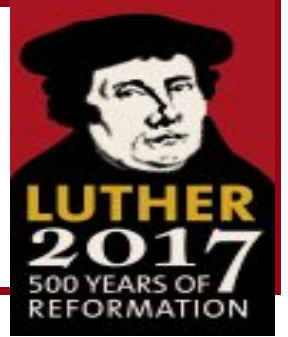


## *Gospel Motivated Living*

Psalm 119:97-105 Romans 12:1-21 Luke 6:43-45

August 20, 2017

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One of the most fundamental truths in theology and holy Scripture is this:

*Sanctification follows Justification.*

Sanctification is your holy life; and it A L W A Y S comes after Justification: after God declares you “not guilty!” of your sins through faith in Christ. Another way of saying it is this:

**FIRST GOD FORGIVES YOU;  
THEN YOU DO GOOD WORKS.**

If you get these mixed up, then your own good works become the basis of your salvation --- and you have lost it all.

St. Paul teaches that *Sanctification follows Justification* in the book of Romans.

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.

First God’s mercy: then you offer your body!

St. Paul teaches us that “**God’s Mercy**” motivates us to holy living: to “*offer our bodies as a living sacrifice.*” The word for “mercy” here is actually plural: “in view of God’s mercies!” God has given you *many good gifts!* The Lord has showered you with an *abundance of blessings!* The Gospel, the Good News about Jesus, brings *all of God’s mercies* into your life.

In the book of Romans, St. Paul has taught us about God’s mercies in many and various ways. Here are some examples:

- † **You belong to Jesus Christ**
- † **You are loved by God**
- † **You are Called to be Saints; you are “*holy*” in God’s eyes!**
- † **The Lord has given you Grace and Peace**

- † You have the Righteousness from God: He declares you “not guilty” of your sins through faith in His Son Jesus Christ
- † God is Kind to you at all times
- † You have been Redeemed: a price was paid for you and you are set free to live in God’s Kingdom
- † Your sins have been atoned for: a sacrifice was made for you when Jesus died, and His blood covers over you sins
- † Christ’s perfect life has been credited to you like a banking transaction
- † God is your Father in Heaven who cares about the details of your life
- † You have Peace with God that gives you unlimited access to God
- † You have the Hope of Glory --- God has promised you the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting
- † You have been saved from God’s Wrath and eternal damnation
- † You have been baptized! You are united to Christ in His death, burial and resurrection!
- † You are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus!
- † There is no condemnation against you in God’s presence
- † The Holy Spirit lives in you and prays for you by name
- † Jesus, the Son of God, lives in you
- † God is working a grand scheme in your life – from Creation to Eternity
- † Nothing will ever be able to separate you from the Love of God in Christ Jesus!

This is just a sampling from the book of Romans alone of God’s many mercies to you! This is not even all the blessings that God freely gives you in Christ His Son!

St. Paul teaches us that all of these “mercies of God” motivate you to holy living.

**Do you see that in your life?**

**Are you living a transformed Christian life?**

**Is your life and all you do motivated by God’s mercies to you?**

If not, then repent and believe that in Christ your sins are forgiven, and you have a new and fresh start. **Live your life in God’s mercy.** Let His overwhelming mercies impact you and transform your life!

Faith in Christ and the free gift of salvation give you a cheerful heart, a willing spirit, a joyful attitude, and deep thankfulness. The mercies of God change you! Your heart, your mind, and your will eagerly desire to live a holy and godly life. Holy living is your **reaction** to God's grace and all of His mercies!

*Sanctification follows Justification:*

**FIRST GOD FORGIVES YOU;**

**THEN YOU DO GOOD WORKS.**

*God showers you with His mercies*

*And then you love Him and serve others*

One way that St. Paul describes your good works and your daily life in Christ is by calling it your "**spiritual act of worship.**" You worship God by serving others.

One way that happens is when you use your spiritual gifts to serve others. God has given you personally **SPECIFIC GIFTS** to use in His Kingdom --- for example, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy --- "**we all have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.**" When you use your God-given gifts in God's kingdom, then you are serving other people! Remember how Martin Luther said it, "**God doesn't need your good works, your neighbor does!**" When you love and serve others with your gifts, you are worshipping God! Your daily life is holy and pleasing to God...it's a "**spiritual act of worship!**"

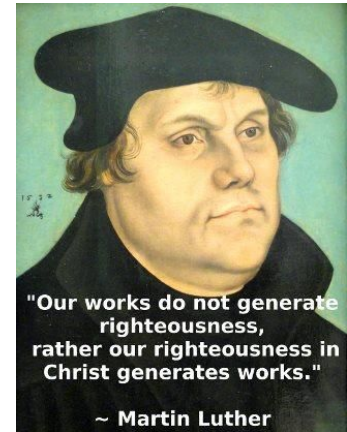
The **mercies** of God transform you! Here is how St. Paul describes your Gospel-motivated life in Christ:

**Do not be conformed to this world, but be TRANSFORMED by the renewal of your mind Romans 12:2**

The word "**TRANSFORMED**" means that you are changed. It means that you do not belong to the world any longer. It means that you do not let yourself be squeezed into the mold of the world, but **God's Word forms and shapes you.** Your character and your conduct reflect Christ. Your thoughts, attitudes and words reflect Holy Scripture.

When you are **TRANSFORMED IN CHRIST**, you realize that there are two value systems -- the world's and God's --- and they are not only incompatible with each other, but they are directly opposite and hostile to one another.

They **conflict** at every point, whether it is values, ethics, morals, right and wrong -- even *truth itself*. You see the world's value system in what is now called "tolerance", "diversity", and "political correctness". As Christians, we cannot compromise with the world. The Bible is clear: *"friendship with the world means enmity with God. Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.* (James 4:4) You have been called out of the world and brought into the Kingdom of God -- **Do not be conformed to this world, but be TRANSFORMED by the renewal of your mind around Christ and His Word!**



In the Book of Romans, St. Paul lists many examples of what it means to be **"transformed"**:

- † **Your love for others is genuine**
- † **You show honor to others**
- † **You are zealous in faith, and fervent in spirit, as you serve the Lord.**
- † **Rejoice in hope**
- † **Patiently endure pain, hardships, and suffering**
- † **You are constant in prayer.**
- † **You give your money to support God's work**
- † **You show hospitality to others.**
- † **You bless those who persecute you rather than curse them.**
- † **Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.**
- † **Live in harmony with one another ... as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people**
- † **It means that you are not overcome by evil, but you overcome evil with good.**

Perhaps the best summary statement of a transformed life is simply this:

**HATE WHAT IS EVIL  
CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD.**

ROMANS 12:9

As Christians, we live Gospel-motivated lives. The Good News of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ changes us; the abundant mercies of God **TRANSFORM** us! We are God's people who live by faith in Christ and His Word! Amen!