

“The Transformed Life”

Have you ever witnessed the transformation of a caterpillar to a butterfly? When the children were young we once found a cocoon attached to a branch and broke it off and placed it in a glass jar in our home to observe it. In due time the insect emerged. What was once green, crawled upon the tree, ate leaves and looked almost disgusting, emerged completely transformed. It was now multicolored, flew above the trees, ate nectar and looked stunningly beautiful. It was hard to imagine that such a creature came from an ugly worm!

That is the power of transformation and that is what happens in a person's life who is transformed by the Spirit of God. When we become Christians, old things have passed away and behold, new things have come!

Here in Romans 12: we move in this epistle from the doctrinal to the practical.

Based upon the mercies of God, Paul calls us to a life of

- *dedication* vs 1-2. Living Sacrifices on the altar of God that are transformed by the renewing of our minds.
- dedication should issue in *activation* (3-8) as we use our gifts and abilities to serve our Savior in the body of Christ and out in the world. We serve in various ways when the church is gathered and when the church is scattered during the week.
- But *activation* has no impact without *transformation*.  
Vs 9-13  
Paul focuses upon the Christian's behavior and character.

I see four aspects of the Believer's Transformed Behavior here. Behavior includes not only actions but attitudes.

1. Our Behavior Toward *other Saints*
2. Our behavior Toward *our Savior*
3. Our Behavior Toward *ourSelves*
4. Our Behavior Toward *our Stuff*

## I. OUR BEHAVIOR TOWARD OTHER SAINTS 9-10

Sincere love of the brothers and sisters in Christ.

No hypocrisy- no play acting/ no speaking behind a mask

Be real. Let love be sincere.

That has to be supernatural not natural. God has to do this in us- we cannot manufacture it in the power of our flesh. It comes from the transformation of our minds 12:2

- Love is first an act rather than a feeling. It is a choice.
- Biblical Love is expressed in action, God loved so much *that He gave*.
- Love is the abandonment of self-interest for the interest of others.
- Love has standards: It does not tolerate evil. *Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good*. Agape love is neutral about evil and sin. God who is love, hates sin perfectly.
- Love is others' focused

*Be devoted to one-another in brotherly love*

*Prefer one-another in honor*

The only competition in church ought to be in who can out-do the other in giving more honor! It is the world's way to exalt self at the expense of others. In the church we exalt others at the expense of ourselves.

Our Behavior toward other saints

## II. OUR BEHAVIOR TOWARD OUR SAVIOR 11

While vs 9-10 primarily deal with love, vs 11 deals with our work for Christ, or our *Christian service*. Just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many, so also we who follow him, are servants. The highest honor in the Bible is to be called *A servant of God*. OT writers God calls, “My servants, the prophets.” Our highest aspiration as Christians ought to be “a faithful servant.” Remember in Paul’s day “servant” had a distasteful meaning. But Paul calls himself a “bondservant of God” He is not forced into servitude but does it willingly and joyfully because he loves his Master.

That is to be our attitude and behavior. Since we are actually serving the Lord of glory in all our Christian service we ought to do it with diligence and with fervent zeal.

When we clean the church, for example, we are serving the Lord. We want to do it the best we can for HIM!

*“Whatever you do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God.”*

*Col 3:23-24 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*

Serving in the Nursery – on the board – picking up trash along the highway – helping the needy – preparing a meal

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### III. OUR BEHAVIOR TOWARD OURSELVES 12

Transformed minds – affect our character and attitudes.  
Paul focuses on three examples (Joy, Patience and Prayer)

1. Joy
2. Patience (Perseverance)
3. Prayer

(See written out by hand notes)

### IV. OUR BEHAVIOR TOWARD OUR STUFF 13

In relation to material goods, Paul gives 2 commands that deal with *generosity*. *Contributing to the needs of the saints*. *And practicing hospitality*. Giving and sharing. NT giving is more than giving to the institutional church- that is important but it is not the totality of giving. We meet other's individual's needs. Tax deduction or no. Charitable giving is not defined by the *government* but by *God*. The family of God cares for its own materially.

Hospitality- it's a lot of personal service to host others but it is commanded for all Christians and *required for leaders*. This is one of the qualifications for Elders (Tit 1:8).

NT hospitality was very important for believers. Instead of hotels they stayed in the homes of fellow Christians. It is almost a lost quality. There are blessings both ways.

#### Conclusion

5. Our Behavior Toward *other Saints*
6. Our behavior Toward *our Savior*
7. Our Behavior Toward *our Selves*
8. Our Behavior Toward *our Stuff*