

Our church vision and no doubt our personal longing is to see our 'lives transformed' but how does change actually happen? That's what we are exploring this week

Read Romans 12:1-2. What do you remember from the talk on Sunday that you found particularly helpful, challenging or encouraging? Why?

1. To change we need to understand our big problem and why God's great mercy is desperately needed!
Romans 1-11 builds up to a crescendo application In Romans chapter 12 verse 1 *"Therefore, in view of God's mercy"*.

Transformation isn't possible without understanding the reality and consequences of our ruined soul. Dallas Willard says, *"without this realization of our utter ruin and without the genuine revisioning and redirecting of our lives, which that bitter realization naturally gives rise to, no clear path to inner transformation can be found."*

- Read Romans 1:18-20; 3:23; 6:23. Do you feel you grasp why our sin is a big problem and deserves punishment/ death?
- Re-read Romans 3:23 but this time with verse 24. Justification means God sees me 'just as if I have never sinned'. How does that speak of God's mercy to you?
- Read Romans 9:16; 23. *What does that reveal about God's mercy?*

An idea shared on Sunday was to meet 1:1 to read Romans 1-6 to understand more of the big problem of sin and God's great mercy. If anyone in your Life Group wants to do that then help them find them someone to read with!

2. We respond to God's mercy with thanks - continually surrendering every part of life to God

The climax of God's grace and mercy is shown through Christ's death – his sacrifice for us demands a response of thanks. How are we to respond with thanks?

See continued on in verse 1 – *"offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship"* (read also 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17)

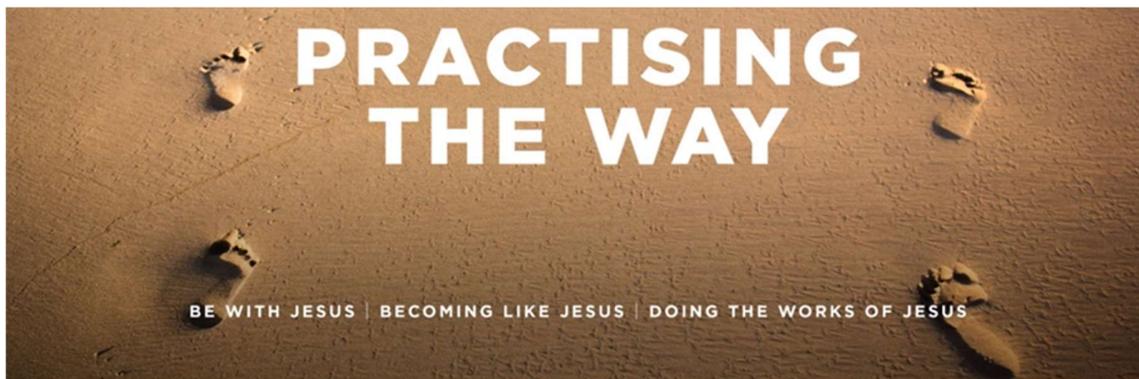
- What does it practically mean for you to offer your body (representing all of life 24*7) on the altar as a response of thanks to God for what Jesus has done? Which part of your life do you find it difficult to surrender to God?

3. To be transformed we intentionally seek to renew our minds

To be able to truly change we need to offer not only our body but our minds as well.

Read verse 2, *'do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...'*

We are all being **shaped and formed** by something – in ways that conform or transform.



- As a group brainstorm the top 10 ways you are unintentionally being *conformed* to the patterns of this world (include the formation that is happening virtually!) What patterns, stories or narratives do you personally feel a challenge to not conform to?

A big part of non-conformity might be abstaining or refraining from filling our mind with things that are unhelpful. Read this quote

“What we take in—our time on social media, how much news we consume, and the television shows we binge watch -- all become part of our spiritual transformation. There is a dire need to renovate our lives by paying attention to what we consume, and this attention will surely give clarity to our efforts for formation towards Christlikeness.” (Dallas Willard, Renovation of the Heart)

- What do you consume without thinking? How might that be unintentionally forming and shaping you?

But while abstaining and not putting garbage is super helpful, it’s not enough for transformation – we need to renew our minds by filling it with something good - getting and giving ourselves good teaching from God’s word.

- Is anyone willing to share what rhythms and practices work well for them to be fed from God’s word through the week? How does that help renew your mind so you can see clearly?

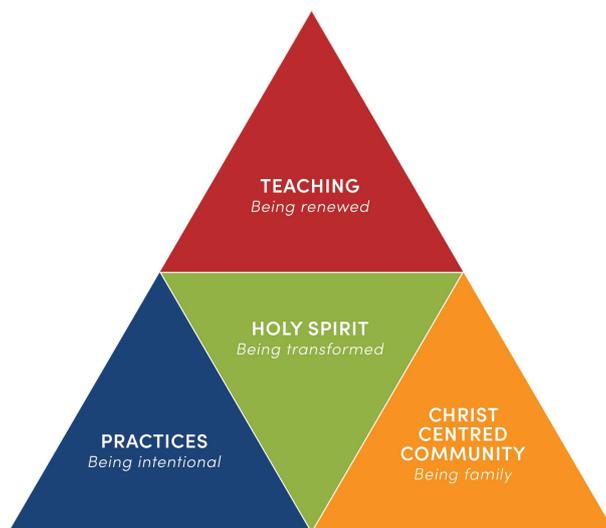
What are the benefits of having a renewed mind? See second half of verse 2 is to *be able to test and approve (that is discern, appreciate and determine to obey), God’s will – his good, pleasing and perfect will*

Recap the idea of the **TCBC transformation pyramid**, where getting being renewed by good Bible teaching is just one side. The strength of every side is important!

- Which side of the pyramid do you feel is most healthy in your life right now?
- Which side are you feeling is a bit unhealthy or spiritually unfit right now?

If the ‘sweet spot’ of transformation is where the points touch...

- What moments of your week can you think of where teaching, practice, Christ centred community and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit meet together?



Pray for one another. Perhaps also sing this song we sang on Sunday **More Like Jesus** together¹

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BhrCKhBFB4>