

Reset | Don't Repeat The Past

Romans 12:1-2

Housekeeping — Testimonies:

- Financial report — continue your support!
- 3 salvation last week — pray with us for more!
- Chaminda: Muslim convert

Introduction — Not Repeating 2015

- Sideways with a coworker
- Tension with your kids
- Bickering with your spouse
- Overeating
- Poor financial management
- Infrequent Bible reading / devotion to God
- No more bad romances

Text — Romans 12:1-2

1 "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.

- Tense: a single, decisive act; a lifelong decision ("living sacrifice")
 - Illustration:
 - My decision to eat healthy this year
 - Posting my decision on FB = baptism for the believer (no turning back)
 - Spiritual worship: What we do with our bodies is spiritual — worship or idolatry.
 - Giving ourselves completely to God is a holy act. And whoever does this, no matter that person's past, is accepted by God ("by the mercies of God").

2 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."

- Tense: a continuous, day-by-day decision

- Don't be shaped by this world (this is what we all want, to some degree depending on your understanding of sin)
- Be transformed
 - Something we all want – to change...
 - **How do we change?**
 - **By immersing our minds in all things Jesus, retraining the way we think.**
 - **For what purpose?**
 - **To skillfully discern how to live an increasingly godly life in an ungodly world.**
 - **By what means?**
 - **Testing. A life of testing.**

It Takes Skill To Live A Godly Life

- Think back to your biggest trials last year – the people and the problems that brought sorrow to your heart...
- Think about how complex those problems were (why you found yourself languishing in hatred for a coworker; why you watched in horror as, day after day, you compromised your relationship with Jesus; why you engaged in an addiction; why you _____).
 - I think about my own compromise in high school before I came to authentically know Jesus...how my deep-seated rejection fueled my need for approval and, how in turn, I found myself behaving in ways that I loathed, yet felt like I couldn't escape because the pain of more rejection was simply not an option.
 - I needed discernment during that time. I didn't know why I couldn't make the right decision.
- Maybe you find yourself in a marriage that you know, deep down, you should be faithful to, but you want out so badly. You're not in love, but you know the Scriptures that you love don't give you a way out. You need discernment this year. You need revival.
- Maybe you have a child you love with all your heart, yet the relationship is fragile. One misstep and you fear you might lose your child to the world. So you're tempted to enable and coddle your child rather than skillfully parent him or her. And what does skillful parenting even look like in your situation?
- Maybe you have a job that seems to shape you more than Jesus does. The work environment is cruel and toxic. There is intense peer pressure to conform. And if you don't, you risk relentless ridicule. You pray each morning, "Lord, help me overcome

today." You beg him. Yet not 5-minutes pass after you arrive that you find yourself engaging in mean-spirited gossip, crass banter, crude sexual dialogue. You return home defeated once again and you sink into an evening of entertainment in front of the television to drive away these feelings.

- Maybe you decided that this year will be the year you develop consistent spiritual rhythms — prayer, the scriptures, consistent participation in the church — yet you find yourself, once again, days behind in your bible reading and putting off checking out a Community Group. Some powerful insecurity rises up and bats down your efforts to drive to that unfamiliar home full of unfamiliar people. "Next week," you tell yourself over and over. But you've been saying this for months...maybe years.

Conclusion — 3 Gifts from God to live skillfully in this world:

1. Grace and Acceptance on Your Worst Day

- Romans 8:1 — *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

2. The Holy Spirit's Indwelling Presence To Overcome

- Romans 8:10 — *"But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness."*

3. The Promise of Full Redemption

- Romans 8:29-30 — *"For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified."*

So let us therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our spiritual worship. Let us not dare be conformed to this world any longer, but let us be transformed by the renewal of our minds, that by testing we may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Call To Repentance — following Jesus and baptism

Communion