

Romans 12:1-2

Christian Renewal

Renewing our lives

**“In spite of our newness in Christ ...
holiness is neither automatic nor inevitable”**

-- John Stott

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

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.

William Barclay

Brothers, I call upon you, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies to him, a living, consecrated sacrifice, well-pleasing to God – for that is the only kind of worship which is truly spiritual. And do not shape your lives to meet the fleeting fashions of this world; but be transformed from it, by the renewal of your mind, until the very essence of your being is altered, so that, in your own life, you may prove that the will of God is good and well-pleasing and perfect.

The Message

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

The essence of the message

When Christ becomes the centre of life then we can present real worship, which is the offering of every moment and every action to God

-- William Barclay

“Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice”

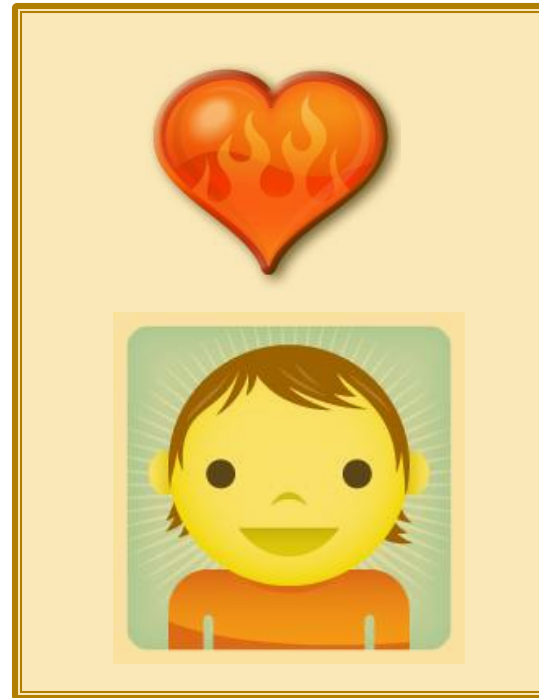
What does it mean?

**“The problem with a living sacrifice is
that it keeps crawling off the altar”
-- Warren Wiersbe**

Body and Soul



**Greek: body and soul
are separate –
the body is bad**



Hebrew: man is one

Why does God want my body?

- If he's got your body, he's got you!
- Wherever your body goes you are sure to follow

Come on, we're going now



God cares about our bodies not just our souls

Psalm 139:13-16

**¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.**

¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

**your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.**

**¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.**

**¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.**

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Casting Crowns "If We Are The Body"

But if we are the body

Why aren't His arms reaching?

Why aren't His hands healing?

Why aren't His words teaching?

And if we are the body

Why aren't His feet going?

Why is His love not showing them there is a way?

There is a way

**Your service to God is expressed
through your physical body**

"A living sacrifice"

	Old Testament	New Testament
The sacrifice	Animal death	Jesus – the lamb of God
Willingness	No part in the decision	Done willingly
Power to forgive sins?	No	Yes
Time scope	Repeated regularly	Once
People scope	Israelites	Whole world

Unlike the dumb, unwitting, dead animals of the OT, we are "living sacrifices" giving ourselves to the intelligent and deliberate service of the Lord

The sacrifice of Christ – it makes all the difference

- **Hebrews 10:4:**
 - It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
- **John 1:29:**
 - The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
- **The Gospel in three words: Do vs. Done**
 - Every other religion is based on works – you go to heaven because of what you do

“Do not conform but be transformed”

By the renewing of your mind

Apart from God your mind is

- **Depraved** (Romans 1:28)
- **Filled with wicked thoughts** (Matthew 9:4)
- **Evil imagination** (Genesis 6:5)
- **Hostile to God** (Romans 8:7)
- **Defiled** (Titus 1:15)
- **Its thoughts are empty and worthless**
(Ephesians 4:17)
- **Filled with human pride** (Colossians 2:18)

Why does God want my mind?

- Because the mind is the initiator of sin
- James 14:15
 - But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.



Do not be conformed to this world

- It is not saying the physical world is a bad place
- **1 Timothy 4:4**
 - For everything God created is good



Do not be conformed to this world

- It is not primarily giving rules about outward behavior



Do not be conformed to this world

- It is not calling us to retreat from the world



**Rousanou Monastery,
Meteora, Greece**

Do not be conformed to this world

It DOES mean:

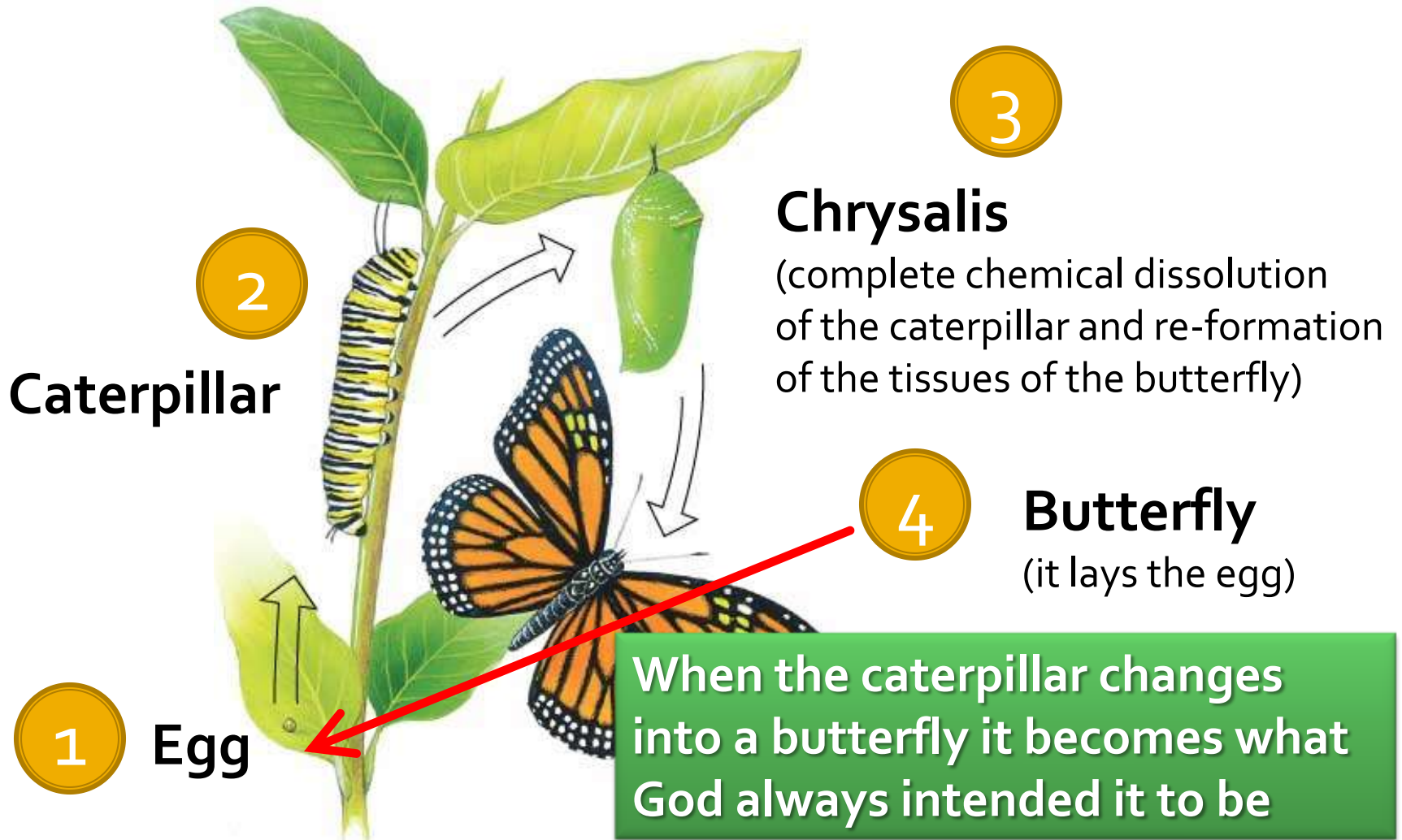
- This age will not last forever
- We must live today by the values of tomorrow, when Christ will reign
- The essence of worldliness is to live as if this age will last forever

Christians don't fit in and never will!

Transformation = Metamorphosis

- People change slowly, if they change at all
- Change is hard
- Metamorphosis = a gradual change on the inside that produces a total transformation on the outside

The Monarch Butterfly



Key Concept: Training not Trying

- Renewal is not solved by just trying harder – it is impossible – only God can do it
 - But you must cooperate with Him by disciplining yourself



- **The Bible calls us to train to be transformed**
- **1 Corinthians 9:25**
 - **Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.**

A life-changing thought

God never says:

Clean yourself up and then I will use you

Come to me just as you are, and I will clean you up

Come to him, bringing your body, and give it to God

Presenting your body is an act of spiritual worship

God will never misuse what I place in his hands!

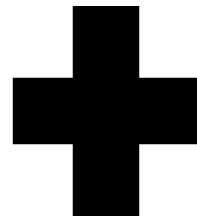
It takes time...

The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day.
-- Proverbs 4:18

- **As we reject the ways of the world, we learn over time to see things as God see them – this isn't instant or automatic**
- **Since it is God's desire it is within the reach of every believer!**

And continual vigilance

Two process going on all the time...



**Renewal
For Life**

Continual renunciation of the world

“For I [Jesus] have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.”

-- John 6:38

Formula for spiritual growth and renewal

$$T + HS + HH + GE = SG$$

- **T** = Time (not overnight)
- **HS** = Holy Spirit (not by our own strength)
- **HH** = Habits of Holiness (not by accident)
- **GE** = Godly Encouragement
(with the help of other Christians)
- **SG** = Spiritual Growth / renewal
(what God made us to be)



Based on Dr. Charles Ryrie/Ray Pritchard

Live for God and be satisfied

- If you live for God you will come to the end of your life satisfied
- If you live for the world you will get the world's reward but be satisfied for only a short time

Follow God's ways every day

- **We must strive every day to prove to ourselves and others that God's way is best**

Don't take the easy way of the world

- **When you take the easy way of the world it turns out hard; when you take the hard path of following God's will it always ultimately turns out to be the only easy way there is**
 - **But the proof is in hard times not when all is going well!**

Live for Christ!

- **In the long run those who live for Christ will find themselves on the victory side, proving that God's will is good and pleasing and perfect**

How to become a Christian

The Gospel message = “Good News”!

- **A = Admit** (I am a sinner)
 - God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)
- **B = Believe** (that Jesus died for your sins – He is the Savior)
 - To all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)
- **C = Confess** (that Jesus is Lord)
 - If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

