sovereign WILL of God. He cannot be manipulated or have His hand forced in this matter. It's totally His prerogative alone! God is under NO obligation to extend MERCY to anyone. He can show mercy or withhold it from whomever He wants. He owes no one anything!

No one can “will” to receive God’s mercy and make it happen. MERCY is totally on God’s terms! And what are God’s terms? Well read on.

Slide # 3**Romans 9:30–32 (NKJV)**

30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith;

31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

Faith is the human side of the equation (so to speak). Paul masterfully interweaves the theme of mercy and faith together throughout this entire section. God of His own prerogative makes mercy available but those who avail of it are those who come to faith. Faith enters into the good of it.

We see this same reality in chapter 11.

Slide # 4**Romans 11:20 (NKJV)**

20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

Romans 11:30–32 (NKJV)

30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained **mercy** through their disobedience,

31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the **mercy** shown you they also may obtain **mercy**.

32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have **mercy** on all.

Now, theologians might argue about the precise relationship between mercy and faith, (which in the end is past finding out), but my point is that they are **vitaly linked**. Those who come to faith are those who are the recipients of the mercy of God.

And God has so worked that “***He might have mercy on all***” as Paul says in Romans 11:32. Now of course the whole story is that one must come to faith to enter into the good of it as I have already said, but in truth provision has been made in reference to all. This is where the **ALL** of Romans 10 comes in.

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Romans 10:11–12 (NKJV)

11 For the Scripture says, “Whoever **believes** on Him will not be put to shame.”

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich **to all** who call upon Him.

Note the **ALL** emphasis here! **All** are under disobedience, mercy is made available to **all** (Rom. 11:32), and **all** who call upon Him in faith are saved (Rom. 10:11-13).

So in the context of our study Paul is overwhelmed by the staggering reality of God’s all-encompassing MERCY which is now made available to all who will appropriate it by faith. His response was one of doxology as seen in Rom. 11:33-36. To those who come to faith and thus are the recipients of God’s mercy Paul now makes application as to how they should then live.

In Romans 10 Paul emphasizes that in saving faith the true believer calls on the name of the LORD to be saved and confesses Christ as Lord (Rom. 10:9, 13). So, in salvation, there is a recognition of the LORDSHIP of Christ, but there is also **immaturity**, there is also **inconsistency**. What Paul does here is exhort the believer to now **live consistent** with the mercy shown to him. This is the great challenge in the Christian life – to live consistent with our position in Christ.

Paul is still concerned with justification by faith, for it is fundamental to him that the justified man does not live in the same way as the unrepentant sinner. – **Leon Morris**

Paul has emphasized this from the very beginning of the letter as seen in the key verses of Romans 1:16-17.

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Romans 1:16–17 (NKJV)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed **from faith to faith**; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

“***From faith***’ points to the initial act; ***to faith***’ to the life of faith which issues from it.” - **W.E. Vine**

Slide # 7

Outline of Romans 12:1-2

- I. The Basis of Commitment – the mercies of God (v. 1 a)
- II. The Character of Commitment – a living sacrifice (v. 1 b)
- III. The Demands of Commitment – Not Conformed/Transformed (v. 2 a)
- IV. The Effects of Commitment – Prove the Will of God (v. 2 b)

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

1 I 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.

Paul here uses the language of **appeal** versus a direct command. It is the language of grace. The LAW says, “***Do these things and you will live***”, but GRACE says “***Live and you will do these things***”. Beseeched by the mercies of God is the language of GRACE. “***All other faiths make sacrifice the root, Christianity makes it the flower.***” (John Phillips)

The word “beseech” (parakaleo) literally means “to call to” which is the idea of urging or exhorting. Paul is strongly appealing to them.

The word “**therefore**” reaches back to what has previously been said and builds a conclusion upon it. There are four MAJOR “therefores” in the book.

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- 1) The “therefore” of condemnation (3:20).
- 2) The “therefore” of justification (5:1).
- 3) The “therefore” of security (8:1).
- 4) The “therefore” of consecration (12:1).

Paul addresses the readers as “**brethren**” meaning they are Christians. This exhortation is directed to fellow believers.

On the basis of all that has gone before in the letter Paul appeals to the Christian “**by** the mercies of God”. That is to say, “in view of”, “because of” or “on the grounds of” the mercies of God.

The “**mercies of God**” here are plural as they are varied and many nuanced. Paul sees what God has done for the believer as “mercies”. This word for mercy (Gk. oiktirmos) is a different word than the one used in 11:32 (Gk. eleos) but essentially has the same meaning – and is basically a synonym (cf. 2 Cor. 1:3; Phil. 2:1; Col. 3:12, Heb. 10:28). It too has the idea of pity or compassion on the undeserving. **Mercy** as used by Paul is consistently linked with God’s **love** and **kindness**.

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Ephesians 2:4 (NKJV)

4 But God, who is **rich in mercy**, because of **His great love** with which He loved us,

Titus 3:4–5 (NKJV)

4 But when the **kindness and the love** of God our Savior toward man appeared,

5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His **mercy** He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

The gospel is the good news of mercy to the undeserving. The symbol of the religion of Jesus is the cross, not the scales.

– **John Stott**

Mercy is God's gracious withholding of judgment that is deserved. God can withhold the judgment that we deserve because Christ in love has taken our punishment allowing God to extend mercy to us. Romans 9:23 says that God bestows the riches of His glory "***on the vessels of mercy***" whom He has prepared for glory.

We deserve the judgment of eternal damnation but because of God's mercy we are on our way to GLORY!

Every sin we have ever committed deserves the eternal judgment of God. You deserve to go to hell for every single sin ever committed. Adam and Eve got kicked out of the paradise of Eden for ONE sin! We need mercy for every single sin!

Sin is any violation of God's holy standard at any point whether it be in thought, word, or deed. There are sins of omission and sins of commission. Every single thought that is contrary to God's holiness is worthy of eternal damnation and yet as a believer God has shown us mercy upon mercy. How many sinful thoughts have we had? How many sins are we guilty of? In each case we as believers have experienced the mercy of God as He has withheld judgment that we deserve! (cf. Lam. 3:22-23)

Thus, we have received mercy upon mercy upon mercy. In Romans 1-11 Paul has catalogued "the mercies [the kindnesses] of God" resulting in our salvation. On that basis Paul now exhorts the believer to present his body as a living sacrifice.

Slide # 10

Representative "mercies" – Romans 1-11

- Justification by faith
- Identification "in Christ"
- Under GRACE – not law
- The indwelling Spirit
- Help in our weakness
- The election of grace
- Promise of coming glory
- Nothing can separate us from God's love
- Provision made for all
- The absolute faithfulness of God

The point is NONE of these are deserved. Mercy is undeserved! We do not serve God to get saved, but rather we serve because we have already been saved on the basis of God's mercies. We serve out of gratitude because of what He has done for us. We serve because we now love Him and want to please Him (1 Jn. 4:19). A proper appreciation of the mercies of God motivates us to be a living sacrifice for Him.

We as believers want to serve God and yet at the same time we need exhortation – we need encouragement! And that is exactly what we have here in Paul's appeal to the believer on the basis of God's mercies.

On the basis of God's mercies – all the kindnesses He has shown to us undeserving sinners – on that basis Paul says to the believer “**present your bodies a living sacrifice**”.

It is interesting that judgment in the Bible, including the believer's judgment, is consistently based on works! We as believers are saved by faith, but we are judged by our works with the issue being that of rewards.

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1 Corinthians 3:13 (NKJV)

13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NKJV)

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the **things done in the body**, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

You serve God in the context of the body He has given you. You say, “Well, I don't ever do much, but I have lots of nice thoughts. It is the thought that counts – right?” WRONG! Paul here in Romans 12 exhorts us to present our **physical bodies** as a living sacrifice to God. The body represents the totality of one's life and activities. The body is the vehicle of expression. We live out life through the body.

Paul said basically the same thing back in chapter 6. After emphasizing justification by faith alone in chapters 3b - 5, then in chapter 6 he emphasizes that we should present ourselves to God to serve His righteous purposes (cf. Rom. 6:13, 16, 19).

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Romans 6:13 (NKJV)

13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but **present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead**, and **your members as instruments of righteousness to God**.

To present your body means to yield what you do with your body to God. You now want to use your body for God. When you awake in the morning you should say, “***God I am all yours – use my body today for your glory***”.

God is now living in your body. You are the temple of God. Jesus bought you with His blood. You now belong to Him. Your body is no longer yours to do as you please. It now belongs to Him. And He wants you to present your body sacrificially to Him!

Slide # 13**1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)**

19 Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own?**

20 For you were **bought at a price**; therefore **glorify God in your body** and in your spirit, which are God’s.

The world has a slogan that says, “***my body – my choice***”. That is very non-Christian. As Christians we say of our body: “Christ’s body – His choice”. It’s not “my body” – it’s now Christ’s body. We are here to serve His purposes and not a self-agenda. This is what it means to be “a living sacrifice”. We sacrifice living for self for the sake of God.

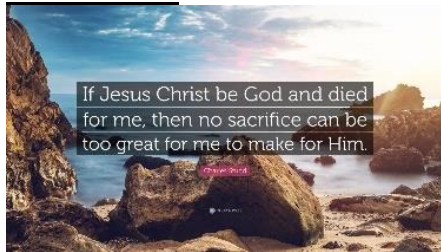
In presenting a sacrifice you devote something to God. And in this case you are called on to present YOURSELF – your BODY as a living sacrifice. The people of Paul’s day knew very well the concept of a sacrifice being made either to the true God or false gods. These sacrifices were always offered up dead – end of story! The sacrifice was total and complete!

But we are different. We are to be a LIVING sacrifice. We now have LIFE – Christ’s life (Rom. 6:4). As those sharing in Christ’s life we are now to offer up ourselves in complete devotion to God. It is sacrificial in the sense that we are no longer to live with a self-agenda - we no longer do what pleases the flesh – but rather now our whole devotion as a way of life is to serve God’s purposes. That is being a living sacrifice. As a way of life it lives by maxim, “Not my will, but God’s will be done”.

But as is often said, “***The problem with the living sacrifice is that it so often wants to crawl off the altar***”. This is our struggle. We want to serve God sacrificially, but there are many distractions, entanglements, and challenges. The battle is real as noted in Romans 7.

The key is found in PRESENTING YOURSELF – committing yourself to be a living sacrifice – living all out for God as one who now shares in His life. That involves living intentionally. It involves a specific commitment to do so! And the mercies of God are our motivation to that end. If you really appreciate all that God in His kindness has done for you – it will motivate you to want to sell out for God.

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This is really radical stuff! Many Christians want to go part way, but not all the way. They like the “living” part but not so much the “sacrifice”. But Christ not only calls us to life but also to be a living sacrifice as a way of life.

A young man was being interviewed for a good prospective job. He had a neat appearance and looked like a sharp young man. He made a good first impression on the owner of the business. He had put together an impressive resume in which he listed his pastor, his Sunday school teacher, and a church deacon as references. The owner of the business studied the resume for several minutes and then said, “*I appreciate these recommendations from your church friends. But what I would really like is to hear from someone who knows you on weekdays*”.

The language of sacrifice is not a part time thing! Rather, it is sell out complete devotion that gives all! You say, “***I think this challenge is just for clergy or missionaries or those involved in special service***”. Guess again, it is addressed to the brethren generally – to all Christians. Paul writes to all the saints in Rome (Rom. 1:7). We ALL ought to all be able to say with Paul...

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Philippians 1:20–21 (NKJV)

20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.
21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Footnote: The word “*present*” in the phrase, “*present your bodies a living sacrifice*” is in the aorist tense. Some scholars want to say this indicates a once for all action – a once for all decisive offering. But technically the aorist tense only states FACT of action. It doesn’t really tell you anything else about it. So, Paul is simply saying “DO THIS”.

In truth believers often get off track and need to come back to the commitment of Romans 12:1. This may often need to be revisited! In this it is parallel to walking in the Spirit. We are also told to walk in the Spirit, but if we find ourselves fulfilling the lusts of the flesh – what should we do? Well, we should get back to walking in the Spirit. The same is true in regard to presenting ourselves as a living sacrifice. If we have crawled off the altar (so to speak) we need to again present ourselves and get back to where we should be. THE FACT OF ACTION of presenting ourselves as a living sacrifice should be applied as needed! It ever remains our reasonable service!

Someone has described this “presenting” or “offering” as comparable to the analogy of marriage. In the act of marriage each partner commits themselves unreservedly to the other person. But then as they go along often adjustments need to be made in keeping with the original pledge. And so it is with God’s people. In salvation, we recognize Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior, but then, in the process of the relationship, we often need to make adjustments to where we are properly aligned with our initial faith commitment!

A living sacrifice is holy to God. Holy means “*set apart*”. This is biblical separation – living a set apart life for God. This is the blessed man of Psalm 1 who “walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scornful” (Ps. 1:1).

A living sacrifice is “*acceptable to God*” meaning it is pleasing to God. It is a life that in the end God will pronounce “Well done” over. This is always the goal.

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2 Corinthians 5:9 (NKJV)

9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

What does a living sacrifice look like? Well, it is total, it is holy, it is acceptable to God, and it is reasonable!

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Reasonable (Gk. “logikos”) = logical

Service (Gk. “latreia”) = spiritual service like that of a priest

Reasonable is the idea of intelligent and deliberate. It is thoughtful. Service is “spiritual service”. We have been made “a holy priesthood” and we should therefore sensibly serve accordingly (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9). We should live consistent with our holy calling – with who we now are in Christ.

Offering ourselves fully to God is the only logical, rational, sensible thing to do! A halfway commitment is irrational. When you consider what God has done for you it makes total sense to totally sell out and live for Him. Just consider these “mercies” from God as seen in Romans 8 alone.

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- v. 1 – no condemnation in Christ
- v. 4 – empowered to live righteous by the Spirit
- v. 9 – Spirit of God dwells in you
- v. 11 – promise of physical resurrection
- v. 14 – led by the Spirit – sons of God
- v. 15 – received the Spirit of adoption by which we cry out “Abba Father”
- v. 16 – Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.
- v. 17 – children – heirs of God – joint heirs with Christ – will be glorified with Him.
- v. 18 – glory to be revealed in us.

Slide # 19

- v. 23 - eagerly awaiting the redemption of the body.
- v. 26 – Spirit helps in our weaknesses – makes intercession

- v. 28 – all things work together for the good of those who love Him.
- v. 29 – foreknew, predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son
- v. 30 – predestined – called – justified – glorified.
- v. 31 – God is for us – who can be against us?
- v. 32 – delivered up Son for us – freely give us all things
- v. 33 – No charge against us
- v. 35 – nothing can separate us from the love of Christ
- v. 37 – more than conquerors through Him who loved us

Write LARGE over mountain peak text of Romans 8 “***the mercies of God***”. If that doesn’t move you – if that doesn’t motivate you to sell out living for God then you really need to check yourself! It is totally reasonable in light of the extravagant mercies of God to commit ourselves fully to the Lord. Nothing else makes spiritual sense!

“Love so amazing, so divine, demands my heart, my life, my all.”
-Issac Watts

2 And 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.

Paul here continues to build on what a sold-out commitment to God looks like. Here Paul gives two commands – one negative and one positive. They are two sides of the same commitment.

First, he says, “***do not be conformed to this world***”. We have to be intentional about this. You might drift into carnality but you won’t drift into holiness. You have to be intentional. You have to present yourself to God and that involves a commitment to not be conformed to the world. The pull of the world, the influence of the world, the pressure of the world is ever present (cf. 1 Jn. 2:15-17).

Satan has developed this fatal world-order, with its philosophy, (man’s account of all things, but changing from time to time); its science (ever seeking to eliminate the supernatural); its government (with man exalting himself); its amusements (adapted to blot out realities from the mind); and its religion (to soothe man’s conscience and allay fears of judgment). – **William R. Newell**

The word “***conformed***” (Gk. *suschematizo*) means “***to be shaped by a pattern of mold***”.

J.B. Phillips translates this as “***Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold.***” The world wants to influence you in terms of its values, its attitudes, its moral atmosphere.

The world demands tolerance, and once they get tolerance, they demand acceptance, and once they get acceptance, they demand normalcy, and once they have normalcy, they demand celebration. Make no mistake, the world is pushing its rebel agenda as hard as it can. There is nothing neutral about it. And we feel the pressure to go along to get along!

And unless you are willing to take a stand you will be compromised by it. You have to intentionally determine not to skate along – not to be shaped and conformed to the spirit of the age (cf. 1 Pet. 1:14).

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Galatians 6:14 (NKJV)

14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom **the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

Paul said the world is dead to me and I to the world. The world wanted nothing to do with Paul’s Christ perspective and Paul wanted nothing to do with their anti-God perspective. Our calling is to not be conformed to the world. We are not to compromise with the world’s value system or its world view.

Actually, the word “***world***” (Gk. *aion*) here in Romans 12:2 is more accurately translated as “***age***” referring to this temporary era in which Satan is allowed to be the god of this age (1 Cor. 7:31; 2 Cor. 4:4).

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Galatians 1:4 (NKJV)

4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from **this present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father,

The Jewish rabbis contrasted this present age with the Messianic age to come. This present age is evil as dominated by Satan but the Messiah will one day come and reign in righteousness.

In contrast to being conformed to the world the believer is to “***be transformed by the renewing of your mind.***” And they go together. To be conformed to the world is to have your thinking shaped by the world and that is counter to Christian growth.

To be transformed in your mind is to have your thinking shaped by God's Word which results in spiritual growth and becoming more and more conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29).

If you are going the way of the world, you are not going God's way. If you are going God's way you are not going the world's way. You can't have it both ways at the same time. Either you go the way of the world or you go God's way. At any given time it is one or the other!

And going God's way has two sides to the coin of holiness. On one side we refuse to be conformed to the world but on the other side we are being transformed by the renewing of our mind.

And it is this renewing of our mind that causes us to think biblically and refuse the world's ways. Both conformed and transformed are in the passive voice meaning an outside agency is actually influencing the person. Either we are allowing the world to influence us or God.

The word transformed is the Greek word "metamorphoo" from which we get the English word "metamorphosis".

Slide # 22

TRANSFORMED

Greek: "metamorphoo"

English: "metamorphosis"

The word metamorphoo means to change from one form to another. We speak of it in reference to a caterpillar being transformed into a butterfly.

This is the word used in relation to Christ's transfiguration on the Mount as the disciples there had a little pre-kingdom glimpse of coming kingdom glory (Matt. 17:2; Mk. 9:2; also see Lk. 9:29). The only other place this exact word is used in the NT is found in 2 Cor. 3:18 (cf. Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10).

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2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being **transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The idea of transformed is that of being changed from the inside out. There are two realities to this idea of transformation. There is what the Bible calls being born again which happens at the moment of saving faith (Jn. 1:12-13; 3:1-7; 1 Jn. 5:1, 4).

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2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is **a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, **all things have become new**.

This is a positional reality! All believers are now a new creation in Christ. We have a new nature that is now wed with the Holy Spirit Who has come to live inside us (1 Cor. 6:17, 19; 2 Pet. 1:4). This a spiritual reality for all believers and it never changes.

However, as new creations in Christ we are not a finished product. In practice God is at work in us to more and more transform us (present tense) into the character of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18) and that is a lifelong process that finds completion only in glory (1 Jn. 3:2).

What Paul has in view here in Romans 12:2 is the transformation of our character through the renewing of the mind. As noted, in Romans 8:29 we see that God has determined to conform us to the image of His Son. But this involves a process!

In conversion we come to repentance. Repentance literally means to have a change of mind. In repentance we come to have a change of mind about sin, self, and the Savior. It is a life-changing change of mind.

But we might say it this way: In the repentance of conversion, we see the BIG PICTURE truth of Christ as Lord and Savior, but then in the DETAILS we need to grow in relation to this truth and we need constant nurturing to that end. And we need consistency!

The spiritual battle is for the MIND. We are to present our bodies but that involves thinking activity which activates the body. The MIND controls the BODY. Transformation takes place as the mind is consistently being renewed. Thus, the renewed mind drives spiritual growth and maturity.

Slide # 25

“The renewing of your mind” seems to mean that the believer is to keep going back in his thought to the original commitment, reaffirming its necessity and legitimacy in the light of God’s grace extended to him. - ***Expositors***

Again, NOTE the central place of the mind. I often say, “**Christianity is a thinking person’s faith**”. The mind is central. What goes on in the mind governs everything: our convictions, our decisions, our commitments, our growth, our consistency.

However, instead of the mind so many today want to make Christianity all about FEELINGS. In terms of spirituality many today ask, “**How are you feeling**”. Rarely do they ask: “**What are you thinking?**”

The battle ground between conforming to the world and being transformed is within the **mind** of the believer. *Christians must think differently*. The problem with many Christians is they live life based on *feelings*... The life based on *feeling* says, “How do I feel today? How do I feel about my job? How do I feel about my wife? How do I feel about worship? How do I feel about the preacher?” *This life by feeling will never know the transforming power of God*, because it ignores the **renewing of the mind**. – **David Guzik**

Feelings have their place, but they are the caboose and not the engine. The engine that drives everything is the mind. The mind controls the body!

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The key to this change is the mind (noos), the control center of one’s attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and actions.

– **The Bible Knowledge Commentary**

The mind (Gk nous) [is] the center of logical reasoning, ethical judgment, and moral awareness. – **Liberty Bible Commentary**

Paul doesn’t here elaborate on how the mind is renewed resulting in spiritual transformation, but from other Scriptures, we know this happens by the Spirit working through the Word of God. God’s truth shapes our thinking and that in turn changes us little by little. Little by little we are being transformed into the image of Christ by way of the Spirit working through the Word.

When I was in Bible College we had a saying:

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We master the Word through memorization. The Word masters us through meditation!

Slide # 28**Psalm 119:11 (NKJV)**

11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

John 17:17 (NKJV)

17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Colossians 3:16 (NKJV)

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

The world is a place of distraction. Where is your mind at?

Slide # 29**Colossians 3:2 (NKJV)**

2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

Don't be conformed to this world! How can that be achieved? By being transformed by the renewing of your mind by staying in the Word, by staying focused on God and the things of God.

And as you do this you PROVE something – namely the WILL OF God as worked out in your life.

Sometimes the challenge comes forth where someone says: “***Prove it!***”. To prove something means to demonstrate the truth of it by having it tested. “Tested and Proven” – that is the idea! To prove the will of God is to demonstrate it in your life, and thus to prove it is good, acceptable, and perfect in your experience.

The word “**prove**” in verse two corresponds to the word “**present**” in verse one. To present yourself a living sacrifice results in the proving of God's will in the life.

That there is an intimate connection between certifying the will of God and making oneself a living sacrifice is indicated by the used of “pleasing” in each case (cf. Phil. 4:18; Heb. 13:16). – ***Expositors***

The Greek word translated “**good**” is **agathos** which refers to that which is inherently good. It means intrinsically good with the idea of being profitable and beneficial. The will of God is wholesomely good bringing about blessing.

It is also “**acceptable**” meaning is it “**pleasing**” (cf. Rom. 14:18; 2 Cor. 5:9; Eph. 5:10). It is pleasing first and foremost to God. The will of God proven in the life is pleasing to God, but also those who live out the will of God finding it to be satisfying and pleasing.

And it is also “**perfect**” which means complete or that which accomplishes the desired end. It is the will of God lived out that completes a person!

Paul is not talking about the “will of God” in terms of vocation or other specifics regarding the non-moral decisions of life. Rather what Paul is talking about in context is the MORAL will of God related to living for God, related to an all-out commitment to God.

The will of God above all is that we live for Him – no matter what we are doing. No matter what we are doing we should present our bodies to be a living sacrifice. No matter what we do we should ever be doing it through the lens of transformation that ever seeks to live out the will of God.

Slide # 30

God’s will for your life is to do the will of God. – **Tom Sexton**

Slide # 31

Colossians 3:17 (NKJV)

17 And **whatever you do** in word or deed, **do all** in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3:23 (NKJV)

23 And **whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord** and not to men,

24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

In the doing of the will of God you prove it to be good, acceptable, and perfect. This is our calling! We are not to live for self but to live all out for God. We are to be radicals for God. We are to be HOLY living sacrifices. This is our reasonable service!

Slide # 32**Living Sacrifice**

In short what Paul in essence is saying here in Romans 12:1-2 is that in light of all that God has done for us, we in turn should give our all for Him. We don't do this to be saved – but because we are saved.

Realize that the “therefore” of Romans 12:1 comes AFTER the great prolonged discussion of justification by faith and builds on it. We don't serve God to get saved – we serve with our all because we have been saved. Our service is the fruit of our faith.

When a professing Christian dies the tendency of many is to proclaim God's “Well done” over his life. But I would remind us that whenever “Well done” is pronounced in the Bible it is always in reference to the faithful as in “***Well done, good and faithful servant***” (Mt. 25:21, 23; Lk. 19:17). It is my conviction that only those believers who consistently lived the life of a living sacrifice will in the end hear God's “Well done!” Only a life sold out life for Jesus is worthy of “well done”.

Life And Death

So he died for his faith. That is fine-- More than most of us do.

But, say, can you add to that line that he lived for it, too?

In his death he bore witness at last as a martyr to truth.

Did his life do the same in the past from the days of his youth?

It is easy to die. Men have died for a wish or a whim-- from bravado or passion or pride. Was it harder for him?

But to live--every day to live out all the truth that he dreamt, while his friends met his conduct with doubt and the world with contempt.

Was it thus that he plodded ahead, never turning aside?

Then we'll talk of the life that he lived. Never mind how he died.

(Unknown Author)

Brethren, by the mercies of God present God present your bodies **a living sacrifice** which is your reasonable service and thus prove the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.