Jell-O and Butterflies

Romans 12:1-2

I. The Statement of the Exhortation – 12:1

A. The Basis of the Exhortation – “The Mercies of God”

“I ﻿﻿beseech ﻿﻿you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,”

How do we get members to follow the Lord?

1. Some Churches Use Unscriptural Threats (i.e.: This is what God will do to you.)

a. He will take away your salvation.

b. He will burn you in purgatory.

c. He will decree that you never were saved.

2. Paul Used Scriptural Treats - “The mercies of God” (i.e. this is what God has done for you, especially 1-8)

1. We All were Sinners – (Romans 1-3 and 5:12)

“for ﻿﻿all sinned and continually fall short of the glory of God,

b. God Offers Free Forgiveness – (Romans 4-5)

“and eternal life. Therefore, ﻿﻿having been justified by faith, ﻿﻿we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” (5:1)

c. He Supplies All that We Need to Live the Christian life (Romans 6-8)

Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should ﻿﻿bear fruit to God. It is all summed up in the last few verses of chapter 8

Because we are:

free from all condemnation;

predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ;

inheritors by adoption; eternally linked up with Christ;

inseparable from the love of God; the elect of God;

beyond all possibility of condemnation;

Christ died, arose, sits at God’s right hand;

No charge can be laid against us;

“Therefore,” οὖν (12:1)

B. The Content of the Exhortation – “Present your bodies”

1. It is a Definite Action – (aorist)

“that you present your bodies”

At a point in time. After salvation. He is addressing believers – “Brothers”

2. It is a Physical Body – “your bodies”

3. It is living – “a living sacrifice” as opposed to the dead sacrifices of the O.T.

Many say, “I will die for Christ.” But will the live for Him?

4. It is Set Apart – “holy”

This is like the first-born in Egypt. They were redeemed by the blood of the Passover Lamb. Later they were separated to God to do service of worship in the tabernacle and the temple. We are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world. (John.1:29)

5. It is Acceptable – “acceptable to God”

We, who once yielded our members to the service of sin and Satan, are now called to yield our members as instruments of righteousness to service of God.

C. The Reason: It is the Proper Thing to Do

1. It is a Logical Service – “reasonable” - λογικὴν

Since He has done so much for us, could we do any less for Him?

2. It is a Spiritual Service – λατρείαν

In the Christian life there is no distinction between spiritual and secular. Our whole life is to be lived on a spiritual plane. To us, there is to be no secular because it is done for the Lord, it is spiritual. I saw a Sign: Spiritual services are performed here three times a day.

Where do you think it was? Over the sink!

II. The Method of the Exhortation – 12:2

A. Stop Being Jello -

“And ﻿﻿stop being conformed to this world”

Jell-O takes the shape of the container into which it is poured.

Before Christ, we were shaped by the world around us. The word “world” is not “” but “ἁγίαν”age.

The present evil age (Gal. 1:4, Eph. 1:21). The grammar indicates that this is something that we did as unbelievers and we are to stop doing it now that we belong to Christ.

A young Christian said to a devoted Christian lady. “I would give the world to have your experience. The lady said, “My dear, that’s exactly what it cost me. I gave the world for it”

B. Go On Being a Butterfly –

“Go on being transformed” - μεταμορφοῦσθε

When I was in the second grade, in the winter Miss Carter brought in a cocoon and put it between the storm glass and the window. She told us to watch it every day. Of course we did. Eventually the ugly worm in the cocoon became a beautiful butterfly.

That is what God wants to perform in our Christian lives. He wants to make a beautiful butterfly out of the worm that we turned into after He made us so beautiful to begin with.

“At the cross” one line is (or was) “Such a worm as I” Now it is “a sinner such as I” (Psalm 139)

1. It is Not Adding Something to Your Salvation.

Colossian 2:9-10

﻿“For ﻿﻿in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all ﻿﻿principality and power.”

When you received Jesus as your Savior, you received the One in Whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form. And (v.10) you are complete in Him.

2. The Meaning of the Word, “transformed”

Μεταμορφόω – metamorphosis - Other uses of the word- (four times in the N.T.) Matt.17 and Mk.9 record the transfiguration of Jesus. Jesus was transfigured (μεταμορφόω) before them.

In Phil. 2 we learned that the Son added the human form so that His glory was hidden. It was still there, but could not be seen. He did not look like God on the Mount of transfiguration, that glory, which had been hidden, became visible.

3. Experiencing the Transformation.

The only other use of the word μεταμορφόω is in 2 Corinthians 3:18

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding ﻿﻿as in a mirror ﻿﻿the glory of the Lord, ﻿﻿are being transformed *μεταμορφόω* into the same image from glory to glory, just as ﻿﻿by the Spirit of the Lord.”

a. The Process

Question: Where do we find “the glory of the Lord?”

Answer: On the pages of Scripture.

As we behold Jesus on the pages of the Word, and admire Him we will become like Him. The process is “a little at a time” The more we behold, the more we become like Him.

“From glory to glory” refers to the experience of salvation available in the New Covenant and mediated by the Spirit who leads Christians from justification through sanctification to glorification.

As believers manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), they are progressively being transformed into His likeness.

b. The Place – “by the renewing of your mind,”

The "renewing" of the mind is nothing else than the continual keeping fresh and vital of the mind's understanding of, and desire for, the will of God. (Zane Hodges)

c. The Proof - “that you may ﻿﻿approve what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

The word, “approve” δοκιμάζω – “prove” in most versions - Means to prove by testing, hence “approve”.

As we pass through this process we will test and approve the will of God for our lives. We will find that it is good, acceptable and perfect. As we move along the Christian journey, we will find that God’s will becomes our will.

We will see it as good in us, acceptable to us perfect for us.

Conclusion: Are you Jell-O, a cocoon or a butterfly? What do you want to be?