

Romans 12:3-8
Spiritual Formation

I. Jesus saves us specifically to transform us. Matt.11:25-30

- A. Come to me. This is the first reality in the gospel.
 - 1. You need to actually come to Him as Lord.
- B. Learn from me. (Matt.28:18-20)
 - 1. Not just about me, but from me.
- C. *A person who says they have "come to Christ" but who doesn't want to learn to think like Christ, doesn't want to be Jesus' apprentice, probably hasn't come to Him yet.*
 - 1. *If you have come to him, you are so impressed with Him that you don't need to be forced to want to be like him.*

II. Paul emphasizes this transformation. Rom.12:1-2

- A. Rom.12:1-2. The Theme Verse for the whole section.
- B. The Gospel is Spirit life supernaturally saving and transforming us.

III. What does a mind in transformation look like? Romans 12:3-8 (Read All)

A. A realistic view of ourselves in Christ. 3. 2 Cor.10:12-18

- 1. No "hyperthink" about the self.
 - a) This is almost the opposite of our culture's view, where the Self is crucial to everything.
- 2. Trusting the "shape of the faith" God has granted. (Paul at Corinth)
 - a) God shapes faith in different ways, like physical muscles and muscle structure among us.
- 3. How can I cooperate with this?**
 - a) I can be honest with myself about my limitations.
 - (1) Arrogance grows in the area of our strengths. Look for it there.
 - b) I can embrace and learn from my regrets.
 - (1) Regrets are things we wish we could change.
 - (2) Regret + Grace = Wisdom
 - c) I can stay on my square.
 - (1) Do what I do to the best of my ability with humility and integrity. And not compare with others.

B. A Genuine appreciation for our life together. 4-5. 1 Cor 12:4-7

- 1. *Probably the main way that the Spirit alters our characters is by putting us in with other characters. Like in a Rock Polisher*
- 2. How can I cooperate with this?**
 - a) I can focus on the mission more than my feelings.
 - b) I can remember that God loves and uses other believers that rub me the wrong way.
 - c) I can realize that the mission needs the people I'm frustrated with.

C. An Authentic desire to help others any way we can. 6-8 (1 Cor.12:4-11)

1. What is a spiritual gift?
 - a) A simple definition: “An ability to express Christ by following the instincts of ones renewed nature in acts of service and worship. A manifestation of the Spirit.” J. I. Packer
2. An ad hoc list of 7. *The emphasis is not on defining these, but on the variety in unity in the Body of Christ.*
 - a) Prophecy. The ability to say something that has the effect of “speaking for the Lord” into another person’s life.
 - b) Service (deakanos). Official or unofficial physical service.
 - c) Teaching. Instruction, imparting spiritual knowledge and spiritual skill in life.
 - d) Exhortation (paralkesis). Counsel, encouragement, compassion
 - e) Giving. Ability to supply others with support.
 - f) Leading. Ability to influence others in some numbers toward godly goals and maturity.
 - g) Mercy. Showing compassion, etc
3. **How can I cooperate with this?**
 - a) I can stay long enough in a church to find out where I might be needed. Take the time.
 - b) I can be willing to cooperate with legitimate authority and do things that are not my own ideas.
 - c) I can focus on spiritual priorities rather than church politics or structures.

D. An Acute awareness of God’s Grace. Phil.3:12-14 (Matt. 11:28-30)

1. According to the grace given to me...
2. **How can I do this?**
 - a) I can let all my weariness remind me that it is the Lord’s work, not mine alone, that gets everything done. Sabbath...
 - b) I can let all my failures remind me that I am learning and have not “arrived.”
 - c) Because I have been completely and eternally forgiven and embraced by God in Christ.