

- **We just spent 11 chapters and 9 months learning primarily doctrine.**
- **In Ch 1-3 we saw Gentiles aren’t righteous on their own** (even though they didn’t get the written law) and **Jews aren’t righteous on their own even though they are descendants of Abraham.**
- **Second part of ch. 3 – 5 Paul showed us that righteousness for both groups is by grace, through faith in Jesus.**
- **In Ch. 6-8 we saw that we need to be sanctified and live righteously and that the solution is the Holy Spirit.**
- **In 9-10 Paul explains that the fact that there aren’t more Jews in the Pews isn’t a failure by God to keep His promises but was an opportunity for Salvation for the Gentiles.**
- **Chapter 11 we saw that God is clearly not finished with Israel and the church is not Israel’s replacement but we as Gentiles are grafted into Israel.**

That’s a lot of doctrine. 9 months worth.

- We find today **two ways in which Christians tend to Error.**
 1. **Those who emphasize doctrine and are proud of it, but there is no commitment to doing something about it.** (Tend to be more fundamentalist or evangelical)
 - a. This is laying a foundation and never building the house.
 2. **Those who emphasize doing something with little or no reference to the doctrinal** reason why have a religion based on works. (Tend to be more liberal. Doctrine is not as important, Works matter)
 - a. This is building a house without first laying a foundation.

Sound doctrine should always be the foundation of Godly living.
People of SonRise. The Foundation has been laid. Chapters 12-15 shift us from What God has done (doctrine), to what that means practically in your life and mine. How we should respond to God’s mercy toward us.

- 12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy,**
- “Therefore” is looking back. Because of what we have learned in the last 11 chapters, God’s sacrifice and mercy, he urges them.
 - **Notice there is not a command.** What you are about to be asked to do is not an obligation to be saved, but what you should do as a result.
 - **12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.**
 - The mercy in view is that Jesus made Himself a sacrifice for us that was **holy** and **pleasing** to God. That’s why it was effective paying for our sins.
 - **If it is not an obligation to offer yourself as a living sacrifice, then what is it and why do it? It is True Worship. When you sacrifice your own wants, desires and will for God’s that is true worship of God.**

- You might be thinking, Living Sacrifice, that sound’s ominous, but like Christ’s sacrifice wasn’t for Himself, this is consciously choosing not for yourself but for God and others and it’s because of His great mercy.
- It’s a living sacrifice because it’s not sacrifice and then dead, but ongoing. ***² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*** So the world has a pretty predictable pattern or selfishness.
- **By nature, you will conform to the world and how it functions. But God’s mercy laid out in ch. 1-11 should make you want to be different than the world you were saved from.**
- **But changin’ is hard. So how do you do that? *By the renewing of your mind.***
- **What does renewing my mind mean?** Mind means what you think about and remind yourself of. Constant renewing.
- I know Jesus is King, I was dead in my sin, I’m alive in Jesus, nothing can separate me from God, His intense love for me. I know God is in control.
- **I naturally want to follow the pattern of the world, but to be transformed and live differently, I must constantly renew my mind with all these truths.**
- I do it because when you do what is opposed to God, its because your mind isn’t thinking or has temporarily ignored what you knew to be true. **God is faithful, Loves you, what he says to do is better for you.**
- When you’re tempted, renew your mind. The renewing of your mind transforms you. It changes you so you don’t follow the pattern of the world. **Watch what the result of renewing your mind is. . .**
- ***Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.***
- **Offering your body and mind as a living sacrifice and renewing your mind, come before you receive specific divine guidance.**
- Think about that logically. Why might that be?
- We want God to give us His plan and then we will approve or reject it.
- **God wants Dedication before Direction.** You tell me you are in and then I’ll tell you what we are doing once you’re committed.
- **“Why won’t God give me direction?”** Well, if you would renew your mind and be transformed so you are committed to go whatever direction He sends you, you would be shown His will.
- God doesn’t throw His pearls before swine and he doesn’t reveal His specific will until you’ve committed to it, whatever it is!

God wants you to be transformed by renewing your mind. How do you do that?

1. **Read the Bible.** (Ps. 119:11) ***I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.***

2. **Prayer as Jesus taught us to.** (Luke 11:4), *And lead us not into temptation.*

3. **Fill your mind with Godly things.** (Phil. 4:8) *⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*

- **Verses 1-2 urge us to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God and be transformed by the renewing of our minds. The rest of the book is a description of that service starting with using our Spiritual Gifts to serve the body of Christ.**

³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. So live and think honestly about yourself. Don't think selfishly about yourself, but view yourself as a part of the body of Christ with gifts you use on behalf of that body. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your^{rw} faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,^{rw} do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

- **This is the first thing listed. That tells me this is foundational for all Christians to understand. Spiritual Gifts and You in the Body**

1. **You are to be a connected and gift empowered participant in the body of Christ.**
2. **Your Spiritual Gifts are to be approached from the standpoint of a living sacrifice with a renewed mind.**

- **Want to know what your spiritual gifts are and how to use them? How are you able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.**

a. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

3. **The way you serve the body will be related to the gifts God has equipped you with.**

- **You will never be more fulfilled in your life than when you are offered to God as a living sacrifice, transformed by a renewed mind, able to discern God's will and using your Spiritual gifts to serve where God leads you to serve within the Body of Christ.**