

Title: YOUR BODIES AND YOUR MINDS, ROMANS 12:1-2
(Chatham, NJ; 08/24/14, AM) [Pc – Exegetical]

Theme: Romans 12 describes the persistent repentance that we must undergo in order to live the Christian life.

Purpose: To explain what the Bible means by “present your bodies” and “transform you minds” and to demonstrate how these are the essence of repentance.

Introduction:

1. Chapters 1-11 describe the essential truths of the Gospel and of the Christian faith.
2. Chapter 12 describes the hard work of repentance.
3. This must be the duty of every individual.
4. Read “True Heroism” in *Best Loved Poems*, p. 38.
5. Proverbs 16:32 suggests the importance of such inner fortitude.

I. Present Your Bodies, 1

A. By the mercies of God

1. We are called to respond to God's mercy
2. As opposed to force of law and intimidation: “convert to Islam or die”
3. 2:4, God's kindness leads to repentance
4. Force can change a person externally
5. Only kindness and mercy can change a person from within

B. Your bodies

1. Not just limbs or parts as in 6:13, 19
2. This stands for the whole person, not just the flesh and its parts
3. What we do for Christ is embodied in daily living

C. As a living sacrifice

1. The Law demanded atonement by sacrificing animals
2. There was more: love God, etc.
3. Under the Gospel, we are a sacrifice by the way we live
4. Paul also calls us temples in 1 Corinthians 6:15
5. The ideas of sacrifice and God's presence are reflected in how we live
6. Our sacrifice is not one that dies but one that lives holy and acceptable to God

D. Spiritual worship or rational service

1. The different translations are not as different as they seem
2. Spiritual and rational refers to all of what only a person can offer to God: his complete self
3. Worship and service – the Greek word is sometimes used of service, sometimes of worship
4. Being a living sacrifice is both worship and service dedicated to God

II. Transform your minds, 2

A. Do not be conformed

1. Do not become one with
2. The world = age
3. Refers to the way of thinking and living opposed to God
4. Ephesians 2:1-3 describes it as being under the power and influence of evil
5. Sometimes we must identify those evil ways as they surface in our own minds

B. But be transformed

1. Be formed and changed by a different set of truths
2. Here is the essence of repentance carried out in daily living
3. Repentance is not a one-time event; it is a process
4. We also call this sanctification
5. It means we are to grow and change into the likeness of Christ, Eph 4:13

C. Transformed in several ways

1. First, renew our minds – most often our behavior is dictated by what we believe
2. Often unrecognized, ways of thinking can steer our decisions in wrong ways
3. Patterns become entrenched that we can't recognize them
4. Keep thinking, keep learning, change your mind
5. Second, discern the will of God by testing
6. Paul doesn't mean experiment but he means use it – try it out (like giving a car a test drive)
7. Test it to see how good it is and by testing you can more easily recognize what is good, acceptable, and perfect
8. Hebrews 5:14 – such testing brings about maturity and certainty

Conclusions:

1. Sacrifice, service, and transformation: these are the elements of living for the will of God.
2. Anyone can be a true hero.
3. The Gospel message comes first: death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for the redemption of all people and for the forgiveness of sins.
4. Believe it, confess it, and obey it by being baptized for the remission of sins.
5. Live it by your continual service and transformation.