



# transformed

studies in Romans 9-16

SCPC term 4 2007

## sunday 28th october 2007

## study 2 transformed lives Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer 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 12:1-2**

Well... from 3 chapters one week to 2 verses this week! A welcome change of pace I hope. After 11 chapters spelling out God's mercy to us in Jesus Christ, Paul now moves into calling for the right response to that mercy. It all turns on the first word of chapter 12: "THEREFORE". It's a transition word. Unless we properly see what comes *before* the therefore (the 'view' we're meant to be gazing at—which is God's mercy to us) we won't properly see what we're being called to *after* the 'therefore'. Indeed, when we properly take in the view of God's mercy in Romans 1-11, we will count it a privilege to take up the exhortations of Romans 12-16. It's more good news! New lives are for living. God loved us in Christ just as we are (Romans 5:8), but also loves us so much that he won't leave us as we are. His mercy TRANSFORMS our lives.

### some notes on questions

Q1. try not to give just 'cliché' answers like "Jesus died for us" but track as best you can the whole argument of Romans 1-11—especially the earlier chapters that we looked at some time ago.

Q2-3. Discussing question 2 properly is going to be essential to discussing question 3 properly! It's relatively easy to see that being a 'living sacrifice' is an all-encompassing thing—all you are and all you have on the altar, as it were, in service of God. And that's the point with how Paul defines worship by linking it to that idea—worship is all of life. The key will be that the answer to question 3 (what worship is) isn't a subset of question 2 (what being a living sacrifice is) - but every bit as encompassing.

Q4-5. Romans 1:18-32 paints the dark picture of what this sinful world is really like. Yet we can be deluded that most of the world is neutral. That means we underestimate the radical calling involved in non-conformity. Transformed lives ... it's more radical than we think!

Q6-8. A major goal for the study is grasping how radical this transformation is—from selfishness to service—and not just in 'holy' slots in the week but in all of life. A good way in on the discussion for many will be realizing why it's unhelpful to call singing in church 'worship', or even our Sunday gathering 'worship'.

**digging deeper:** 2 Cor 3:18 "transformed into his likeness" is a good reminder that the goal of this transformation (compare Romans 8:28-30) is to become like Jesus.

**putting it into practice:** if transformation comes from renewed minds that have been viewing/studying God's mercy... then obviously Bible reading is a big part of any plan to get on the transformation track!



remember that once the talk goes up on the website you can always post a question/observation by leaving a comment—it's easy to do and then others will also be able to see the response when it goes up and leave their thoughts too.

### coming events

marriage course: wed 7 nov  
men's breakfast : sat 10 nov  
carols at lismore high: sun 16 dec

small group bible study leaders' notes