

July 21, 2019

Session 17: Acceptable Unto God

3) The Presentation Issue of “acceptable unto God.”

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, **acceptable unto God**, which is your reasonable service.

Firstly, let us look at defining what “acceptable” means.

OED: acceptable – Capable, worthy or likely to be accepted or gladly received; hence, pleasing, agreeable, gratifying or welcome.

To condense this to a nutshell and keep it to the context of presenting ourselves in a particular fashion, let us say that “acceptable” is “someone who is worthy to be received.”

Received how? Received into God’s Simple Son Education. The person is “acceptable” or “worthy” to get into this education is one who has passed the second volitional testing point in Romans 8:16-39. This Testing Point is comprised of two aspects: absolute confidence in our Father and also in His word to produce in us His wisdom and the character of His Son.

Our Father needs to know that what was said to us in Romans 8:16-39 has demonstrated that no matter what comes our way, He will do what He said He will do, that He has not overlooked any situation or circumstance and that His word will accomplish what He designed it to accomplish. This is the checkpoint of what it means to be “acceptable unto God.”

Do not mistake “acceptable” as being justified unto eternal life. Neither does it mean that we are acceptable because we are surrendering ourselves to be His disciple.

We are “acceptable” because we are presenting ourselves to our Father on the basis of the prerequisite doctrines. Those doctrine work as our credentials or qualifications to be entered into the Simple Son education. Our Father has put together an educational curriculum in Romans through 2 Thessalonians, and the doctrines contained therein have the ability to equip us to handle, in a godly fashion, any and every situation that may come our way. That education contains the doctrines whereby Christ is formed in us. Those epistles are educating us in the four sonship decision making skills of wisdom, justice, judgment and equity.

Romans 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Like Paul, we need to be persuaded that nothing, absolutely nothing can stop our education/edification as God’s adopted sons. Only when we have come to an understanding and

implementation of the doctrines of our sanctification are we ready to move to Phase Two of our Level 1 education.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, **which is your reasonable service.**

You understand what it means for something to be “reasonable.”

OED: reasonable: the ordinary thinking faculty of the human mind in a sound condition; sensible.

Putting this definition to work in the context of Romans 12:1, we have: “In anticipation of beginning our education, the reasonable thing for us to do is demonstrate our readiness for that education by presenting ourselves to our Father as both knowledgeable and functional in the necessary, prerequisite doctrinal issues; our sanctified status of being dead to sin and alive unto God (living sacrifice), our adoption as sons (holy) and our absolute confidence in God and His word (acceptable unto God).”

Or, to say it in a little shorter version:

In anticipation of our education and in demonstration of our readiness to begin it, the sensible thing to do is demonstrate our knowledge and function in our sanctified status with regard to sin (living sacrifice), our adoption as sons (holy) and our absolute confidence in God and His word (acceptable).

Think of yourself as a son who is ready to begin his education. You stand before your Father and you make your case for beginning your education. You do this by talking to Him about three doctrinal issues which are working in you. These are the doctrines which qualify you to begin the education proper. Therefore, presenting yourself in light of them is the “sensible” thing to do.

In fact, this is your third volitional testing point. In a sense, you are presenting your credentials for beginning your education.

As you can see, Romans 12:1 pertains to those things which we should have already learned and responded to. But now we have two more issues to deal with before we begin the education itself. But these do not concern things which we have already learned, but they concern things we anticipate learning. Not only that, but these next components have to do with us realizing that our lives are about to change. A lot of the old way of thinking is about to be over forever. No more will you be an uneducated, unedified believer who is serving God from the flesh.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The first issue is contained in the first phrase of the verse:

Romans 12:2 **And...**

The word “And” tells us the checkpoint is not finished. While verse 1 talked about what has already taken place, verse 2 talks about what we expect to take place and what we want to take place.

Romans 12:2 And **be not conformed to this world:** but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:2 describes how our lives should be from now on. A functional sonship life is one which will not be conformed to this world. A life which is not conformed to this world is a life which we, as sons, must be committed to.

So, what does it mean to be “conformed to this world?”

Romans 12:2 And be not **conformed** to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

OED: conform – 1) having the same form or character; similar agreement, in accord 2) exhibiting harmony or

Paul warns us not to allow the world to form our character to make us like it is. We are no longer to think and live in accordance with the world. Our thinking is going to be completely different. The world is “ungodly” in that it does not think like God, it does not do things God’s way and it does not labor with God to accomplish His purposes. And we must know that this is not limited to evil, sinful actions. This also includes attempts to do good things (even serving God) in the energy of our flesh.

The world is constantly pressuring use to conform. But instead of being conformed to this world, we are meant to be conformed to the image of God’s Son.

How does Satan work to conform us to this world? He does so by means of the course of this world.

The course of this world serves the purposes of the Adversary. The thinking of the course of this world promotes Satan’s thinking. Ungodly thinking is meant to produce ungodly actions. Again, do not make the mistake of defining “ungodly” as only pertaining to evil or sinful actions.

Anything that is not done God's way is ungodly. The actions of the course of this world promote Satan's actions. And those things work to produce an ability to labor with Satan in what he is doing.

One of the things our sonship education will reveal is just how much the world holds sway in our thinking and actions. We should expect the doctrine is going to reveal that and we should want to change it.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but **be ye transformed** by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

The number one definition of "transform" has to do with the changing the physical shape of something. But we are not changing in physical shape. So the 1b) definition is the one to look at:

OED: transform – 1b) to change in character; to alter in function or nature.

So, the transformation that is supposed to take place is into something that is the opposite of what the world would make of us. What would the world make of us? It would make us ungodly. It would conform us into someone who is in agreement with the course of this world.

When we got our new identity in Christ, we were transformed in nature. But now, we are being asked to be transformed in accordance with that new identity in Christ. We are being transformed in three particular ways. Do you know what those are?

Just to give you a hint, look at the verse again.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.