PEOPLE OF ANOTHER WORLD

(Rom. 12:1-8)

I. PRELIMINARIES

A. Pastoral Prayer (Rom. 10:1, 1 Tim. 2:1f)
B. Further Announcements
C. Today's Text:

Therefore I exhort you brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies *as* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. **2** And do not be conformed to this *present evil* world, but instead be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may show forth the will of God—that which is good and pleasing and complete *in his sight.* **3** For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you: Don't think *of yourselves* more highly than you should, but think judiciously, seeing that God has allotted to each one *of you* a measure of faith. **4** For just as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, **5** so we, *though* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. **6** So then: Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *let each one exercise his gift.* If it is prophecy, let him prophesy in proportion to his faith. **7** If it is service, let him serve. If it is teaching, let him teach. **8** If it is exhortation, let him encourage and exhort. If it is giving, let him do so with sincerity. If it is leadership, let him lead with diligence. *And* if it is mercy, let him show it with cheerfulness.

D. Prayer for ministry of the Word

II. INTRODUCTION

A. Opening Illustration: Lilies of the Field **(Slides)**

- MP: Homer's thinking (of building the chapel alone) was worldly, not "judicious"! He needed a transformed mind—and God, in his providence, gave him one.

B. Review: Paul's great theme in Romans: The righteousness of God **(Slide)**

- Righteousness needed (1-3)
- Righteousness imputed (3-5)
- Righteousness imparted (6-8)
- Righteousness vindicated (9-11)
- Righteousness practiced (12-15)

C. <u>To note carefully:</u> Right theology always precedes right living! (HSL)

D. Today's Big Idea: God's born-again children have become *a people of another world.* In particular, they have become a spiritual *family,* a spiritual *priesthood*, and a spiritually gifted *body.* But to see this clearly, and to live it out well, our minds must be transformed by the Word of God. Only then will the world around us see that we really are a people of another world!

III. (1) GOD HAS CALLED US TO SERVE HIM AS A FAMILY OF SPIRITUAL PRIESTS

Therefore I exhort you brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual (reasonable) service of worship.

A. Read and Comment (HSL)

B. Application: Already, Paul is renewing their minds, helping them see themselves in a brand new light:

- We are a spiritual family/brotherhood
- We are a spiritual priesthood **(Slides)**

[4] Coming to him *as to* a living stone—rejected by men but chosen and precious in the sight of God— [5] you yourselves, as living stones, are also being built *into* a spiritual house for[3] a holy priesthood, in order to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. – 1 Peter 2

- Our problem: Often we can't SEE (clearly) what they are!

IV. (2) TO BECOME EFFECTIVE AS A FAMILY OF SPIRITUAL PRIESTS, OUR MINDS MUST BE TRANSFORMED

[2] And do not be conformed to this present evil world, but instead be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may show forth the will of God—that which is good and acceptable and complete in his sight.

A. Read and Comment (HSL)

B. MP's:

- We are all conformed to something
- Either the world or the Son of God (Rom. 8)
- The need: Transformation: CHANGE!
- The means: The Word of God plus obedience to it
- The result: Seeing, approving, showing forth of His Will

V. (3-8) WHEN OUR MINDS ARE PROPERLY TRANSFORMED, WE WILL SEE THREE IMPORTANT THINGS CLEARLY

A. (3) By God's grace, every Christian has been given a measure of faith

[3] For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you: Don't think of yourselves more highly than you should, but think judiciously (realistically), seeing that God has allotted to each one of you a measure of faith.

- We see the reality of grace
- We see the wisdom of humility
- The world is based on rampant individualism and self-exaltation

[14] But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast, and so lie against the truth. [15] This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual,[10] and demonic. [16] For where there is envy and selfish ambition there is also disorder and every evil practice. – James 3

- Our Lord addresses this spirit emphatically:

35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to Jesus and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." **36** So he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" **37** They said to him, "Grant *us* that in your glory one of us may sit on your right hand and the other on your left." **38** But Jesus said to them, "You don't realize what you are asking for yourselves. Are you able to drink the cup that I *must* drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I *must* undergo?"[11] **39** They said to him, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "You will *indeed* drink the cup that I *must* drink, and be baptized with the baptism I *must* undergo. **40** But to sit on my right or my left is not mine to grant, but belongs to those for whom it has been prepared." **41** Now when the ten heard *about this*, they started to get angry at James and John. **42** But calling them to himself, Jesus said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and that their "great ones" wield authority over them. **43** But among you, it *must* not *be* so. On the contrary, whoever desires to become great among you must be your servant; **44** and whoever desires to be first among you must be *the* slave of all. **45** For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

5 Moreover, all that they do, they do to be seen by men. They broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels *on their robes*; **6** and they love the place of honor at the banquets, the chief seats in the synagogues, **7** formal salutations in the marketplaces, and being called 'Rabbi' by the people.[2] **8** But as for you, you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' *for you have one teacher, and you all are brothers.* **9** And you are not to call anyone on earth your father, for you have one father, your Father in heaven.[3] **10** And do not be called leaders, for you have one leader: the Messiah. **11** But *as for you*, the greatest among you will be your servant; **12** and whoever exalts himself will be humbled, but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

- We see that God allotted each of us a measure of faith (30/60/100 fold. Different talents)

B. (4-5) Every Christian is a vitally important member of the Body of Christ

[4] For just as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, [5] so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

- MORE renewing of the mind: Not only are we a brotherhood and a priesthood, but we are a BODY **(SLIDE)**

- HSL: Diversity, Unity, Mutual Dependency
- Application: The Lord is guiding us into humble, confident, fulfilling membership in his Family.

C. (6-8) Every Christian has one or more spiritual gifts, which he/she is called to discover and exercise to the fullest extent possible

6 So then: Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each one exercise his gift. If it is prophecy, let him prophesy in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is service, let him serve. If it is teaching, let him teach. 8 If it is exhortation, let him encourage and exhort. If it is giving, let him do so with sincerity. If it is leadership, let him lead with diligence. And if it is mercy, let him show it with cheerfulness.

- Intro: This is one of several NT lists of gifts **(Slide)**
- Read and Comment (HSL)
- Application 1: We must ***discover*** our gifts, diligently ***exercise*** our gifts, and ***focus*** on our gifts
- Application 2: This is the chief goal of the pastor/teacher: Every Member Ministry!

11 And he himself gave some *as* apostles, some *as* prophets, some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. – Eph. 4

VI. CONCLUSION: A PEOPLE NOT OF THIS WORLD

A. Called to BE different from the world, and so to MAKE a difference in the world

14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do men light a lamp and *then* place it under a basket; instead, they place it on its stand,[3] and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. – Mt. 5

B. Called to THINK (SEE) differently

- A brotherhood
- A holy priesthood
- A body
- Etc.

C. Called RELATE differently

- Mutual Humility
- Mutual Service
- Mutual Dependency
- Mutual Love

D. When we thus SEE and RELATE we become a people of another world, and we will indeed make a difference in this world, for time and eternity.