

## "Transformed"

Romans 12:1-2 - I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

It makes me squirm when I hear people talk about self-improvement. They make resolutions, write up check lists, or just resolve to live as better people. Some of them seem to keep a mental tally of the good deeds they do—rather like doing reps in a gym. The more good deeds they do, the better people they will be—right?

But that's not what the Bible says. That's not what Paul writes about in our reading for today. He tells us to "present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God ... be transformed by the renewal of your mind." That's pretty comprehensive! God is not asking for a stack of good deeds, or even a cleaned up section of our lives. He is asking for it all—body, mind, the works. He wants all of us, all the time. He has plans for us.

"Sanctification" is the word we use for what God intends to do with us. God is remaking us, day by day, more and more into the image of Jesus Christ. There will be a strong family resemblance between us and Him when the Holy Spirit is through. People will be able to look at us and see that we are part of God's family.

But family resemblances don't come by hard work—at least, not by *our* hard work! You have your nose or eyebrows or the family thumb because of your DNA. It is none of your doing, it is a gift. The Bible calls it "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27b).

So what is our part in this great transformation process? It is simply to let it happen—to let God do what He's going to do—to relax and enjoy the process, and every so often, try something new that God is putting before us—a new challenge, a small change or an insight into a difficult situation that might make a difference.

We may not see the changes God is working in us over time—in fact, other people will almost certainly see them long before we do. But they will be there. After all, the same Lord who suffered, died, and rose for us, will certainly see to it that we become all that He means us to be. Paul writes: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).

**THE PRAYER:** Father, make me more and more in Jesus' image. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. Name a fellow Christian who shows a family resemblance to Jesus.
2. Why do you say so? In what ways?
3. What is one area of your life where God is working to make you more like Jesus?

Today's Bible in a Year Reading: Psalms 73, 85; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34