***Transformed by Renewing Our Mind (Rom. 12:1-2)***

1. the power of the gospel
   1. We are called to enjoy our relationship with Jesus and experience His transforming grace as we give ourselves to Him in a wholehearted way. We are equipped to do this by renewing our mind with the truths that give us assurance of how He accepts and views us with mercy even in our weakness.

1I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable [pleasing] to God, which is your reasonable service [logical response]. 2And 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 [pleasing] and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12:1-2)

* 1. ***By the mercies of God***: Understanding God’s mercy both *motivates us with gratitude* to give ourselves fully to Him and *gives us* *confidence in our weakness* that our offering is pleasing to Him. Paul presented the truths of grace and mercy throughout Romans 1-11 (especially in Romans 5-6). By His mercy, we are accepted and enjoyed by God and have a significant destiny in His eyes.

18Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity…because He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)

14For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. (Ps. 103:14)

38He being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity…39He remembered that they were but flesh. (Ps. 78:38-39)

* 1. ***Present our body to God as a living sacrifice***: We give our body to the Lord in a wholehearted way. He desires that His people love Him with all their heart (Mt. 22:37). Our body here speaks of our whole person. David declared that he would only give to God a sacrifice that cost him. We give God that which is costly because it expresses our love. Though costly, it does not earn us His love.

24The king said…“...for I will not offer…offerings to the Lord my God which cost me nothing.”   
(2 Sam. 24:24, NAS)

* 1. ***Holy and acceptable (pleasing)***: He accepts the flawed and weak offering of our love, life, and service as holy and pleasing because He evaluates us through His mercy. Holy means “set apart” or sacred to God. There is joy and strength in believing that our offering is pleasing and holy to Him. Many live with despair thinking that the offering of themselves is not holy and pleasing to the Lord.
  2. ***Will of God***: He has a plan for our life into which He is sure to lead us. His first priority is that we be conformed to His image by growing in love and humility. This is more important than accomplishing things in man’s eyes.

6…being confident…that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it… (Phil. 1:6)

10For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)

* 1. ***Prove***: Our lives will give evidence that God’s will and leadership are good, acceptable, and perfect.   
     1. ***Good***: He leads us in a way that is good for our life and works all things for good (Rom. 8:28).   
     2. ***Pleasing***: God’s plan satisfies us according to how God uniquely designed each of us (Ps. 139).   
     3. ***Perfect***: God’s plan is perfect and cannot be improved upon.

1. transformed by the renewing of our mind
   1. We are transformed by changing how we think. Transformation begins by *knowing* what God is like, who we are in Christ (Rom. 5), that He sees the weak offering of our life as holy and pleasing, and that His sure master plan for our life is good, pleasing, and perfect (Rom. 12:1-2).

2And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind…  
 (Rom. 12:2)

* 1. ***Not conformed to the world***: We accept God’s evaluation of our life and do not measure our lives by the world’s values and standards. Paul assures us that presenting ourselves to God is holy and pleasing, so it is worth our effort to keep doing it. We express our love to Jesus by offering ourselves to Him in context to resisting worldly temptations and enduring criticism for standing for truth and purity.
  2. As our mind is renewed, our emotions will be transformed, and thus our behavior will change.   
     Our emotions and actions will follow what we think and say. Our emotions are not transformed by *trying harder*,but by *seeing more clearly* the truth of how God sees and evaluates us.

23…and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24and…put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:23-24)

* 1. Satan seeks to plant lies in our mind. Strongholds in our mind are collections of ideas that are in agreement with Satan. They are arguments or lies about the Lord and how He views His people.

4For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity [agreement] to the obedience of Christ... (2 Cor. 10:4-5)

* 1. ***Pulling down***: We pull down, cast down, or dismantle strongholds in our mind by renouncing lies about God and who we are in Christ and speaking the truths related to how God sees us in Christ.
  2. We have to think and speak what God says in order to feel and act in the way God wants. The war of words determines who has dominion in our heart. When condemnation, shame, fear, or despair rise in us to challenge what God promised in His Word about loving, forgiving, directing, providing for us, etc., then we must apply the Word by *confessing the truth* and *resisting lies*.
  3. Our words are powerful in causing either faith or fear to grow in us. If our words agree with God’s Word, we release His power in our life. If our words agree with Satan’s lies, we allow darkness to continue. Many have “faith” in Satan’s words.
  4. Many assume that it does not really matter what they think. Whatever comes to their mind is what they think on. They do not understand that they must take charge and set the course of their thinking. If they think they are afraid or depressed, they assume it is just an expression of who they are, so they do not resist such thoughts. They don’t know they have power to cast these ideas down.
  5. It is a glorious day when it dawns on you that you do not need to dwell on whatever comes to your mind. We are not captives to random, negative thoughts; we can renew our mind. Many are passive in this because they have not been taught the truth about the value and power of renewing the mind.