
THE TRANSFORMED LIFE



RENEWING YOUR MIND

A STUDY OF ROMANS 12

COMPILED BY GENE TAYLOR

PREFACE

Over the years I have often gone to the twelfth chapter of the book of Romans to remind myself how I ought to be living as a Christian. It has been most helpful in guiding me on the path that I believe my Savior would want me to walk.

I first became acquainted with the practical nature of this chapter when, as a young preacher just starting out, I heard a series of three lessons on it by the late Peter J. Wilson at a lectureship presented by the Thayer Street Church of Christ in Akron, Ohio, in the mid 1970's. I have drawn heavily on his outlines over the years. They form the skeletal basis for this study though, over time, I have added a great deal of my own material.

These lessons have been prepared in this form so that as many people who read and study them may come to understand and appreciate the wonderful information the apostle Paul has given in Romans 12 as to how to live before God and others as a follower of Jesus Christ.

May all of us use the inspired Scriptures to be our guide in all that we do so that our lives will glorify God, that we will set a proper example before others and that, finally, when death comes, we will receive a crown of life.

Gene Taylor
March 2011

© Gene Taylor, 2011. All Rights Reserved.

LESSON ONE: SETTING THE CONTEXT

Introduction

1. The purpose of these lessons is to set forth the marks of the life of the Christian as they are presented in Romans 12.
2. This chapter contains some of the most practical and relevant teaching to be found in the Bible as it relates to living as a disciple of Christ, a child of God.
3. This lesson will examine the context in which the chapter is found.
 - a. Context is important in any study.
 - b. It is clear that the apostle Paul draws heavily upon that which precedes this chapter.

I. The Letter to the Romans

- A. The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome.
- B. The church at Rome.
 1. Its origin is unknown but tradition states that it was founded by the apostle Peter but such a view is inconsistent with known facts and without any supporting evidence.
 - a. Peter's own epistles were neither addressed to nor written from Rome.
 - b. In Paul's letter to this church he makes no mention of Peter.
 - c. In epistles Paul wrote from Rome while in prison there, he makes no mention of Peter.
 - d. No mention is made of Rome in the writings of Peter and no inspired writer mentions Peter in connection with Rome.
 - e. If Peter were in Rome, why were there no spiritual gifts in the church there? (1:11)
 2. Its probable origin.
 - a. Some of those present on the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts 2 returned to teach the gospel and establish a church there. (Acts 2:10)
 - b. Some who were scattered after the stoning of Stephen may have journeyed there. (Acts 8:1-4)
 3. It was composed of both Jews and Gentiles. (11:13; 7:1)
- C. The purposes and messages of the book.
 1. To state Paul's longtime desire to visit them. (1:13; 15:23)
 2. To express Paul's thankfulness for their faith. (1:8)
 3. To show that both Jew and Gentile are under condemnation because of sin. (3:9)
 4. To explain that justification was not by the Law of Moses but rather by faith. (3:28; 5:1)
 5. To indicate how saved people, Christians, should conduct themselves.

II. Setting the Context

- A. As the twelfth chapter of Romans opens, the apostle is:
 1. Basing his appeal in this chapter on that which preceded it.
 - “I beseech you therefore...”
 2. Concluding a well ordered and systematic exposition on justification by faith that has taken him eleven chapters to complete.
- B. The theme of the book.
 1. The theme of the book is stated in 1:16-17.
 - “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.”
 2. The theme developed.
 1. The guilt of the Gentile world. (ch. 1)
 2. The guilt of the Jewish nation. (ch. 2)
 3. The guilt of all and God’s provision to save. (ch. 3)
 4. The Old Testament supports and proves the theme. (ch. 4)
 - a. The promise to Abraham was given on the basis of faith while he was yet uncircumcised.
 - b. The heirs of the promise are those who have the same faith as Abraham, not circumcision.
 5. A contrast of Adam and Jesus Christ. (ch. 5)
 - As sin and death came into the world by one, life came by one—Jesus Christ.
 6. The life of the Christian. (ch. 6)
 - a. Dead to sin but alive to God.
 - b. One cannot be a servant of sin and a servant of Christ at the same time.
 7. A contrast of the freedom of the Christian to the bondage of the law. (ch. 7)
 8. A contrast of walking by the flesh to walking by the Spirit. (ch. 8)
 9. The question, “Has God rejected His people Israel?” (ch. 9)
 - a. There were many advantages to being a Jew. (see 3:1)
 - b. The oracles of God had been committed to them. (3:2)
 - c. The Jews rejected God. (11:1)
 10. The rejection was due to unbelief, acceptance is by faith. (ch. 10)
 11. The plan of God is subject to universal application. (ch. 11)

LESSON TWO: A LIVING SACRIFICE

Romans 12:1

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.

Introduction

1. As the apostle has just concluded his dissertation on “justification by faith,” he now focuses on how one is to live by faith.
2. It is very typical of Paul to go from the sublime to the practical.
 - a. As he does here.
 - b. As he does in the book of Ephesians.
3. In the twelfth chapter of Romans Paul makes practical application of the principles of “justification by faith.”

I. “I Beseech You”

- A. Note the intensity of the language.
 - To beseech means to beg, implore or urge.
- B. “Therefore.”
 - Because of all that has been already stated.
- C. “By the mercies of God”
 1. “The word ‘by’ *dia* denotes here the reason why they should do it, or the ground of appeal. So great had been the mercy of God, that this constituted a reason why they should present their bodies, etc. see 1 Cor 1:10; Rom 15:30. The word ‘mercies’ here denotes favor shown to the undeserving, or kindness, compassion, etc.” (*Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament*)
 2. “‘By means of the mercies of God’ as shown in his argument and in our lives. See 2 Cor 1:3 for ‘the Father of mercies.’” (*Robertson’s Word Pictures in the New Testament*)
- D. “Present your bodies.”
 1. The Greeks looked upon the body with disdain that the body is a prison, an encumbrance.
 2. Contrary to the Greek concept, the Christian believes that the body belongs to God.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. “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.”

- b. 2 Corinthians 7:1. "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
- c. Romans 6:12-13. "12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 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."

II. "A Living Sacrifice"

- A. Sacrifices in the Old Testament died in the offering.
 - They were offered one time then perished.
- B. The Christian is to be dead unto sin but alive unto God.
 - 1. Romans 6:11. "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - 2. This emphasizes the dedication and consecration a Christian is to have.
 - a. Galatians 2:20. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
 - b. Galatians 6:14. "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."
 - 3. The greatest need in the church today is commitment.
 - a. Though many make the decision to follow Christ, as in any decision made in life, for it to be successful it must be seen through with a commitment.
 - b. A lack of commitment causes:
 - 1) Marriages to fail.
 - 2) Students drop out of college.
 - 3) Those once baptized to forsake the Lord.
 - 4.) Dead churches.
 - aa. The church at Sardis (Revelation 3:1-3)
 - bb. Churches are only as alive as their members are.
 - 4. The need for commitment is seen in spiritual matters.
 - a. The account of the rich young man. (Mark 10:17-22)
 - b. Luke 9:62. "But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'"
 - c. The example of the apostle Paul. (Philippians 3:8-16)
- C. A holy sacrifice.
 - 1. Holy. "Fundamentally signifies 'separated' (among the Greeks, dedicated to the gods), and hence, in Scripture in its moral and spiritual significance, separated from sin and therefore consecrated to God, sacred." (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)

2. 2 Corinthians 6:14. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?"
3. 1 Peter 1:15. "But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct..."

D. An acceptable sacrifice.

1. "Acceptable *euareston* Literally, 'well-pleasing.'" (*Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*)
2. 2 Corinthians 5:9. "Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him."
3. 2 Timothy 2:5. "And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules."
4. 1 Samuel 15:22. "Then Samuel said: 'Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams.'"

E. A reasonable sacrifice.

1. Reasonable. "*logikos*, pertaining to 'the reasoning faculty, reasonable, rational,' is used in Rom 12:1, of the service (*latreia*) to be rendered by believers in presenting their bodies 'a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.' The sacrifice is to be intelligent, in contrast to those offered by ritual and compulsion; the presentation is to be in accordance with the spiritual intelligence of those who are new creatures in Christ and are mindful of 'the mercies of God.'" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
2. "'Reasonable,' not in the popular sense of the term, as a thing 'befitting or proper,' but 'rational,' as distinguished from merely external or material. Hence, nearly equivalent to 'spiritual.' So the English Revised Version (1885), in the margin. It is in harmony with the highest reason." (*Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*)
3. "The word rendered 'service' *latreian* properly denotes worship, or the homage rendered to God. The word 'reasonable' with us means what is 'governed by reason; thinking, speaking, or acting conformably to the dictates of reason' (*Webster*); or what can be shown to be rational or proper. This does not express the meaning of the original. That word *logikeen* denotes what pertains to the mind, and a reasonable service means what is mental, or pertaining to reason. It stands opposed, not to what is foolish or unreasonable, but to the external service of the Jews, and such as they relied on for salvation." (*Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*)

LESSON THREE: BE TRANSFORMED

Romans 12:2

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.

Introduction

1. The key to being successful as a “living sacrifice” is non-conformity to the world.
2. The Christian, instead of being like those in the world, is to be changed, i.e., he is to be transformed.

I. “Do Not Be Conformed to This World”

- A. Uses of the word “world” (*kosmos*).
 1. The material universe which God pronounced as “good.” (Acts 17:24; Romans 1:20; Genesis 1:31)
 2. The inhabitants of the earth whom God loves. (John 3:16)
 3. The realm of Satan which the Christian is forbidden to love. (1 John 2:15-17; 5:19)
 - a. It includes the lust of the eye, lust of the flesh and pride of life.
 - b. It includes all the allurements and enticements Satan has at his disposal.
- B. The world of Satan is hostile to Christ.
 1. 1 Corinthians 1:21. “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”
 2. John 15:18. “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.”
 3. John 7:7. “The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.”
 4. James 4:4. “Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”
- C. The world has a “walk” or manner of life and a fashion to it which identifies it.
 1. Ephesians 2:1-2. “1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience...”

2. Ephesians 4:17. "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind..."
- D. The Christian is not "of the world."
1. John 8:23. "And He said to them, 'You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.'"
 2. John 15:19. "'If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.'"
 3. James 1:27. "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."
 4. Colossians 1:13. "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love..."
 5. Philippians 3:20. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ..."
- E. As a Christian, do not allow the world to set the pattern of your life.
1. 1 Peter 1:13-15. "13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct..."
 2. "With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves toward the goal of true maturity." (*J.B. Phillips, The NT in Modern English*)
 3. This is a problem that affects congregations.
 - It is interesting and worthwhile to note that each church took on characteristics of the city in which it was located, a tendency of religious bodies and congregations since that time. The early church gradually imbibed the spirit of Rome and slowly patterned its organization after that of the empire. This spirit and organization is clearly visible in the Roman Catholic church. National influence is also detected in the Lutheran and Calvinist churches that originated in medieval Europe. America gave birth to a new spirit in religion, a more independent search for truth and a disposition to debate principles considered vital. But as the American spirit has changed in its political ideals and social views, a parallel change can be

detected in American religious bodies. Social work and emphasis has come to dominate American churches, while attention to doctrine and conviction on matters of faith has waned. A general breakdown in national morals is reflected in churches everywhere. The tendencies and weaknesses observed and condemned in the early church are being repeated today, and the Revelation should serve as a warning to the church today against conforming to the world. (Homer Hailey, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*, 118-119)

II. "Be Transformed"

- A. "There must be a radical change in the inner man for one to live rightly in this evil age..." (*Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament*)
- B. Jesus, on the Mount of Transfiguration, is an illustration of what is to take place in the Christian. (Matthew 17:1-2)
 - 1. "He was transfigured *metemorphothee*, *meta*, denoting 'change' or 'transfer,' and *morfee*, 'form.' This latter word denotes the form regarded as the distinctive nature and character of the object, and is distinguished from *scheema*, the changeable, outward 'fashion:' in a man, for instance, his gestures, clothes, words, acts. The *morfee* partakes of the 'essence' of a thing." (*Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*)
 - 2. The Christian is to reflect the glory of Christ. (Matthew 5:14)
- C. The key to this transformation is "the renewing of your mind."
 - 1. 2 Timothy 2:15. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
 - 2. Philippians 2:5. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus..."
 - 3. Colossians 3:16. "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."
 - 4. Psalm 119:10-11. "10 With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!"
 - 5. Psalm 119:16. "I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word."
 - 6. Psalm 119:97. "Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day."
 - 7. Psalm 119:104. "Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."
 - 8. Psalm 119:165. "Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble."
- D. Such a transformation grants victory over the "world" (1 John 5:4)

LESSON FOUR: QUALITIES OF THE TRANSFORMED LIFE - I

HUMILITY AND USEFULNESS

Romans 12:3-8

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

I. Humility (3-5)

- A. Pride, arrogance, self-adulation are all characteristic of the worldly life.
 - 1. The worldly are wrapped up in self.
 - 2. Selfishness is the root of all sin.
- B. To the Christian, self must be denied and crucified, put to death.
 - 1. Luke 9:23. "Then He said to them all, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.'"
 - 2. Galatians 2:20. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
 - 3. Galatians 6:14. "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."
 - 4. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. "For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."
 - 5. Philippians 2:3-4. "3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others."

- C. Humility is essential for the church to properly function.
1. Most of the problems in the local church are of a personal nature.
 2. For brethren to be able to get along and function as one, they must have the proper attitude toward self and one another. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)
 3. "Many faithful men and women who made up the membership of these various congregations deserve special mention for their steadfastness in the faith and their untiring zeal in the Lord's work. But the writer of history must restrict his pen to a few items, a few names, a few events which in themselves may be of no greater moment than others, but which tend to connect events into a readable story. In the Lord's kingdom there are no 'least nor greatest,' but all are equally a part of 'the one body,' and of equal importance. Though the work of some acquire a greater degree of prominence, yet it is in no wise of greater value in the aggregate, nor is the less prominent work to be dispensed with." (James T. Amis, *A History of the Churches of Christ in and around Springfield, Missouri*)
 4. It is God who made us to differ, therefore, there is no room for boasting. (1 Corinthians 4:7; James 1:17)
- D. The Christian is to think soberly of himself.
1. To think soberly is to think clearly and realistically.
 2. One is not to think more highly of himself than he should.
 3. One should not bury his abilities in false modesty or humility.
 - a. Recognize as a Christian who you are: one who is in the image of God, redeemed, a royal priest, etc.
 - b. Do not despise yourself.

II. Usefulness (6-8)

- A. Whatever gift, talent or resource you have, use it to the glory of God.
- B. Jesus condemned that person or thing that did not perform for which it was created.
 1. The barren fig tree. (Mark 11:12-14, 20)
 2. The figure of the vine and the branches. (John 15:1-8)
 - a. A Christian is created in Christ Jesus for good works. (Eph. 2:10)
 - b. The Christian, as a light in the world, is to be doing good works not hiding that light. (Matthew 5:14-16)
- C. The parable of the talents emphasizes that one is to be useful to the Lord and be utilizing that with which the Lord has blessed him. (Matthew 25:14-30)
- D. Whether the supernatural gifts of the first century or the ordinary abilities and talents now, one is to use them in ministry (*diakonia*), practical service.
 - Teaching, exhortation, giving with liberality, showing mercy and cheerfulness, tending to the sick, encouraging a weak brother, etc.

LESSON FIVE: QUALITIES OF THE TRANSFORMED LIFE - II

LOVE AND ZEAL

Romans 12:9-11

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord...

I. Love (9-10)

- A. Love is to be sincere, from the heart, not put on or acted out.
 - 1. Toward God and Christ. (Matthew 22:37-39; 1 Corinthians 16:22)
 - 2. Toward the word of God. (Psalm 119:97)
 - 3. Toward the brethren. (1 Peter 1:22)
 - 4. Toward all people, as God does. (John 3:16)
- B. Love is demonstrated by hating—abhorring that which is evil.
 - 1. Hebrews 1:9. ““You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.””
 - 2. Amos 5:15. “Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.”
 - 3. Psalm 97:10. “You who love the LORD, hate evil!”
 - 4. One of Satan’s greatest victories is to get us to laugh at, wink at or tolerate sin.
- C. Love is also demonstrated by cleaving to the good.
 - 1. Cleave: “*kollao* ‘to join fast together, to glue, cement,’ is primarily said of metals and other materials (from *kolla*, ‘glue’). In the NT it is used only in the passive voice, with reflexive force, in the sense of ‘cleaving unto,’ as of cleaving to one’s wife, Matt 19:5;....in Rom 12:9, ethically, of ‘cleaving’ to that which is good. (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
 - 2. Barnabas encouraged the Christians in Antioch to “continue with the Lord.” (Acts 11:23) (“Cleave unto the Lord” - ASV)
- D. The love one is to have for brethren, “brotherly love,” is a family type of love— tender affection.
 - 1. In the Greek it typified a kinship or kindred relation.
 - a. Galatians 3:26. “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”

- b. Romans 8:16. "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."
- 2. We can test our love for the brethren.
 - a. How do we react to their needs?
 - b. How do we react when there are differences of opinion?
 - c. Does it meet the test of 1 Corinthians 13:1-13)
 - 1) Suffers long: patient.
 - 2) Is kind: gentle.
 - 3) Does not envy: generous.
 - 4) Does not parade itself: humble.
 - 5) Is not puffed up: humble.
 - 6) Does not behave rudely: courteous.
 - 7) Does not seek its own: unselfish.
 - 8) Is not provoked: self-control.
 - 9) Thinks no evil: forgets.
 - 10) Does not rejoice in iniquity: does not delight in others' sins.
 - 11) Rejoices in the truth: sincere.
 - 12) Bears all things: endures.
 - 13) Believes all things: trusting.
 - 14) Hopes all things: optimistic.
 - 15) Endures all things: will last.
 - 16) Never fails.
- 3. "In honor giving preference to one another."
 - a. Outdoing one another in showing honor.
 - b. Philippians 2:3. "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."
 - c. In matters of showing appreciation, giving honors, strive to lead the way, even to outdo one another.

II. Zeal (11)

A. In service of the Lord there are two basic attitudes.

- 1. Lagging in diligence.
 - a. Slothful, lazy and indolent.
 - 1) Amos 6:1. "Woe to you who are at ease in Zion..."
 - 2) These are not only lazy but lack concern as to whether they ever accomplish anything.
 - Jeremiah 48:10. "Cursed be the one who does the Lord's work negligently..." (NASU)
- 2. Fervent in spirit.

B. Fervent in spirit.

1. Fervent: *zelos*, to be hot, to boil, to be on fire, glowing.
2. “[*zeo*] to boil with heat, be hot, used of boiling anger, love, zeal for what is good or bad.” (*Wuest Word Studies*, Vol. I, 214)
2. This spirit is illustrated by:
 - a. Apollos.
 - Acts 18:25. “This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.”
 - b. Jesus.
 - 1) Psalm 69:7-9. “7 Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. 8 I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother’s children; 9 Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.”
 - 2) John 2:17. “Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.’”

C. Fervor, ardor, and enthusiasm are the keys to success in the Lord’s work.

1. It was a lack of these things that caused problems in the church at Laodicea. (Revelation 3:14-16)
 - “The one man whom the Risen Christ could not stand was the man who was neither hot nor cold...The Christian may burn out, but he cannot rust out.” (*William Barclay, Revelation, Volume I*)
2. These things are often lacking in:
 - a. Singing during worship services.
 - b. Teaching programs of the church.
 - c. The membership in general.
 - d. Personal work and evangelism.

D. Christians need to be serving the Lord diligently from the heart. (Eph. 6:6)

LESSON SIX: QUALITIES OF THE TRANSFORMED LIFE - III

JOYOUS, PATIENT, PRAYERFUL, GENEROUS AND HOSPITABLE

Romans 12:12-1

12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;
13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

I. Joyous (12)

- A. NIV: "Be joyful in hope."
- B. The hope of the Christian gives him joy.
 - 1. 1 Peter 1:3-4. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you..."
 - 2. Romans 5:1-2. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."
- C. The worldly person is without God or hope, thus, without true joy. (Eph. 2:12)
- D. The Christian has Jesus Christ as his hope.
 - 1. Colossians 1:27. "To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."
 - 2. Hebrews 6:19-20. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."
- E. One of the greatest inconsistencies in life is a somber, sad, complaining, miserable "Christian."
 - 1. Psalm 100:2. "Serve the LORD with gladness..."
 - 2. Psalm 144:15. "Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!"

II. Patient (12)

- A. Patient. "*hupomeno...*' to bear patiently, endure,' translated 'patient' (present participle) in Rom 12:12... (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
- B. All Christians will face adversity and persecution in their lives. (2 Tim. 3:12)
- C. The Christian must patiently endure adversity ever clinging to and relying upon Jesus and the hope He provides.
 1. He is even to "glory in" tribulations.
 - Romans 5:3-4. "3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope."
 2. He is to be joyful when trials come upon him.
 - James 1:2-3. "2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."
 3. He is not to be moved by the trials and adversities of life because of the hope he has in Jesus.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:58. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

III. Prayerful (12)

- A. The Christian is to be "continuing steadfastly in prayer."
 1. Continuing. "*proskartereo*, lit., 'to be strong towards' (pros, 'towards,' used intensively, and *kartereo*, 'to be strong'), 'to endure in, or persevere in, to be continually steadfast with a person or thing,' is used of "continuing" in prayer with others, Acts 1:14 Rom 12:12 Col 4:2... (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
 2. Steadfastly. "*ephistemi...*' to set upon or by,' is used in the NT intransitively, either in the middle voice, or in certain tenses of the active, signifying 'to stand by, be present, be at hand, come on or upon,' and is translated 'be instant' in 2 Tim 4:2....Note: For *proskartereo*, in Rom 12:12, KJV, rendered 'continuing instant,' RV, 'steadfastly...'" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
- B. The Christian must:
 1. "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
 2. Always "pray and not lose heart." (Matthew 18:1)
- C. James 5:16. "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

IV. Generous (13)

- A. The Christian is to be "distributing to the needs of the saints"
 1. Distribute (communicate). "*koinoneo*; to share with others." (*New Exhaustive Strong's Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary*)
 2. "The meaning is 'sharing in the necessities;' taking part in them as one's own." (*Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*)

- B. The attitude of heart one is to have is seen in the early church in Jerusalem.
- Acts 4:32. "Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own..."
- C. One cannot be blind to the needs of his brethren and still have a proper relationship with God.
1. 1 John 3:17-18. "17 But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."
 2. James 2:14-17. "14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?"
- D. As the apostle Paul was collecting for the needy saints in Jerusalem, he reminded the Corinthians how they were to give.
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7. "6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

V. Hospitable (13)

- A. The Christian is to be "given to hospitality."
1. Given.
 - a. "*dioko*, 'to pursue,' is translated 'given to' in Rom 12:13, lit., 'pursuing hospitality.'" (*Vine's Expository Dict. of Biblical Words*)
 - b. "Metaphorically, with the accusative of thing, to pursue, i.e. to seek after eagerly..." (*Thayer's Greek Lexicon*)
 - c. The same word is used in Romans 14:19.
 - "Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another."
 2. Hospitality.
 - a. "*philoxenia*, 'love of strangers' (*philos*, 'loving,' *xenos*, 'a stranger'), is used in Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2, lit. '(be not forgetful of) hospitality.'" (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
 - b. "Giving or offering a generous welcome to guests or strangers." (*New Century Dictionary*)
- B. Someone has said, "The Christian religion is a religion of open heart, open hand, and open door."
- C. Consider the caution given by the apostle Peter. (1 Peter 4:9)
1. "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling."
 2. "Complaint spoils hospitality. Jesus enjoined the entertainment of strangers (Matt 25:35)." (*Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament*)

LESSON SEVEN: QUALITIES OF THE TRANSFORMED LIFE - IV

FORGIVING, COMPASSIONATE, CONDESCENDING AND PEACEABLE

Romans 12:14-21

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. 17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. 20 Therefore 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.' 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

I. Forgiving (14)

- A. Jesus warned His followers that they would be persecuted.
 - 1. John 15:20. "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."
 - 2. 2 Timothy 3:12. "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."
- B. Being patiently able to endure persecution is one thing, maintaining a proper attitude towards persecutors is another.
 - Matthew 5:43-45a. "43 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven..."
- C. New Testament examples
 - 1. Jesus.
 - a. 1 Peter 2:21-23. "21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 'Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth'; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously..."

- b. Luke 23:34. "Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.'"
- 2. Stephen.
 - Acts 7:59-60. "59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.'"
- 3. The apostle Paul.
 - 1 Corinthians 4:12. "And we labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure..."

II. Compassionate (15)

- A. Jesus, while on the earth, displayed compassion many times.
 1. Seeing the multitude was like sheep without a shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)
 2. When He healed the sicknesses of the multitude. (Matthew 14:44)
 3. When He saw the multitudes had nothing to eat. (Matthew 15:32)
 4. When He healed two blind men in Jericho. (Matthew 20:34)
 5. When He cleansed a leper. (Mark 1:41)
 6. When He raised the son of the widow of Nain from the dead. (Luke 7:13)
- B. We are to have compassion on one another.
 - 1 Peter 3:8. "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous..."
- C. We have many friends with whom we can laugh but the real close friends are invariably the ones with whom you have cried.
- D. It is often easier to weep with those who weep than to rejoice with those who rejoice.
- E. "My Prayer" by Bill Hall.
 - "Lord, help me never to become calloused of heart. Help me to be sensitive to the pains and hurts of others.

"Let me feel a genuine thrill on truly thrilling occasions: when two young Christians are joined in marriage; when some young man preaches his first gospel sermon or when some new convert leads his first prayer; when a newborn baby cries, or when some elderly person passes successfully one more milestone in his life; when a sinner responds to be baptized or when a brother returns.

"Lord I do not want to shut out from my own life the sorrows of others. Make me to weep when tears are in order: when a doctor has just given a frightening report; when parents grieve over their delinquent child; when tears flow from the eyes of a motherless child, or of a childless mother; when a struggling brother or sister has slipped back into sin; when a man has just been forsaken by the wife of his youth; when all hope seems gone among those who had hoped.

“Help me to be excited over the successes of others: when someone achieves something that I’ve never been able to achieve; when some worthy man is appointed an elder of the church; when someone’s son is graduated with honors; when some couple moves into that long-awaited new home; when some young man’s preaching ability obviously has surpassed mine. Above all, Lord, don’t let me be jealous.

“Lord, help me to be like thee: compassionate, kind, merciful, gracious, slow to anger, plentiful in mercy, touched with feelings of others’ infirmities, able to weep, ready to rejoice, emotional, loving. Let me deny self and esteem others better than myself.

“And Lord, let me never become hardened to sin. Help me to hate sin, to weep blinding tears over my own sins, to maintain a conscience void of offense. May I be repulsed and grieved over the sins of others.

“Lord, help me never to become calloused of heart, for should I do so, I could no longer render effective service to Thee or to my fellow-man, and I would forfeit all hope of real happiness, both in this life and in that which is to come.”

III. Condescending (1 6)

- A. There is a disagreement among scholars as to whether the verse is referring to lowly things or lowly people.
 1. Marvin Vincent says it can apply to both: “The English Revised Version (1885): ‘to things that are lowly.’ *Tois tapeinois*, ‘to the lowly’ may mean either lowly ‘men’ or lowly ‘things.’ The verb literally means ‘being carried off along with;’ hence, ‘yielding or submitting to,’ and so ‘condescending.’” (*Vincent’s Word Studies of the New Testament*)
 2. The person who has an undue regard for things never has a proper attitude toward those persons of lower station in life.
- B. The Scriptures tell us of improper and proper attitudes toward things and the consequences of each.
 1. Jeremiah 45:5. “‘And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them; for behold, I will bring adversity on all flesh,’ says the LORD. ‘But I will give your life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go.’”
 2. 1 John 2:15. “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”
 3. Luke 12:15. “And He said to them, ‘Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.’”

4. Mark 4:18-19. "18 'Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.'"
5. Matthew 6:33. "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."
6. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. "17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."
7. Philippians 3:8. "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ..."

V. Peaceable (17-21)

- A. Contrary to the worldly concept that personal revenge and vengeance are a part of justice, the Christian must have the attitude of non-retaliation to evil.
- B. God's blessings are upon the peacemakers.
 1. Matthew 5:9. "'Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.'"
 2. Romans 14:19. "Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another."
- C. Vengeance is to be left unto God.
 1. Deuteronomy 32:35. "'Vengeance is Mine, and recompense...'"
 2. Hebrews 10:30. "For we know Him who said, '*Vengeance is Mine; I will repay,*' says the Lord. And again, '*The LORD will judge His people.*'"

Conclusion

1. In this study we have examined the attributes of the life of one who is a true servant of the Lord.
2. If we claim to be Christians, our lives are to manifest these qualities.
3. If these qualities are not a part of your character, be transformed by the word of God.

For additional class books, study guides, and sermon outline books, visit:



www.centervilleroad.com