

Renewal

by H.J. Vine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual renewal through the transformation of the mind, focusing on Christ as the ultimate goal and source of strength for believers.

Scripture: Colossians 3:10

Topics: "Spiritual Renewal", "Mind Transformation"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the importance of being transformed by the renewing of our minds, emphasizing the spiritual renewal and energy available to the weary and burdened through God's way of renewal. The sermon delves into the process of renewal in the new creation, highlighting the need to respond to God's compassion by yielding our bodies and minds to Him. Progress in this transformation is linked to being at peace with God through Christ's work and continually renewing our minds according to the image of Christ.

Transcript

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2).

How encouraging for the weary, how cheering for the weak, how heartening for the heavily burdened, for those who faint by the way, to know that they may renew their spiritual energy and strength. Many a man whose health and physical strength are gone would give much to be sure of such a renewal. It is of great importance for the children of God to understand God's way of renewal for themselves.

The praising psalmist sang, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: . . . thy youth is renewed like the eagle's!" He experienced the reality of it. Again he sang, "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, Thou art very great. Thou renewest the face of the earth." Creation experiences it likewise. When, however, we think of the new creation to which we belong, we may well ask, "Is renewal to be known there too?" Certainly, for we are told in Colossians 3:10, we "have put on the new man, which is renewed" also.

In the early part of Romans we are taught how God has wrought in and through our Lord Jesus Christ for our everlasting welfare. In righteousness and love He has secured our justification and reconciliation, having predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son, and, setting our hearts at rest as to these things, giving us liberty in the power of the Spirit to walk so as to please Him. We are then instructed how to respond to His great compassion toward us (Rom. 12:1-2). We are to yield our bodies to Him and be transformed by the renewing of our mind. The body being presented to God, and the mind rightly

renewed, we prove for ourselves "what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Progress in being "transformed by the renewing of the mind" can only be ours when we are at peace with God through the work of Christ, being reconciled to Him through the death of His Son. Where doubts still cloud the mind, how can there be advance in the knowledge of divine things? The exhortation, or rather beseeching, to thus respond follows the teaching which gives us this divine assurance. At the very start, when God began His work in us--the work which He will carry on and complete--a renewing of an eternal character took place with us. That was done once, and done for ever. In we only place it is named in Scripture it is said to have taken place in the spirit of the mind (Eph. 4:23), and a different word is used for renewing, *anane*, for it is new in an abiding sense. In Romans 12:2 it is *anakain*sis, to be renewed in a fresh way. In the former scripture three things are stated concerning us: (1) We have "put off the old man"; (2) "Being renewed in the spirit of the mind"; (3) "Having put on the new man" (see New Trans.). These things have taken place; but the renewal according to Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 4:16, and Colossians 3:10 still goes on. This word is used five times, the other two being Titus 3:5 and Hebrew 6:6.

This renewal of the Holy Spirit spoken of in Titus 3:5 is still going on; but if a man professed the faith of Christ and apostatised, we are told in Hebrews 6:6, it is impossible to renew him again to repentance after he has outwardly partaken of the great benefits spoken of in verses 4 and 5. The fact is he was never a true believer at all, and his own course proves it. Those, however, who are true children of God are to make progress in the direction which the Word of God indicates by the renewing of their minds. The Apostle Paul tells us that notwithstanding all the labours and afflictions which were his, he experienced a daily renewal. "Though our outward man perish," he writes, "yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16); and what he says immediately after gives us the secret of this: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." The latter engrossed his attention, for Christ is the Centre of them all.

In bringing these remarks to a close we must turn to Colossians 3:10, where we have the divine Objective of this great work of renewal, the Objective too which is to be before the hearts of all those who are the happy subjects of the renewing of the present time. Again, as in Ephesians 4, it is said of such, "They have put off the old man and have put on the new"; but it is added as to the new man, "Which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free: but CHRIST IS EVERYTHING, AND IN ALL." There it is! Our renewing is according to the image of Christ. No lower standard is put before us. He Himself is the image of God. Notice again how this renewing is connected with the mind. The reading should be "renewed into full knowledge." How important it is, then, that our thinking should be in the divinely indicated direction. How many allow their thoughts to go far astray. The Apostle warns us of those who "mind earthly thing"; and he fears lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craft, so our thoughts should be corrupted from simplicity as to CHRIST, for it is to Him we are espoused by divine grace (2 Cor. 11:2-3).

Our renewal, therefore, has in view Christ being "everything and in all"--the One who loved us and made us His own eternally through His sufferings and death; the One whose moral glory shines so perfectly in His lowly pathway, making God Himself known in His love and holiness; His grace and righteousness; His compassion, kindness and long-suffering; in His justice and mercy; telling out the "great love" wherewith He loved us at Calvary, when He became the propitiation for our sins. It is now that He is everything and in all in the new man, but soon the purpose of God shall be brought to its counselled perfection, and amidst the splendours of the glory of God all the saints shall shine in radiance divine, fully conformed to the image

of God's Son, with Himself the Centre of all, the joy of every heart, the praise of every mouth--"THE FIRSTBORN AMONG MANY BRETHREN." Lord, hasten that day, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

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