

Fil-Am Community Church
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Romans 12:1-2

Renewing Our Minds!

Good Morning Fil-Am it is so good to see your smiling faces today. We are going to get into a topic today that if done correctly will step on your toes, will cause each of us to take a long **CRITICAL** look at yourself and our walk and hopefully reconnect or refocus on our walk with God.

So for time's sake let us get into the Word of God, more importantly let us get the Word of God into you!

Romans 12:1-2 (NASB) ¹ *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.* ² *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 12:1-2 Amplified Bible ¹ *Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [dedicating all of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which is your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship.* ² *And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed and progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].*

Introduction: The Scriptures were not given for our information, but for our **transformation.** -D. L. Moody-

This morning I want to focus on the phrase in Romans 12:2, “**by the renewal of your mind.**” Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

We are perfectly useless as Christ-exalting Christians if all we do is **conform to the world around us.** And the key to not wasting our lives with this kind of success and prosperity, Paul says, is being transformed. “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed.”

The first point we will discuss this morning is by **Renewing Our Minds** we have.....

1. Freedom in Christ

The Freedom of Being in Christ

Romans 8:7 (NASB) *“Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,”*

Romans 10:3 (NASB) *“For not knowing about God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.”*

Romans 6:18 (NASB) *“And having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”*

Romans 6:22 (NASB) *“But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.”*

Galatians 5:1 (NASB) *“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”*

You are free in Christ, because when you do from the inside what you love to do, you are free if what you love to do is what you ought to do.

Saints that's what transformation means: When you are transformed in Christ you love to do what you ought to do. That's freedom.

The First point was by Renewing Our Minds we have Freedom in Christ,
The Second point is by Renewing Our Minds we...

2. Tear Down Strongholds

2 Corinthians 10:4-6 (NASB) ⁴ *“For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵ We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.”*

Satan's strongholds are simply thoughts.

If the devil can get you to entertain his thoughts; Thoughts of

- Fear,
- Anxiety,
- Doubt,
- So on, and so on...

If the Devil can get you doing this then he can have a doorway to controlling your mind.

When he does this he will put a ring in your nose and lead you around if you let him, however, we don't have to let him.

The Word of God tells us how to be victorious. It shows us how to be more than conquerors in Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

James 4: 6-8 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: *“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”* Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he **WILL** flee from you. **Draw Near** to God and He will **Draw Near**

to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

To simply try and resist the devil without doing the rest of what this Word says is to be taking it out of context.

Vs. 8 says “Draw Near to God and He will Draw Near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

Double mindedness is another way of saying you are wishy washy when it comes to what you believe, or that you are not settled in your spirit that the Word of God is true.

There is a cure for that. Find out what God’s Word has to say, and then hear it, meditate on it, and let it take root in your spirit. Let faith arise in your heart.

Romans 10:17 (NASB) *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ”*

Double-mindedness is quoting the Word of God with your mouth and not really expecting it to come to pass; your allowing doubt and unbelief to be your ruler.

Fear, doubt, anxiety, and other such tools of the devil come to us through our mind.

To try to stand against such things without first having our minds renewed with the Word of God is going to cause failure and a defeated attitude.

In order for us to appropriate the victory purchased for us by the Lord Jesus Christ, we must first renew our minds with the Word of God, and begin to look at ourselves as God looks at us.

A Christian cannot lead a victorious life except by the anointing of **God's Word** and the **POWER** of the Holy Spirit. We have to go to the Word of God first, and then lean on the Spirit of God for our strength.

We must allow God's Word by the power of the Holy Spirit to charge our spirits until our spirit is dominating our mind and flesh, or the world and the devil will join forces and defeat us.

When a Christian learns that the circumstances of life does not at all show where he or she is spiritually, he or she will rejoice, for when we learn that our recreated human spirit can be masters of our intellect and senses, we can have a strong and constant faith life.

By constantly dwelling on God's Word and meditating on His precepts we bring our mind into submission to God's will. God's Word is God's will.

When we renew our mind to the point where doubt has **no more room**, the power of faith can be released and results obtained.

The **First** point is by Renewing Our Minds we have Freedom in Christ,
The **Second** point is by Renewing Our Minds we Tear Down Strongholds
The **Third** Point is Renewing Our Minds is...

3. Essential for Transformation

I point this out for one reason: to make the point that the nonconformity to the world does not primarily mean the external avoidance of worldly behaviors. That's included. But you can avoid all kinds of worldly behaviors and not be transformed. "His face shown like the sun, and his clothes became white as light!"

- Something like that happens to us spiritually and morally.
- Mentally, first on the inside, and then,

- Later at the resurrection on the outside.

Transformation is not switching from the to-do list of the flesh to the to-do list of the law.

When Paul replaces the list, the works of the flesh, he does not replace it with the works of the law, but the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19–22).

Galatians 5:19-23 (NASB) ¹⁹ *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law.*

The Christian alternative to immoral behaviors is not a new list of moral behaviors. It is the **triumphant power** and **transformation** of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ our Savior, our Lord, our Treasure.

And in Romans 12:2 Paul now focuses on one essential means of transformation “the renewal of your mind.” *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”*

Oh, **how crucial** this is!

- If you long to break loose from conformity to the world,
- If you long to be transformed and new from the inside out,
- If you long to be free from mere duty-driven Christianity and do what you love to do because what you love to do is what you ought to do,
- If you long to offer up your body as a living sacrifice so that your whole life becomes a spiritual act of worship and displays the worth of Christ above the worth of the world,

Then give yourself with all your might to pursuing this the renewal of your mind. Because the Bible says, this is the key to transformation.

Consider the way Peter describes our mind-problem in 1 Peter 1:13-14,

1 Peter 1:13-14 (NASB) ¹³ *Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ as obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,*”

They are life-ruining, worship-destroying desires, and they get their life and their power from the deceit of our minds.

There is a kind of knowledge of God a renewal of mind that transforms us because it liberates us from the deceit and the power of alien passions.

Ephesians 4:17-18 (NASB) ¹⁷ *“So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;”*

Paul takes us deeper than Peter here. He penetrates beneath the “futile mind” and the “darkened understanding” and the willful “ignorance” and says that it is all rooted in “the hardness of their heart.”

Here is the deepest disease, infecting everything else.

- Our mental suppression of liberating truth is rooted in our hardness of heart.
- Our hard hearts will not submit to the supremacy of Christ,
- and therefore our blind minds cannot see the supremacy of Christ

The reason I say the Holy Spirit is required is because this word “**renewal**” in Romans 12:2 is only used one other place in all the Greek Bible, namely, Titus...

Titus 3:5 (NASB) *“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,”*

There’s the word “**renewal**” which we’ve seen is so necessary. And it is renewal “of the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit renews the mind. It is first and decisively his work.

We are radically dependent on the Holy Spirit, as he assists us in our efforts, and are able to follow his initiatives and enabling’s.

Holy Spirit must work in two directions:

- From the outside in
- And from the inside out.

He must work from the outside in by exposing the mind to Christ-exalting truth.

- That is, he must lead us to hear the gospel,
- To read the Bible,
- Eat, sleep and Drink the Bible,
- To study Christ-exalting writings of great, spiritual men,
- And to meditate on the perfections of Christ.
- And in it all pray, pray, pray that the Holy Spirit will renew your mind that you may desire and approve the will of God, so that all of life will become worship to the glory of Christ.

This is exactly what our great enemy does not want us to do, why? Because he knows all too well that it will lead to Transformation!

The Spirit must work from the outside in, through Christ-exalting truth, and from the inside out, through truth-embracing humility.

If he only worked from the outside in, by presenting Christ-exalting truth to our minds but not breaking the hard heart and making it humble, then the truth would be despised and rejected.

And if he only humbled the hard heart, but put no Christ-exalting truth before the mind, there would be no Christ to embrace and no worship would happen.

As we heard in the 2016 Togetherness conference...

The word without Love brings about Brutality,
Love without the word brings about Compromise, you need both in order to get it right!

Conclusion: What Then Shall We Do?

It takes commitment on our part, let me give you an illustration to help you understand what commitment is all about:

A Pig and a Chicken were walking down the road together. As they walked along they read a sign advertising a breakfast to benefit the poor.

The Chicken said to the Pig, you and I should donate some ham and eggs for the breakfast.

The Pig replied, *“Not so fast, for you it would be just a contribution, but for me it would be a total commitment.”*

The pig at least understood that it is not possible to offer a partial sacrifice.

Saints, let's not mince words, it is also not possible to offer partial commitment, because partial commitment is no commitment at all.

What then do we do in obedience to Romans 12:2, "*Be transformed in the renewal of your mind*"?

We join the Holy Spirit in his precious and all-important work. We pursue Christ-exalting truth and we pray for truth-embracing humility with COMMITMENT.

I would like to share a poem by Kate Wilkenson called, *May the Mind of Christ, My Savior*

May the mind of Christ, my Savior,
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and power controlling
All I do and say.

May the Word of God dwell richly
In my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph
Only through His power.

May the peace of God my Father
Rule my life in everything,
That I may be calm to comfort
Sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me,
As the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self-abasing,

This is victory.

May I run the race before me,
Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus
As I onward go.

May His beauty rest upon me,
As I seek the lost to win,
And may they forget the channel,
Seeing only Him.

Who is in control of your mind today?

Philippians 4:8 (NASB)

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things.

Let us Pray...