

# One Body in CHRIST

## Մէկ Մարմին Քրիստոսով

### Romans 12:1-5

Romans 12 was and is important chapter in my life. When I was in Christian Endeavor CE (like Young Life or YFC) in Aleppo, we often recited these verses. Today in my third sermon I would examine our topic, Lord, Make us ONE in CHRIST, through this chapter.

Our passage starts with the word, **therefore**.

Ahaaaa, which means what's before

11 chapters Paul spoke about **God's mercy**. God's mercy for undeserving sinners, where His son died for them, justifying them by FAITH.

“But God, **being rich in mercy**, because of the great love with which he loved us... (Eph 2:4 NIV)

**John Stott says:** “In particular, the ‘key-word’ of Romans 9–11 is ‘mercy’. For salvation depends ‘not ... on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy’ (9:16), and his purpose is ‘to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy’ (9:23). Further, as the disobedient Gentiles ‘have now received mercy’, so too disobedient Israel will ‘now receive mercy’ (11:30f.). ‘For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all’ (11:32)”.<sup>1</sup>

**Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy,**

**What?**

**to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.** (Romans 12:1 NIV)

Two words seem contradictory: living and sacrifice.

How can it be?

“**to sacrifice our bodies**”, it means we should put to death our old bodies.

“The Christian’s self-offering is actually all about coming alive with the new life that bursts out in unexpected ways once the evil deeds of the self are put to death.... It begins in the glad self-offering of one's whole self to the God whose mercy has come all the way to meet us in our rebellion, sin and death.”<sup>2</sup>

**Application:** I try every day to come to Jesus and offer my will, my heart to Him and say: “I surrender to you, do whatever you want with me, LORD. I offer myself as a living sacrifice.”

### **God transforms my ugly life into a new life...**

“He (God) never gets bored, He never grows weary, He never is frustrated, and his commitment to complete his redemptive work never fades. Our Savior’s canvases take a lifetime to complete, but He never forsakes the detailed work of his sanctification artistry.”<sup>3</sup>

How? Paul gives the answer:

**Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.** (Romans 12:2 NIV)

### **-Not conformed, but transformed. (*metamorphoō*)**

God is **holy** and requires from us to live **holy life**. This means transformation of our lives.

We should allow God’s Saving Spirit to work in us, allow the Holy Spirit to renew our mind, to have mind of Christ, that transform our character, our thinking, our behavior.

**The verb transformed *metamorphoo***, that Paul uses are the same word used by Matthew and Mark concerning **Jesus’ transfiguration**. Jesus was completely changed, his skin, his face, his clothes were shining, the whole body was changed. We saw the glory of God.

### **Do not conform to the world but be transformed into the likeness of CHRIST.**

-Christians should be careful not to be like the world around us; the values of the world are dangerous and need to be examined.

“J. B. Phillip’s paraphrase catches the alternative: ‘Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within.’”<sup>4</sup>

Illustration:

“A new survey reveals the theological beliefs of Americans about God, sin, salvation, heaven and hell, the church, and the Bible. And the results show many evangelicals hold unorthodox and heretical beliefs.

While the results include all Americans and are even broken down by a range of categories (age, religious affiliation, sex, income, education level, and so on), the most interesting findings are those for evangelicals. The survey categorized

people as having evangelical beliefs if they strongly agreed with the following four statements:

- The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.
- It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.
- Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.

A significant number of evangelicals surveyed (i.e., those identified as having evangelical beliefs) have a profound misunderstanding about the nature and character of God.

- Almost three out of four (73 percent) agree with the claim that Jesus is the "first and greatest being created by God."
- More than half (58 percent) believe that God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
- More than half (56 percent) agree that worshipping alone or with one's family is a valid replacement for regularly attending church.
- More than half (55 percent) believe the Holy Spirit is a force but is not a personal being.
- More than half (55 percent) agree that "everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature."
- More than half (53 percent) disagree with the claim that even the smallest sin deserves eternal damnation.
- More than one in four (46 percent) disagree that every Christian has an obligation to join a local church.
- Almost half (44 percent) say that Jesus was a great teacher, but he was not God.<sup>5</sup>

Wow, here we are allowing the world to shape us. This is Dangerous.....

**Do not conform to the world but be transformed into likeness of CHRSIT.**

How?

-It is not automatic; we should learn to **test and see** if we are **in alliance with God's will.**

God has his part, and you have your part in the process of sanctification, to live holy life by His grace.

**For Example:** - Sometimes we try **easy way, a short cut** in our growth. it does not work.

We are easily satisfied with our spiritual growth.

“I think we are all too easily spiritually satisfied. We become satisfied with a little bit of theological knowledge, consumers approach to our local church, a cursory devotional life, a little bit of money in the offering plate, a little bit better marriage, children who are little more controlled, and some satisfying Christian friendship.”<sup>6</sup>

When hardship knocks to door, stay firm, God is at work in your life.

**Application:** I keep insisting that you should have a smaller group to study the Bible. Have an accountable Christian friend who can pray with you, tell you the truth about your life. Encourage you, lift you up... not gossip... (discipleship)

-Next, Paul deals with the issue of **self-esteem**. What do I mean? **Know yourself.**

**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.**

(Romans 12:3 NIV)

Two important Ideas here:

a. We have this problem, thinking about ourselves more highly than we ought to. .

Also, I have seen people who think they are NOBODY. They don't have any self-esteem of themselves; that takes one to do nothing or to depression.

-Many Christians on the other hand, struggle with feelings of **insignificance, so they are to impress others.**

**Illustration:** I was visiting a church that was new to me. A lot of people tried to impress me that they were so significant in that church. I tried to be polite and kind. In my head I was thinking, “Do we need to impress each other, do I need to prove that ‘I am significant’?”

On the other hand, some think they **don't need anyone**, they are **independent**.

We are **interdependent**. We need each other. ONE BODY with many parts that work together.

Paul gives the solution:

b-Rather: Think yourself **sober judgment in accordance with the faith.**

Other translations:

**“Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves,” (NLT)**

**“but to think so as to have sound judgment,” (NASB20)**

**“think wisely...(YLT)**

بَلْ أَنْ يَكُونَ مُتَعَقِّلاً فِي تَفْكِيرِهِ

հապա զգաստ կենալ մտածէ

**sober judgment.** How? First by reference to our faith. By faith we can measure ourselves, namely **saving faith in Christ crucified**; “indeed only ‘Christ himself in whom God’s judgment and mercy are revealed’, can enable us to measure ourselves soberly.”<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, this is foundational element in my walk with the Lord, my faith in Christ Jesus.

How important Jesus is for you?

If Christ is more, you are more, if Christ is less, you are less. How valuable Christ is in your life?

**I changed my view about myself because of my faith in HIM.**

God created us in His image. Each of us are uniquely made.

Yes, yet we are fallen creatures as I said in my first sermon: “Jesus invites us into a **spiritual family of misfits and outcasts.**” **Through His Grace** we are who we are.

God made us **“fearfully and wonderfully”**.

Lyrics of Amazing Grace...

Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost, but now I'm found....

'Tis grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved.  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed.

His Grace...gift given.

**“By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”**. (Eph 2:8 ESV)

**Question:** Don't you love to be in this family? I hope so, and I hope you have desire to be in this family.

**Paul goes further explaining how each of us are uniquely made; we will continue next week.**

**Application:**

**We are one body. We belong to each other and need each other.**

**While we are not the same, our differences are God-given.**

Lord, Make us ONE in CHRIST.

- 1 John Stott, *Bible Speaks Today, Romans*, P320,321
2. N.T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone, Romans V2 P 70*
3. Paul David Tripp, *Do You Believe?* p360
4. John Stott, *Bible Speaks Today, Romans*, P323
5. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/state-theology-2022/>
6. Paul David Tripp, *Do You Believe?* 326
7. Paul David Tripp, *Do You Believe?* p362