Sermon Highlights

Living Sacrifice, Renewed Mind:
The Practical Walk of the Believer

Summary:

Drawing from Romans 12, this sermon transitions from the doctrinal foundation laid in the first eight chapters of Romans into the practical application of Christian living. Pastor Bruce Gordon emphasizes that knowledge of Scripture without practice leads to spiritual stagnation. Believers are called to present themselves as living sacrifices, resist conformity to the world's system, and renew their minds through the Word of God, prayer, and fellowship. The sermon further addresses the proper use of spiritual gifts within the body of Christ, the dangers of both pride and self-deprecation, and the importance of genuine ministry to one another. Throughout, Pastor Bruce Gordon stresses that true Christian living flows not from legalism or self-interest, but from a heart transformed by grace and oriented toward the will of God.

Key Points:

- Doctrinal knowledge alone is insufficient; it must be accompanied by practical, lived-out faith

- Believers are called to present themselves as living sacrifices that are holy and acceptable to God, which is a reasonable response to His mercy

- Conformity to the world must be actively resisted, as the world continually attempts to press believers into its mold

- Transformation comes through the renewing of the mind, accomplished through Scripture reading, prayer, study, worship, and fellowship with Christ

- Believers must seek to know and live within the will of God rather than living soulishly or sensually

- Neither pride nor self-deprecation reflects a Christ-centered mindset; humility rooted in grace is the standard

- Spiritual gifts are distributed by grace, not merit, and each member of the body of Christ has a distinct and valuable function

- Gifts such as prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership, and mercy are each to be exercised according to their proper character

- Liberal giving is marked by asking how much of God's money to keep, not how little can be given

- Showing mercy must be done with cheerfulness, reflecting the mercy that has been extended to every believer through salvation

- The church must move from performing church functions to genuinely being the church, including praying for one another in practical, personal ways

Scripture Reference:

- Romans 12:1-21 serves as the primary passage, with supporting references to Romans 6 regarding reckoning the old nature dead, Romans 9-11 regarding God's promises to Israel, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians regarding additional listings of spiritual gifts

Stories:

- Pastor Bruce Gordon used the analogy of a caterpillar undergoing metamorphosis in a cocoon to illustrate the transformation that takes place in a believer's mind and life upon surrendering to Christ

- The human body was used as an extended illustration of how members of the church function together, with the right and left hand serving as an example of how different members have different abilities but equal value

- The account of the rich young ruler was referenced to illustrate how possessions can consume a person, preventing liberal giving and revealing that one's true allegiance lies with wealth rather than God

- Pastor Bruce Gordon shared a personal reflection on declining the title of Reverend, using it to illustrate the biblical call to humility and the truth that only God is worthy of reverence

- A practical scenario was described in which a believer approaches another during a difficult week and offers a brief, sincere prayer without requiring details, illustrating the gift of ministry in action