

Transformed!

How God Renews the Lives of His People

Get Personal

Part 14: *What It Takes*

A Note from Pastor Keith...

OK, we're convinced: God is calling US to be His people at *this time* and in *this place*, and He couldn't possibly be more serious. But what is "being God's people" going to require of us? What does it take? Let's find out.

Being God's People takes INTENSITY!

...offer your bodies as living sacrifices...

Romans 12:1a (New International Version)

1. Give yourself *fully* to the task, nothing held back.

^{1a}Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God....

Romans 12:1a (NIV)

2. It is the only way to *truly* worship God!

^{1b}...this is your spiritual act of worship.

Romans 12:1b (New International Version)

Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

Romans 12:1b (New Living Translation)

Our Definition of Worship:

A response of self-giving that declares the worth of God.

Being God's People takes FOCUS!

1. Transformation flows from a *renewed mind*, one with new thoughts, new values, new priorities.

^{2a}Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Romans 12:2a (NIV, emphasis added)

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold....

Romans 12:2a (Phillips Translation)

2. It is the *only way* to grasp God's Kingdom Vision.

^{2b}Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:2b (NIV)

[Jesus said,] "but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful."

Mark 4:19 (NIV)

[Jesus said,] "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other."

Matthew 6:24a (NIV)

Get Personal!

Recall a time when you acted with *sustained intensity*. How was that different from simply "making a good effort?"

Are you approaching your life *with* God and *for* God with sustained intensity? If not, what's holding you back?

What worldly thoughts, values, or priorities are contributing to or even setting your life agenda?

What are you doing to renew your mind toward God's thoughts and values?

Being God's People takes TEAMWORK!

1. It's not about what YOU can do or what I can do.

^{3a}For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Romans 12:3 (NIV)

Note the order:

- **Renewal of My Mind:** "...be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (v. 2b). God gives me new values and priorities.
- **Discernment of God's Will:** "Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will" (v. 2c). Now I can see and understand what God is up to in the world and how He wants me to be part of it.
- **Sober Judgment regarding My Role:** "think of yourself with sober judgment" (3). But I can also see that my contribution alone is not enough. I'm part of something much bigger than me.

2. It's about what WE can do together in Christ.

⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:4-5 (NIV)

3. Each of us has a spiritual gift, a specific way that God wants to use us to bless others and build His Kingdom.

^{6a}We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

Romans 12:6a (NIV)

¹Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.

⁴There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. ⁷**Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.**

1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-7 (NIV, emphasis added)

4. So... **USE IT!**

^{6b}If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully..

Romans 12:6b-8 (NIV)

¹⁰Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

¹⁰Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well.

1 Peter 4:10 (Contemporary English Version)

Get Personal!

How much can you do on your own to change the world?

So, what's the point? Why bother? Your contribution won't be missed, right?

OK, so you see the problem. It's not about what you can do or what I can do, but what God wants to do through us as we work together.

Look at your gifts and abilities, your experiences and passions. What can you do in partnership with the rest of us? What small part can you play in blessing others and building God's Kingdom? (If you're having trouble visualizing your role, here's a hint from Ephesians 2:10. Look for the role that is so completely *YOU*, that you actually ask, "You mean I get to do *that*?"

Now let's tie it all together: How can you do **THAT** with focus and sustained intensity?