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SAVED. SO NOW WHAT? (Part 3)
Romans 12:1-2

Romans 12: 1 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. 2 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.

By God's grace, we have now finished part 1 and part 2 of our Saved. Now What? Series.

- I. **RESPOND WITH LOVE**
- II. **RELINQUISH YOUR CONTROL**
- III. **RENEW YOUR MIND**

Today, we'll talk about renewing your mind.

ILLUSTRATION : When I was young, I always hear this from the adults around me in Tagalog, "Gamin mo kasi kukote mo." (I told you to use your kukote) or "Hindi mo kasi ginamit, kukote mo." (You didn't use your kukote). I immediately understood as a child that it means "brain" because that was the context. I researched where the word "kukote" comes from, it's a Spanish word, "cocote" which means "nape", "head" "chicken neck" or "intelligent person"

Before we talk about part 3, let's review the first 2 we discussed.

- I. **RESPOND WITH LOVE**

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

And we jetstreamed through the entire Romans 1-11 to show us our condition, what God did and who God gave and what happens to a Christian if the person believes and it's all according to God's mercy and grace.

So how do we respond to God's love and mercy and grace?

The response is love.

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

1 Corinthians 16: 14 Do everything in love.

Story : There was an old lady who drives 2 hours going to church and so a neighbor asked her, "There's a Christian church just across your street but why do you drive 2 hours just to attend that church in that town?" The old lady said, "It's because they love me there."

TWO QUESTIONS : When it comes to whatever we are doing, there should only be two questions we are asking when it comes to our motives and decision-making.

First, does this glorify God? Second, am I doing it out of love?

One of the quotes, I always remember when I was a young pastor was from John McArthur if I'm not sure about my decisions or how should I treat a person.

"When you err, err on the side of love." - John McArthur.

II. RELINQUISH CONTROL

to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

What does IT MEAN TO OFFER OUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE? We don't have to offer or kill anything to God in order for our sins to be forgiven. Jesus has been sacrificed for us.

But in the end, SACRIFICE MEANS something has to be killed and offered.

So what does this mean?

to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God

Remember, nothing has to be killed because we are to offer ourselves as a "living" sacrifice.

How do we offer ourselves as a "living sacrifice"?

to offer your bodies

Etymology : body "sark" literal flesh and blood

But the one used here is "soma", it's not only the flesh and blood but your entire being, your will, your wants, your heart, your rights and etc....IT MEANS THE ENTIRE YOU.

It's saying to the Lord,

"Lord, before I wanted to be in control of everything. I wanted to protect my own rights. But from now on, I am relinquishing control of my life and giving it to your capable, mighty, loving and gentle hands.

How does this happen when you offer your entire being to the Lord?

as a living sacrifice

Remember, sacrifice has to do with death.

It is what Jesus said,

Matthew 16 : 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

I love the New Living translation

"If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me.

This the reason why what we offer is ourselves... a living sacrifice. That's why Paul said in Philippians and Galatians...

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

Now, we have to remember that offering ourselves to the Lord, is not limited to the negative side.

For example : I won't do this and that... NO! You will end up being legalistic. Of course, we will not sin but we will also offer ourselves to be used by God.

Look at this...

holy and pleasing to God

Etymology : hagias "holy" consecrated...

The problem with people when they hear the word "holy", they immediately connect it with people with white clothes or robes that are not speaking or are very mild manner....

It is to relinquish control and offering ourselves to God to use us for His glory!

ACTIVE ILLUSTRATION ABOUT THE GLOVE : The glove cannot move unless the hand inside is controlling it.

QUOTE : Henry Varley said to his new friend DL Moody, "Moody, the world has yet to see what God will do with a man fully consecrated to him." These words so pierced Moody's heart that he couldn't get them out of his mind and said these words to himself, "I will be that man.

IN SHORT : TO BE A LIVING SACRIFICE MEANS, WE SURRENDER OURSELVES TO GOD AND SERVE HIM.

And when we do this... then we are truly worshipping God.
this is your true and proper worship.

Now, let's continue.

III. RENEW YOUR MIND.

2 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.

Why do we need to renew our mind?

If a person is truly saved, he has become a new creation...

2 Corinthians 5: 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

If you are saved. It means you have a new heart. It means you want to love God. It means you want to please God. This means you want to *to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God..* (By the way, one of the measures a person is truly saved is that deep in their hearts, they love God and they love others)

That's why in Ezekiel, it is said there :

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Now here's where the struggle comes in....

Before being saved, our predilections (our natural bent) before was just about pleasing ourselves but now our predilections have been changed to pleasing God.

THE PROBLEM Our minds have been so programmed with the things of this world that there is now a struggle inside ourselves. We want to please God but we still want to do our own thing or we naturally follow our emotions

That's why Paul says

Romans 7: 21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

Inside of us, there is a civil war going on. The only way we can win this war, again is offering ourselves to the Lord and by the renewing of our mind.

The battle is in the mind.

Quote : Who or what who controls our mind, controls us.

This is the reason why Satan wants to control our minds.

You might say : Pastor, how do I know who or what controls our mind in a certain situation.

Simple :

Matthew 7:20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

Illustration : One of my mentors before said to me to make sure I guard what goes on in my mind. It's because he said, "What goes into your mind, goes into your heart and what goes into your heart will come out of your mouth or your action."

That's true.

That's what our Lord said :

Luke 6:45 For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

That's why the book of Proverbs says :

Proverbs 4:23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything flows from it.

Etymology : heart "leb" inner man...mind

I shared this quote with you before :

Watch your thoughts; they become words.
Watch your words; they become actions.
Watch your actions; they become habits.
Watch your habits; they become character.
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

So before we talk about renewing our mind, let's study...

How did our mind work before Christ?

2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world

Etymology : conform to the pattern (one word in Hebrew) “syschematizo” where we get the word schematics... it means, there is a blueprint.

World “aion” age... how the world thinks; the philosophies and ideas of this world.

Remember this, there are two forces where our philosophies, ideas and morality come from before we were saved and we are bombarded by it up to now.

1. Satan
2. Sinful nature

Let's talk about Satan trying to control our minds.

We have to remember that Satan is the god of this age and control how this world thinks.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God

1 John 5:19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

Here are examples of how this “age” thinks and how we are bombarded with it every day :

- Living in and premarital sex are ok.
- Homosexuality is not a sin. (The Word of God calls homosexuality a sin, the same way it calls adultery as a sin.)
- Abortion is ok

And now some people are propagating to accept pedophilia as something that is normal.

That's why Isaiah said.

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

How does Satan control the minds of the people?

Ephesians 2: dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh,

fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

- **He controls our mind by letting us think that we can live independently of God.**
in the sons of disobedience

Isn't that his tactic with Adam and Eve?

Genesis 3: 1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Illustration : The song "Imagine" by John Lennon. I liked that when I was young because of the melody, written and sung by John Lennon and the apparent message of unity and peace with everyone. Who doesn't want that? But when by God's grace, I know the truth about God's Word, when I listened to it again, it doesn't glorify God.

Right from the get go, here's the lyrics :

"Imagine there's no heaven, It's easy if you try. No hell below us. Above us only sky. Imagine all the people, living for today...."

That's an atheist's point of view. People love this sort of stuff "living for today." Yes, we should live as if it's always the last day of our lives BUT remember, there's a God whom we need to account for at the end of this life and the best days of our lives is not here on earth. It's still coming!

Every January 9, our family celebrates what we call "Godependence Day" We set that time because that's the situation our family was put in a situation where we cannot depend on anyone else except Him... AND HE HAS BEEN FAITHFUL!

Application : Remember, this is the reason why God allows trials and sufferings to a Christian, so that we can depend on Him and see for yourself how faithful He is.

- **He controls our mind through the lust of the flesh. (Exploits our weaknesses)**
among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh,

THE FIFTH COLUMN : In the context of warfare, a "fifth column" refers to a group of people within a country who actively support the enemy, typically through espionage or sabotage. The term originated during the Spanish Civil War, where a Nationalist General, Emilio Mola, used it to describe his plan to attack Madrid, expecting a group within the city to aid the enemy. What do they do? Sabotage, disinformation, and etc.

Satan attacks from the outside but will continue to exploit our weaknesses.

How does he do that? THROUGH THE LUSTS OF THE FLESH Satan bastardizes what God has created. God is the source of pleasure but he distorts it by saying you can get pleasure through other means than God... through alcohol, through drugs, through food, through shopping, through sex outside of marriage and etc.

That's why Paul says :

1 Corinthians 9:27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Illustration : When I was young, I saw this bumper sticker that says : "If it feels good, do it."

And this is where Satan also traps the follower of Christ.

Illustration : How people in the Arctic catch wolves. They dip a knife in blood and then cover it with ice. The wolf will smell the blood but in order to get into the blood, he starts licking the knife and then the wolf becomes obsessed and then gets to the knife with blood and keeps on licking, not knowing that because of the ice and his lust for blood, the wolf has already cut his tongue and itself, not knowing that it is already tasting its own blood and then eventually dies.

Be very careful on what goes into our mind.

I heard one pastor say : That the lust of the flesh can be stronger than our love for Christ.

That's why our Lord Jesus Christ said :

Matthew 26:41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak"

Some people only think about the second line and make it as an excuse. No. Jesus is exhorting us and warning us and how do we fight this by God's grace.... **"Watch and pray"**

Watch means, to recognize it...don't make any excuses about it. What are the things of the flesh?

Galatians 5: 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

Watch And PRAY...CONSTANTLY PRAY ABOUT IT TO GOD! And as we discussed before, surrender it to God.

- He controls our mind by through worldly desires.
fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind

Our desire to be rich. Our desire to be recognized. Our desire to be better than others. Our desire to be powerful.

James 1:14 Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. (NLT)

Do not be a Demas –

2 Timothy 4:10 for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me

Illustration : When I started working at 20 years old, the owner of our company was recruiting me in this New Age movement where you set your mind to think to become rich. Of course, it's appealing to me since my family wasn't rich. It appealed to my flesh – to our greed, to envy, to jealousy and etc. Nothing wrong with having money but we need to be careful that it doesn't become our god and not having enough money makes us discontent. . It was a good thing that my boss was a Christian who introduced me to Jesus Christ and taught me that's the way of the world.

Do you know that the first sin is not disobedience? IT'S DISCONTENT!

God has said to Adam and Eve, you can eat all the fruit, except for one. They had everything in the Garden and yet they wanted more... to be God-like. It's the same with Satan, he was in the heavenly realms, the most beautiful of the angels and yet he wanted to be god himself.

By the way, this is the reason why by God's grace, we practice tithing and giving to missions. It disciplines us to let go of money and trust in God's provision so money doesn't become our god. **AND GOD HAS SHOWN THAT HE CAN PROVIDE FOR US ABUNDANTLY.** In the end, it's not our jobs, our business, our abilities, our intellect that provides for us... **ALL OF THIS COMES FROM GOD.**

This is the reason why our Lord Jesus Christ said

Matthew 6: 24 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

**Again, that's why it all starts with whom or what you love or desire above anything else.
REMEMBER, OUR FIRST RESPONSE RIGHT....LOVING GOD**

Now, these are all the tactics of Satan BUT remember this, letting us think we can live without God, exploiting our weakness and tempts us with our own desires.

It's almost like impossible to overcome. And that's why I always tell you, The Christian life is not hard, it is impossible. BUT HERE ARE THE PROMISES OF GOD.

Colossians 2:10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

Remember we are already in Christ.

1 John 4:4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

And remember this our Lord is always interceding for us even if we fail.

Luke 22:31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

One of my favourite books is The Art of War by Sun Tzu, He said there.

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

Now you know yourself and the enemy...that's only half the battle. That's why Paul says :

HOW DO WE RENEW OUR MINDS?

but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

STORY : There was a Cherokee Indian who was telling his grandson about life

"Inside of me there are two dogs. One is mean and evil and the other is good and they fight each other all the time. The grandson asked, "Grandpa, who wins? The grandfather answer, "The one I feed the most."

So be careful what you feed your mind. HOW? FOCUS ON OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

S.G.D.

Example : Follow your heart but the Bible says, the heart is deceitful above all things.

As you think therefore you are... Proverbs