***How do we Transform our Minds?  
RO100-01***

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Please turn with me to Romans 8:5-8. This is segment number four on the topic of "Pleasing God."

**You can be Thrust into Heaven**

People who were acquainted with the Bible view life on the basis of certain absolute truths. I'm going to run them by for you . . . so that you may hear them. . . If you follow them consistently and carefully, these propositions about to be read in your hearing . . . will thrust you into heaven. Where are you going now? Your destiny now is not to eternal life in heaven if you're not in the family. In the next few moments, you can be thrust into heaven if you pay attention.

**Propositions Revealed in the Bible**

There are certain biblical presuppositions upon which we function. They are propositions revealed in the Bible itself.

1. **A Personal Sovereign God**

There does exist a personal sovereign God. The Bible tells us that only fools deny that. There is a God out there. You may count on it. And He is personal. He is not a Star Wars force. He is a person.

1. **God is Holy**

This God is absolutely holy. That means that He is characterized by absolute righteousness and perfect justice. He only does what is right, and He punishes, (you may count on it) every time, that which is wrong.

1. **Sin cannot be Permitted in Heaven**

Sin cannot be permitted in heaven in the presence of the holy God.

1. **Every Person is Born as a Sinner**

Every person is born into the human race with a sin nature, and is spiritually dead, and so is disqualified from entering heaven. You can be the best person in the world. You are automatically eliminated from eternal life by the fact that you are born with the guilt of Adam upon you, and a sin nature. You are spiritually dead.

1. **People do not Cease to Exist after Death**

Human beings do not cease to exist after physical death, but enter an eternity in heaven or hell. People do not go out of existence like animals do. People continue once the physical body has died.

1. **The Penalty for sin is Hell**

The divine penalty for the natural human condition of sin is eternal death in the conscious sufferings of hell.

1. **The Bible**

God has communicated with the human race through the Bible in language which is understandable, and people, therefore, are responsible for knowing what the Bible teaches. If you think you're going to walk into God's presence someday and say, "But I didn't know, I just didn't know what was in the Bible. I couldn't understand it." I'm going to tell you right now that you are going to be condemned. You will not escape because you are ignorant of it.

1. **The Bible is Inerrant**

The perfect God has given mankind a perfect Bible, free from all errors, so that it carries absolute authority in all that it says. A perfect God who is fully capable of giving us an inerrant Bible has done exactly that. Therefore, when the Bible says something, you better believe it. That also means that no preacher; no priest; no pope; and, no church can speak for God. There are a lot of people that haven't learned that. Only the Bible can speak for God.

**The Protestant Reformation**

You know, one of the great, sad consequences of the Protestant Reformation is that when these great men like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli came on the scene, they fought the battle of restoring the Bible as the authority that speaks for God. They suddenly discovered that what they were doing, as Roman Catholics, by and large, had nothing whatever to do with what the Bible said – and most important, in the realm of salvation. Well, once they got on that trail, these men grabbed hold of that basic principle, and they said, "Let's go back to see what the Scriptures say. Only the Bible can speak for God: not the pope; not a council; not the church; not a priest; and, not a preacher. Only the Bible. And when they went back to the Scriptures, they discovered real truth.

However, the sad part is this: that the descendants of the Protestant reformers themselves have missed the point. Instead of understanding that what the reformers gave them was the Bible again as the authority, their descendants decided that what they gave them was a creed – the truth which these reformers restored, and that was all of it. So, vast church groups go back to these reformers, but they've not made one step in further in illumination and understanding of what the Bible teaches, than what these individual men were able to hack out in their lifetimes. Now what kind of logic is that, that you would believe that men who came through the darkness of 1,000 years of the dark ages of Roman Catholicism, and had to fight back all that spiritual superstition and ignorance – that these men were capable of dealing with all the many realms of biblical revelation?

Well, obviously, they couldn't. And all we have to do is read the writings of the reformers, and we discover that these men, while they did a tremendous job in getting back to how you go to heaven (that was the battle lines that they had to fight on), they knew very little about prophecy. They knew zilch zero practically about the difference between Israel and the church. So, they kind of got it all mixed up. They couldn't distinguish it. That took further study and revelation, which others who followed, and who acted on the principle that the Bible has more to reveal – those are the people who went forward; whereas, the descendants of the reformers, and the church groups that came out of them, were frozen back there in that little bit of restored truth that those men were able to come to.

1. **Born Again (Absolute Righteousness)**

The only human beings who can spend eternity in heaven are those who have been born again spiritually, and so possess God's absolute righteousness. Unless you're as good as Jesus Christ, you can't go to heaven. Now just wipe it out of your mind. Forget it. Don't be trying. Don't be thinking you can make it. Unless you have absolute righteousness (that's absolute perfection), you cannot go to heaven.

1. **We can't do Anything to Pay for our Sins**

Since people are born with a sin nature, it is impossible for them to do anything in payment for their moral guilt. All good works, the Bible tells us, of the unbeliever (of the unsaved person) is filthy rags in the sight of God. Because you are born with a sin nature, everything you do is contaminated and totally rejected. We cannot do anything to cover the guilt to restore our righteousness.

1. **Jesus Christ Died for our Sins**

God has satisfied His own justice relative to human sin, by having His Son, Jesus Christ, die to pay for the sins of mankind. So, suddenly you can breathe a sigh of relief. Sin (your sin) is no longer a problem. God has Himself covered the problem.

1. **God has Provided a Grace Basis for us to go to Heaven**

God has provided a grace way for the lost sinner to be born again spiritually; receive forgiveness of sins; and, have imputed to him the absolute righteousness of God for justification. God has provided a grace basis on which you may secure the absolute righteousness of God. God gives it to you as a gift. He imputes it to you. So suddenly, you stand before God just as good as Jesus Christ – not in your own doing, but in His merit (in His righteousness imputed to you). But notice it is a grace basis.

1. **The Means for Receiving this Grace is Faith**

The means for receiving this grace salvation is faith – believing God's offer of eternal life in heaven, based upon the death of Jesus Christ. You cannot earn it. You cannot work for it. You cannot do anything but simply believe the gospel and accept it.

1. **Adding any Human Work(s) Nullifies Grace**

Now get this one. You may be on the threshold of walking into heaven, and this one will take you right back out: Any attempt by the lost sinner to add some human work, such as water baptism; the Lord's Supper; religious rituals; personal morality; or, good works, to the death of Christ, removes the grace basis upon which God saves. The sinner then remains lost. You cannot say, "I trust in Jesus Christ as Savior, plus my water baptism." Bingo, you're out. You cannot say, "I trust in Jesus Christ as my Savior, and I bring my religious rituals that I perform." Bingo, you're out. You cannot bring any human work and add it to the death of Christ, because then the Bible says that you have removed it from a basis of grace, which is a gift. You do nothing to a grace basis. Otherwise, you're trying to take part of what God has done, and add something of your own. That will doom you to an eternity in hell.

1. **You Cannot Lose your Salvation**

The new birth of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ cannot be reversed. So, one cannot lose his salvation no matter what he does. That's why God used the analogy of birth in describing salvation. You can understand that you cannot reverse a physical birth, nor can you reverse a spiritual birth. If you become a godless person, you can go just so far, and God will discipline you in a variety of ways, including taking your life. But your salvation will not be lost. The new birth is secure, and cannot be reversed.

1. **The Christian Retains his Sin Nature, but it no Longer Controls Him**

The sin nature of man comes into the born-again life, but is no longer in absolute control of the person.

1. **The Christian is to be Controlled by the Indwelling Holy Spirit**

Finally, the objective of the Christian life is to live under the control and leading of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and to produce divine good works for rewards in heaven – not for salvation.

This leads us right into Romans 8:5-8, where we have been studying what Paul had to say about the sin nature that all of us, as Christians, carry around with us. And there are four basic points that Paul makes. Number one is that the sin nature dooms a person to death spiritually and physically. Point number two that Paul has made is that the sin nature is hostile toward God, and so it rejects the authority of His Word, the Bible. Point number three is that the sin nature is disobedient to God's laws and to the implications of those laws. Point number four we have learned is that the nature cannot do anything to please God. That's why we say you cannot save yourself. Your good works are zero, zilch, nothing with God. You are helpless. You are doomed. You are helpless. God has to come in and make it up for you. That can only be changed by a gift from God.

Only the born again Christian can please God. That's the objective of the Christian life. And this Christian is the one who can enjoy temporal and eternal blessings. The sin nature in the Christian resists living a godly lifestyle which pleases God.

**Overcoming the Sin Nature**

Romans 8 gives the divine provision for solving the sin nature problem. That's why we're studying this chapter. How in the world can I (with a sin nature, now that I'm born again) live a life that is pleasing to God, so that he can pour out those blessings in a material and spiritual way that He's sitting up there just waiting to dump on me as fast as He can? How can I live that kind of a godly life? How can I resist the sin nature's inducements? Well, this is what this is all about – how to subject ourselves to the authority of the Holy Spirit.

So, there are two lifestyles among Christians. Some are carnal – still living by the sin nature technique; and, some are what the Bible calls spiritual, living under the Holy Spirit's control. The Holy Spirit through the Word of God enables a Christian to live a life which is compatible with the holiness of God. If you are a part of Bible doctrine, you will not get very far in living a holy life. Oh, you'll be a good person, and you'll do as good as any other sin-nature unbeliever around you. But to live the godly life that brings the maximum blessing of God as someone who is the apple of His eye – that you cannot do unless you know the Word of God. Pleasing God is the product of a divine viewpoint mentality. And as we proceeded last week, we asked the question: how do you get a divine viewpoint mentality? When you come into the Christian life, you have a mind that is totally darkened by human viewpoint. Our question is: how to remove the darkness, and to change it to divine viewpoint, so that we're thinking with the clarity of the mind of Christ, with all that that brings in blessing and capacity to us.

**Don't Conform to the World**

We have already told you that Romans 12:2 gives us the technique for doing this. The first principle, with just a brief review, Paul says, "And be not conform to this world. The word "conformed" is the Greek word "suschematizo." And we told you that this word means "to fashion to some pattern." This part of the word "schema" means "an external fashion." So, this refers to how a person lives his daily life externally. God commands us not to conform our lifestyle to some kind of external pattern. The whole realm of what we do externally in the lifestyle is what it says here: "Don't do." Don't do what? Don't conform to what he calls "the world." Actually, the Greek word is not "world." It's "aion," and "aion" means "age." That is a totally different concept. This refers to the present church change in which we live, from the day of Pentecost. The Bible reveals that the age in which we live is dominated by Satan. So, we looked at the Scriptures which describe our age as this present evil age.

The Bible also reveals, as time approaches for the return of Jesus Christ to the earth to set up His millennial kingdom, that evil will rise to a high pitch here on this earth. And we have seen that coming about in a tremendous way in the last 10 or 12 years. The Christian, thus, should not patterned his life after the evil ways of the Satan-dominated society in which we live. This, therefore, affects the Christians relationships socially; his relationships religiously; his relationships financially; and, his relationships in entertainment; in marriage; in family; in the language he uses; in the things he reads; in the friends he has; in the way he dresses; in how he spends his time; in sex; in his personal morality; and, right down the line. There is a lifestyle out in our world. All you have to do is watch television, and you see a good presentation of what that acceptable lifestyle is. The Bible says, "You, as a Christian, do not pattern yourself externally to that form of this evil age."

**Be Transformed**

Now, going on from there, in Romans 12:2: "But instead," he says, "be transformed." That is the Greek word "metamorphoo." This word means "to change into another form inwardly." "Suschematizo" meant to change into a form outwardly. Now it says, "If you're not going to be a dog on the outside, in the way you live: if you're not going to be a dog in your marriage; if you're not going to be a dog in your sex life; if you're not going to be a dog in your business life; and, everything down the line, then you need a transformation which is inward. Here again, we need to look at this part of the world: "morphe" (the noun here). This word "morphe" refers to an inward quality of a thing – its essence.

I'll give you a couple of examples. This word is used in Philippians 2:6. Reading about Jesus Christ: "Who, being in the form of God," and there it uses the word "morphe." Now, is this talking about the external appearance of Jesus? No, this is talking about what He was internally. He had the essence of deity: "Who, being in the essence of God, thought it not something to be held onto. It refers to the essence. The word indicates that the inward reality of Jesus Christ was that He was deity.

Philippians 2:8 uses this other word that we had before: the "schema." Notice that Philippians 2:8 says, "And being found in fashion ('schema') as a man." Outwardly, that's what He looked like. "Schema" is outward; but, "morphe" is inward. This is constantly the need of every Christian. It is in the passive voice in the language, which tells you that this is something that's done to you. You cannot say, "I am now going to transform myself." You are not going to rise up in the morning and say, "I'm going to think just good thoughts today. I'm going to smile all the time. I'm going to be one of those real nice people." That's not going to do it, because it's got to be something on the inside that is done to you. This is very important.

Furthermore, I have to tell you that that word "transformed" is a command of God. It's imperative mood in the Greek language. God is saying to you, "You better do it. I don't want you to live externally like the dogs of our society live, who are dominated by Satan and the sin nature. I want you, therefore, to be changed internally. I want you to be change internally in some way." Christians are commanded to undergo an internal change which will then result in external godly living: "How am I'm going to do that?"

**By the Renewing of your Mind**

Well, Paul says, "I'll tell you. I'm glad you asked: by the renewing of your mind." The Greek word is "anakainosis." "Anakainosis" means "new in quality," not in terms of time. The word means to make something fresh in terms of its quality. And what is it that is to be made fresh? The renewing of your mind. The Greek word is "nous," and that refers to the mentality of the soul that we were talking about here that you're born with. You're born with a soul that's shot-through with human viewpoint. That's all you know. That's all you get from your society. That's all you can absorb as a sin nature-dominated a person. Once you're born again, something wonderful happens. It is now possible for you to have an internal renewal of the mentality of your soul.

It specifically here connotes the perception, or the learning ability, of your mind. This perceptive mind capacity – that into your mentality there comes a new set of information, and there comes a new set of values – Bible doctrine truths. You can take a lot of information from the world, and that's what people have by nature, and it's corrupt. So, this is what we mean by worldliness. It is basically a sin-nature mentality, filled with human viewpoint, expressing itself in daily living. It's not primarily what you do that makes you worldly. It's what you think. If you have a mind filled with human viewpoint, you're as worldly as they come.

Now, the only way the Christian is going to renew this man is by the intake of the Word of God into that perceptive mind. And such a mental renewal will enable the believer to resist the outward patterns of being conformed to the lifestyle of Satan's world. The mental renewal from learning and accepting doctrine truth produces what 1 Corinthians 2:16 refers to as "the mind of Christ in the believer." And it is the Holy Spirit who teaches us these doctrinal truths. Then the believer is capable of storing these truths. When he is positive toward them, he will take these truths, and here, in his human spirit, he will store the truth. He believes it; he learns it; he stores it; and, then God Holy Spirit, as occasion requires, takes this information, and brings it back up to his mind, out of which the actions of the believer are governed. This is how you become a godly person. Until you know the Word of God, and you have it stored in your human spirit so that God the Holy Spirit can cycle that up to your mentality to guide your actions, you're not to be any different than any other slob that walks out there in the unsaved world.

Romans 12:2: "Be not cut out externally to this evil age, but be transformed (changed internally) by the renewal (making new in quality) of the mentality of your soul by means of the Word of God, so that you have this result: you may demonstrate what is the good (meaning conduct that is beneficial in its effect), and pleasing (that is, which is acceptable to God), and perfect (meaning that which has reached maturity." You will do that which is beneficial; you'll do that which is pleasing to God; and, you'll do that which is spiritually mature. This is the essential test for contact for divine approval.

**How do we Transform our Minds?**

If you'll follow that, you'll realize that we have a problem: a mind that needs changing. Now how do we go about doing that? Here is the great secret that few Christians ever get straight. Turn with me to Ephesians 4:11. And again, I have to show you something from the Greek language so that you will understand the provision that God has made for you to get your mind transformed so that you have the capacity to live a godly life that is pleasing to God, and thus for Him to prosper you materially and spiritually.

**The Pastor-Teacher**

In Ephesians 4:11-12, we have a statement that is tied to the fact that God has given pastors and teachers: it's a combination gift of pastor-teacher. So, we're dealing with the pastor-teacher of the local church. Here is the purpose of the pastor-teacher: "1) for the protection of the saints; 2) for the work of the ministry; and, 3) for the edifying of the body of Christ.

**Why do we go to Church?**

In the Greek language, the word "for" the perfecting; "for" the work; and, "for" the edifying, the word "for: is used three times. But in the Greek language, it's two different prepositions. First is the preposition "pros;" then, "eis;" and, then "eis" again. The minute you see that in the Greek language, you know that what you have set up here is a chain reaction. Now you may have been wondering what on earth you're doing going to church; what is the value of going to church; and, in fact, is there any value in going to church? Pay attention, and you'll find very quickly that you'll be able to analyze now any church service just like that: whether it's worth going to; whether you should be there; whether you should not be there; whether God is there; or, whether this is a human endeavor.

**For the Perfecting of the Saints**

There is a chain reaction which is produced. When this is done, then this happens; and when this happens, then this happens. And the whole purpose of the local church ministry, and of a preacher standing up in the pulpit is right here in this verse. Notice what it says: "For the perfecting." Why do you have a pastor-teacher? First, "pros." For what? The "perfecting." This work is "katartismos." "Katartismos" means "to equip" or "to make fit." It is a word which connotes equipping a person for combat. This is soldier-talk: "to equip a person for combat."

**The Christian Soldier's Equipment for Spiritual Combat**

This equipment of the Christian soldiers for spiritual combat is amplified in Ephesians 6:11-18. I'm going to briefly review these. You'd have to get the tapes on the greater explanation of this. First of all, we have a pastor-teacher: "pros" ("for"). And incidentally, this word pros means face-to-face. Your face is looking at my face, and my face (heaven, help me) looking at your face: face-to-face; and, eyeball-to-eyeball preaching and teaching. That's the first step. For what? So that you people sitting there in the privacy of the mentality of your souls can be equipped in a certain way.

1. **The Belt of Truth**

Very briefly, in Ephesians 6, the equipment consists of (number one) a belt of truth. The belt of truth is Bible doctrine which is stored in your human spirit that we talked about a moment ago. You sit in a local church service, and you receive doctrinal instruction from that pastor-teacher in the privacy of your own mind. Under the filling of the Holy Spirit, you understand what you have been taught. You comprehend the Word of Truth that has been taught to you here from the Bible via the pastor-teacher gift. He has a communication ability. It's a divine gift. So, you sit there, and you say, "Oh, yes, I understand that. I grasp it. I know what the Bible says right there."

Now you have to say, "Do I want to take what I comprehend in my perceptive mind, and do I want to believe it. Positive volition comes in. You go on positive signals, and you say, "Yes, I believe it." Immediately, God the Holy Spirit stores that within your human spirit in all these categories down here – various areas of doctrinal understanding. Now the information from the perceptive mind is stored in this reservoir, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is transferred from there up to your directive mind, and cycled as necessary for making decisions. The divine viewpoint-oriented mind, which is what you have then – this divine viewpoint-oriented mind controls the other two major segments of your soul, which is your emotions and your will. Now unless your mind controls your emotions and controls your will, you're going to go berserk in those two areas. And unless a divine viewpoint mentality controls your emotions, you're going to be over the edge. Unless your divine point mentality controls your will, you're going to make the choice of fools. You can see how important it is to be here, where your mentality is instructed with the Word of God that gives you the starting point of getting a transformed mentality. This gives the Christian a clear understanding of what God's standards and requirements for him are.

1. **The Breastplate of Righteousness**

The second element of the Christian's equipment is the breastplate of righteousness. This refers to the lifestyle that the Christian lives, which is compatible with the holiness of God. That lifestyle is threatened by the human viewpoint thinking of the world system which promotes ungodliness. 2 Corinthians 12:10 describes a fivefold spiritual maturity structure which the Christian is to build in his soul. This is how he lives: grace orientation; mastery of the details of life – being able to handle material things; a relaxed mental attitude – a mind free of mental bitterness; capacity to love – God, your friends, your life, and, your husband; and, inner happiness, which is not based on persons or circumstances or things. But carnality destroys the protection of the breastplate of righteousness, and it exposes the Christian then to ungodly living. If you do not have this spiritual maturity structure built in your soul, you will not live a godly life.

1. **The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace**

The next thing of the equipment that Ephesians 6 describes is the shoes of the gospel of Peace. That's the motivation to move out in the angelic warfare. That is the motivation to serve God. Salvation, as a grace gift from God, produces peace in your soul so that you have good combat morale. The Christian knows that his salvation is a reality. It's not a figment of his imagination, because it is entirely the work of God. If you follow those opening points, you realize today that salvation has nothing to do with what I do. It has only to do with what God does. My part is to say, "I'll take it. It's a good deal. I'll accept it. I'll believe it. And I take Christ as my Savior." That's our part, and that's all we do.

Therefore, the reconciliation between us and God is completed. So, the Christian soldier can get out there and move out into combat. He's not eating his heart out as to the reality of salvation. This is what the reformers faced. It is what Martin Luther faced. He couldn't do his work as a priest because there was gnawing within him whether he himself was headed for heaven or hell. And as far as he knew, it was hell all the way. You can't be much of a soldier with that lack of peace.

1. **The Shield of Faith**

The next piece of equipment is the shield of faith. The shield of faith is the confidence in the inerrancy of the Bible – the certainty that you possess a true communication from God. Therefore, you have divine viewpoint available. The Christian believes and utilizes the promises of God which are in the Bible, because he knows they're true. Confidence in the Bible is what enables the Christian to deflect the attacks of Satan, which are shot at him by the flaming arrows of falsehood and doubt, designed to demoralize him.

1. **The Helmet of Salvation**

The next item is the helmet of salvation – the realization that one's salvation by grace is irreversible. That's what the helmet of salvation refers to: that "I know I can never be lost again." Satan can never again claim me, and send me to hell. Thus even when a Christian sins, which he will, he cannot be intimidated by Satan with the fear of losing his salvation. Salvation, that God has provided us, covered all of our past, present, and future sins. Therefore, all of our guilt has been covered. The helmet, therefore, protects our thinking from the deceptions and the taunts of Satan when we fall. When our weaknesses come up, he taunts us. How many Christians have dropped out of God's service because the helmet of salvation was not firmly in place, so that they had no question about the permanency of their salvation?

1. **The Sword of the Spirit**

Then there is the sword of the Spirit. That is, obviously, as we know, the biblical propositions of truth – the categories of Bible doctrine. The inspiration of the Bible guarantees the genuineness of these propositions. And the Christian who knows them can defeat Satan. Those who don't know them are made to look like fools. Nothing is so pathetic as seeing a Christian on some talk show that tries to convey a godly and true viewpoint, but he doesn't know enough about the Bible to be able to use the sword of the spirit to defend what he says. So, they wipe him out, and say, "Well, that's just what you think. That's your opinion." And we Christians are made to look like fools when we do not have a knowledge of the Word of God. When we call the biblical principle, we are not citing mere human opinion, which can be challenged by human reason.

1. **Prayer**

Then finally, there is the tactic of prayer – talking to God the Father. It is the tactic of prayer that enables us to use the pieces of the equipment of armor that the pastor-teacher has prepared us for. God listens only to the prayers of Christians. He never listens to the prayers of unbelievers. Prayers are the Christian's resource to divine power for victory in the use of the combat gear in our spiritual warfare. The non-praying Christian, or the rote-praying Christian – God forbid. The rote-praying Christian is the one who says, "Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep." Ice cream, you scream; we all scream for ice cream – these little, poetic, rote prayers. If you are a non-praying Christian, or you are a rote-praying Christian, you are incapable of spiritual victories, and you are prone to become a carnal person, because prayer is your line of communication with God to receive His logistical support, and to receive the battle plan.

**Equipping the Saints**

No it is the pastor-teacher who transforms a raw recruit into a mature, combat, Christian soldier, fully equipped for the angelic warfare. And that's what, in Ephesians 4:12, we have specifically said. He is equipping, in this way, those who are the saints (the "hagios"). And you know that a saint is anybody who's in the family of God. He is one who is separated from the world, and from the destiny of hell, to a destiny in heaven. It is the position of every Christian in Christ. It is not some super-good Christian. All of us are saints.

**The Pastor-Teacher – the HICEE Technique**

So, the first prepositional phrase indicates that the primary job of the pastor-teacher in the local church ministry is teaching Bible doctrine truth in those church services. Everything else is extraneous to that primary responsibility. This is clearly enunciated in several places in the Word of God (Acts 2:42, Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:2). And I should tell you that the pastor-teacher does his job with what we call the HICEE technique. Now, that's "pros." That's the first reason for the pastor-teacher. But if he does that job, and you're there in obedience to the Word of God, as He said, "Do not neglect the suffering of yourselves together" – when that church goes open, you better be in there for that instruction: morning; noon; night; and, whenever.

**The Work of the Ministry**

Then the second thing can be triggered. The result will be for the work of the ministry. This word "eis" indicates "for the purpose of." And it is for the purpose of the work, which is the "ergon," which refers to things that one does – activity: specifically, the work of the ministry (the "diakonia"). This means service of some kind. This refers to the believer's personal Christian service as a soldier in the angelic warfare. The Christian is called to the daily production of divine good works through the exercise of his particular spiritual gifts in God service, as per Colossians 1:9-10. If he has been equipped for spiritual combat by the pastor-teacher, in face-to-face instruction, he is then capable of going out and performing the work of Christian soldiering, and not until then.

**Current Spiritual Gifts**

So, now there are nine gifts. Some of you are evangelists; some of you are pastor-teachers; some of you have the gift of exhortation; some of you have the gift of ministry, which includes all of your natural abilities; some of you have the gift of administration; some of you have the gift of giving money; some of you have the gift of showing mercy; some of you have the gift of teaching; and, some of you have the gift of faith. All of these basic nine functional gifts are in the church today. They are operational.

**Phased-Out Spiritual Gifts**

There are some gifts that have been phased out, like speaking in foreign languages; healing gifts; and, so on. Those no longer exist because the Bible is now complete, and the testimony of the Bible has been authenticated. Your job as a Christian is to find your gift, and to use it. The objective of the pastor-teacher's training is that the believer is able to function under the power of the Holy Spirit to produce divine good works instead of sin-nature works. Ephesians 2:10 puts it this way: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."

So, now here we have the pastor-teacher doing his job, and doing it on a regular basis. And the result is that the Christian is now equipped for the job of the ministry, as per one of his special gifts.

**Edifying**

Now, we have "pros," face-to-face. That resulted in "eis," the believer being prepared. Now he's able to execute, and the result will be thrice, which Ephesians 4:12 says, "For the edifying of the body of Christ." The word "edifying" looks like this: "oikodome." This means "to construct a building. It means "to put together the body of Christ," which refers to the church. Ephesians 1:22-23 and Colossians 1:18 tell us that the church is the body of Christ. Those who are born again (those who accept God's salvation) are baptized automatically by God the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:13 tells us, and they are placed into Christ. They are now in the church. They're in the body of Christ. Later on, when you an adult, and you take water baptism, you're reflecting how, when you were born again, you were baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ. That's the whole point of that picture.

So, the church body is now built up by you Christians who have been trained and equipped with the equipment of spiritual combat, and the tactics of prayer, and you're now able to go out into the field, and exercise your spiritual gift, and you're winning people to the Lord, and you're leading Christians into a knowledge of full maturity. And what is there? The great, rich privilege of being members of the royal family of God, which the Jews never were. We have the aristocrats of all the ages, and of all the things that have ever lived – we who are members of the body of Christ, the church. And it is you Christians who make that possible. Not me. I only start it. The chain reaction then goes on with the rest of you. You are the people who do the ministry. So, the body is built up, eventually to completion, with the whole church completed, and then with the return of the Lord. If the believer himself is not equipped with a spiritual maturity structure on his own soul, he can't be building up the body of Christ.

So, a Christian soldier can be so very genuine and sincere, and be tirelessly and sacrificially serving God, but if he is not equipped by the pastor-teacher to function under the filling of the Holy Spirit, he will produce worthless human good. His works then receive no reward in heaven. What a tragedy that will be.

**The Importance of Attending Church**

So, here is the key to renewing the Christian's mind. That's what we started with. How do you get that mind renewed, from human viewpoint into divine viewpoint? The key is the exercise in the local church of the pastor-teacher gift when you gather for those times of assembly in those church services. So, I remind you again of Hebrews 10:25: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching." Going to church is not an empty exercise. Such a divine viewpoint mind will enable a Christian to know and do the will of God. Such an execution of God's will, will produce divine good works and eternal rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Your church ritual will never equip the troops to fight and to survive in the angelic warfare.

Why do we have so many spiritual casualties among Christians? Because those preachers, folks, are not up there explaining the Word of God. They're going through all kinds of nincompoop rituals and ceremonies and nonsense, such that you're so bored, you just can't wait to get out, and you are no smarter when you leave than when you walked in. Your mind has not been equipped to do the battle. You, therefore, are not equipped to exercise your gift. The body of Christ and the work of the Lord is not done – the chain reaction.

Now if you've paid half attention, you should be able to go out of here today and be able to evaluate a church service anyplace, under any condition, in any local church ministry, and to determine whether it's biblical, or just plain religion, or whether they're leaving the mind absorbed with human viewpoint, and conning people that they're getting something. And I'll tell you that once you've gotten hold of the real thing, you will never, never go back again.

So, we must pity the Christian who is never alerted to the fact that, out in heaven, it's not going to be the same for everybody. Some of you are going to be dirt poor paupers up there. But some of you are going to live like the aristocrats that you were here, because you were taught the Word of God; you responded to it, you stored it in your spirit; you used your spiritual gifts; and, you really operated under the production of God the Holy Spirit. That's the real thing. May God help us to make the connections, and to function on them.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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