**The Renewed Mind: Love and Righteousness**

As we observed in our last article, Paul encouraged Roman Christians to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1). But no life conformed to this world can possibly please God, so a transformation must occur. The key to that transformation is the “renewing of your mind” (v. 2); adopting an entirely new way of thinking.

The rest of chapter 12 offers a description of the transformed life, but the driving force behind our actions must be proper attitudes. We considered the first two characteristics of the renewed mind in our first article: Humility and Empathy. In this study we will consider two others: Respect for Right and Sincere Love.

**Respect for Right.** The philosophy of the world is, “do your own thing”. If you can go somewhere like Las Vegas where your misdeeds are less likely to follow you, great. In fact, their tourism campaign even brags that what happens there, stays there. Of course, they are lying to you. Your sins will always find you out (Numbers 32:23).

The person who wishes their life to be a living sacrifice to the glory of God must think differently. What is right and good must hold a special place in their heart. Romans 12:9 admonishes us to “abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.” That is a mark of the renewed mind.

The ultimate judge of what is good and evil is God himself, and He has communicated His judgments in His word. Hebrews 5:14 says that “solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.” Verse 13 makes it clear that this training comes from the “word of righteousness”. There is no such thing as *my* truth or *your* truth, there is only *the* truth and God is its author.

**Sincere Love.** In describing the renewed heart, Paul said, “Let love be without hypocrisy” (v. 9). The English word love is used to describe everything from lust to food preference to wholesome devotion. The kind of love God requires is a concern for another individual that leads us to act in their best interest.

Before you jump to the conclusion that the attitudes of the world often fit this description, Jesus adds one more caveat: “I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). He even pointed out that loving those who love you is nothing special; everyone does that! Disciples of Jesus will be known, not only for demonstrating love for their loved ones but also for those who hate and mistreat them.

Concern for the welfare of enemies is not a normal human emotion but it is divine. Romans 5:8 says “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Verse 10 emphasizes that we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son “while we were enemies.” When we mold our thinking to feel genuine concern for those who hate us, we become sons of our Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:45).

Transforming my life to be an acceptable sacrifice to God begins with the renewing of my mind and becomes a life-long challenge. Allowing Christ’s humility, empathy, godliness and sacrificial love to rule my heart will be the driving force behind my behavior.

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