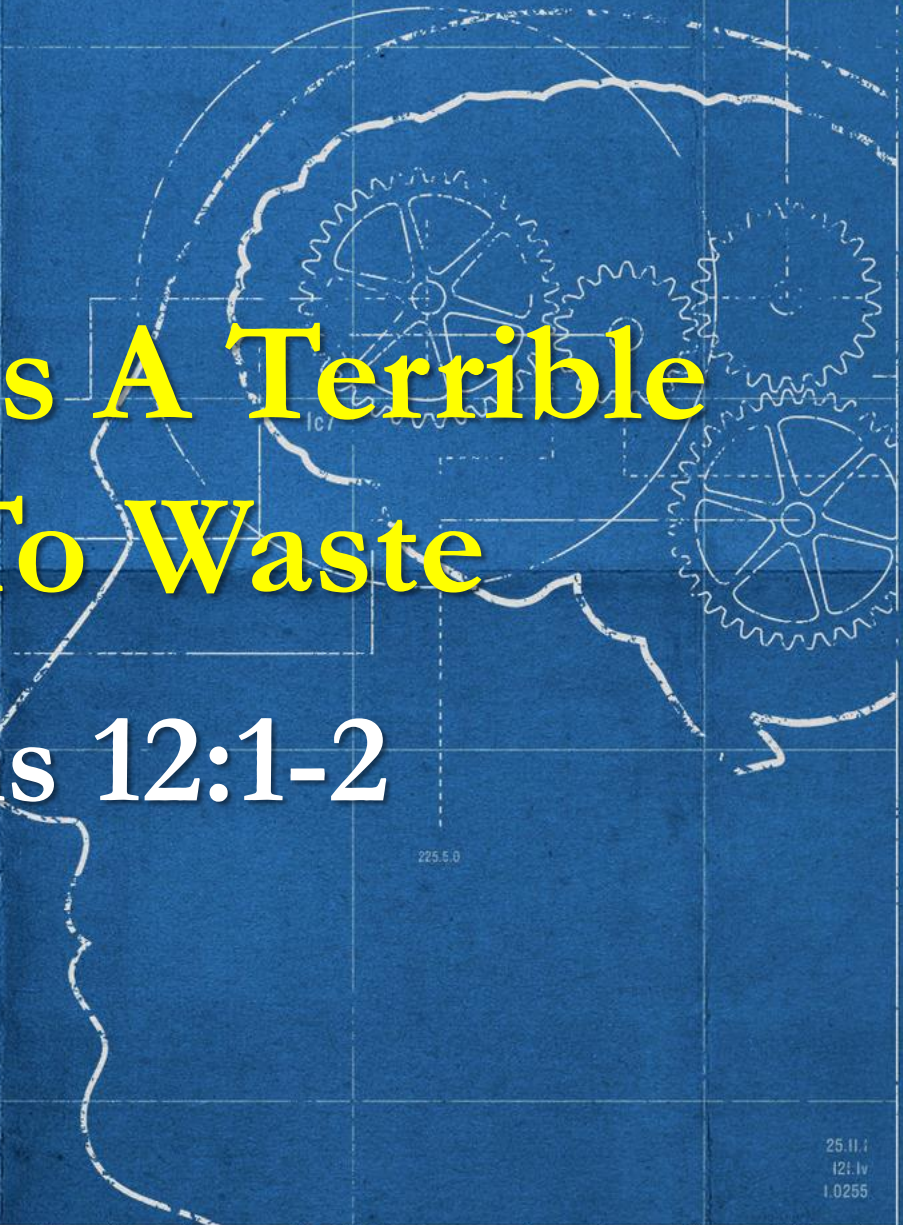


The Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Waste

Romans 12:1-2



What Does Our
Theology Have Do
With Our Day-to-
Day Lives?

Romans 12:1-2

1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. **2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

“Therefore”

Points us back to the previous verses.

Before we begin in Chapter 12

Look Back at 11:28-36

The Point

- Gentiles were once in a state of rebellion, but they have now received mercy.
- As he said in 3:23, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” and no ethnicity can lay exclusive claim to His mercy.
- The gospel has come to the Gentiles, and at the same time, His promises to Israel are irrevocable.

Paul Praises the Lord!

- Who but God could have conceived a plan that would turn disobedience into an occasion for mercy and in the process reach out to all who would believe?
- **It brings to mind Isaiah 55:9 –**
“For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways And My
thoughts than your thoughts.”

Why Does This Matter?

- Because practical instruction for our lives must rest on a solid theological foundation or it is little more than “good advice.”
- If Christ had not done what He did for us, there would be no compelling reason why we should now do what He says.

Biblical Ethics

Our adherence to God's moral instruction arises from its logical and necessary relationship to who He is and what He has done on our behalf.

Consider This:

**Ethical behavior is not
exclusive to
Christianity.**

So, What's The Difference?

Only the Christian Faith

While supernatural, is rooted in history.

The incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ were attestable, eyewitness historical events.

Not to mention prophetic...







Therefore...

The practical aspects of Christianity that we live out on a daily basis are not arbitrary.

Instead, the Christian life is unavoidable given the implications of a God Who has revealed Himself through revelation and His Son, Who lived a sinless life and publically died for us on the Cross.

How Now Shall We Live?

“Therefore I urge you, brethren,
by the mercies of God, **to**
present your bodies a living
and holy sacrifice, acceptable
to God, which is your spiritual
service of worship.”



For a Sacrifice to be Made...

- An animal would be set apart for God and His glory.
- Once given, it no longer belonged to the giver.
- The efficacy of the sacrifice had nothing to do with the sacrifice itself; the power was in God accepting the sacrifice.

But What About Hebrews 10?

10 By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Then What is Paul Saying?

- Personal holiness matters.
- “Sanctification” matters.
- Conforming our will to the will of Christ matters.
- Dying to self matters.
- The sacrifice must be voluntary (this is a “living” sacrifice).

F.F. Bruce said:

“The sacrifices of the new order do not consist of taking the lives of others, like the ancient animal sacrifices, but in giving one’s own.”

Knowing the Truth Is NOT Enough.

If we have not surrendered our
very bodies to the will and glory
of Christ then our own efforts at
holiness will avail very little.

So, Why Do We Do This?

- Because it is “acceptable to God.”
– εὐάρεστος (“well pleasing”)

As a Christian, your all-encompassing goal is to please the Lord who died for you!

And Furthermore

It is “your spiritual service of worship.”

Once again, in view of God’s mercy, it is entirely fitting that we commit ourselves without reservation to Him.

To suggest that accepting the free gift of God’s grace involves no more obligation on our part is heresy of the highest order.

Western Christianity

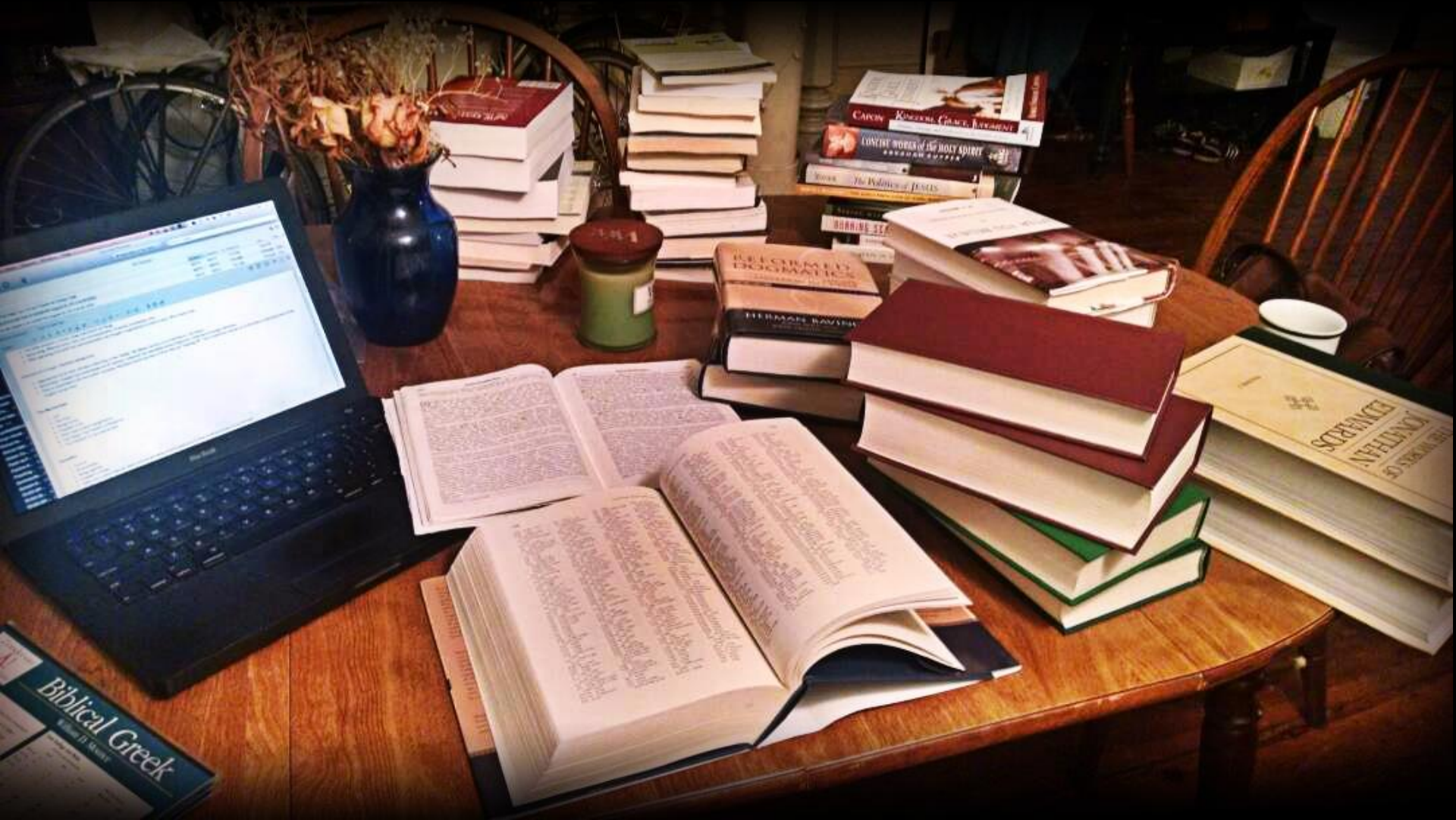
Loves the idea of Jesus as Savior

But it often balks at the
idea of Jesus as Lord

An Example: Church Attendance



An Example: Intellectual to a Fault



What Does This Service Look Like?

- Paul tell us in v. 2:

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

2 Ongoing Activities for Us

1. “do not be conformed to this world”
2. “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”

1. Do Not Be Conformed

- **1 Peter 1:14** – “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance”
- **Philippians 3:20** – “For our citizenship is in heaven...”
- **Colossians 3:2** – “Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”

This World

Must **NOT** serve as a model for Christian living.

Its values and goals are antithetical to growth in holiness.

To be culturally identified with the world is to place the church in a dangerous position.

A.W. Tozer once said:

“Almost everything the church is doing these days has been suggested to her by the world.”

A.W. Tozer died in 1963...



Why I left the toilet seat

UP

2. Be Transformed

- We all realize that the we are under constant pressure from the world to adopt the customs and practices that define the secular mainstream.
- Of course, we are commanded to reject those things.

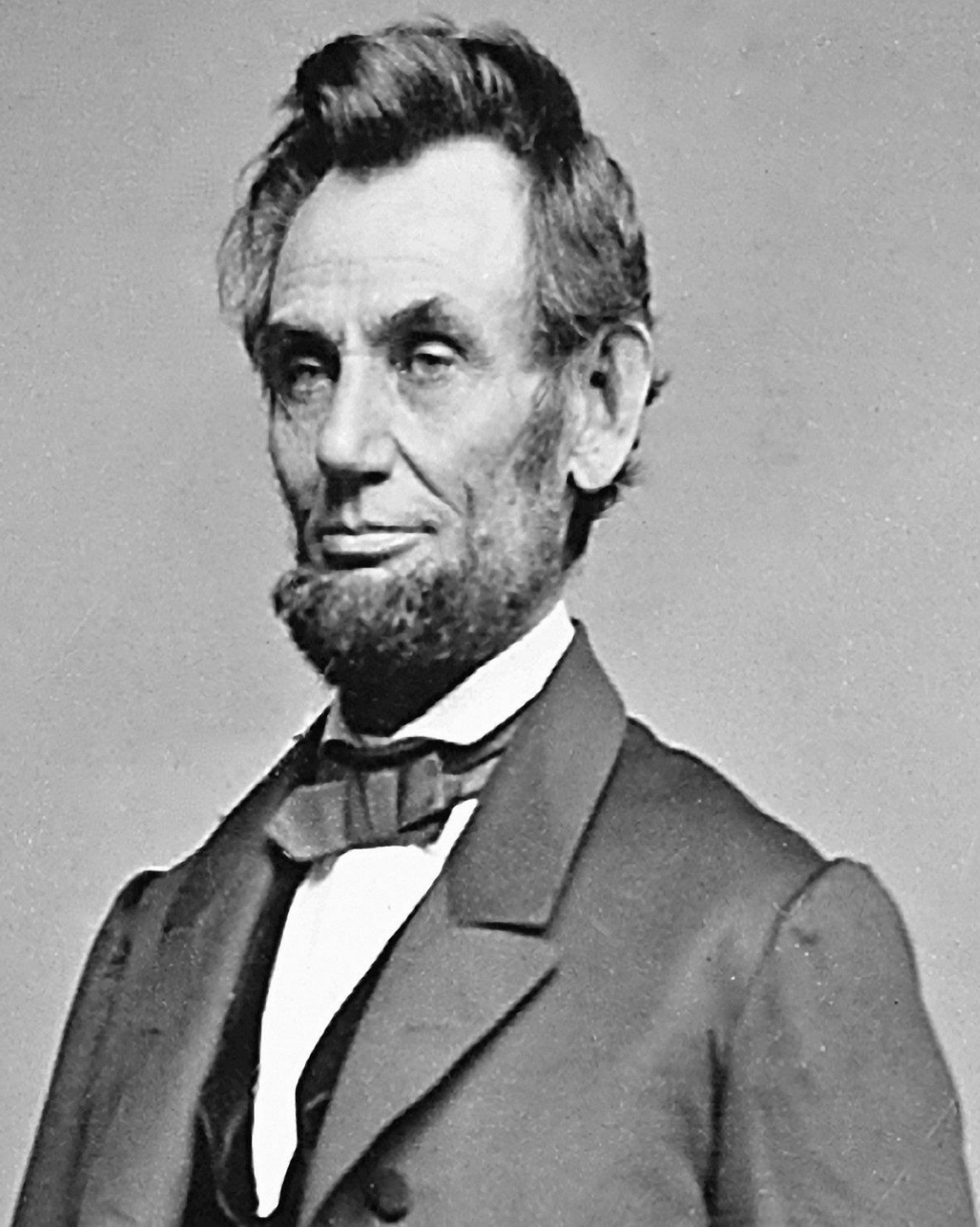
But that is **NOT** enough.

“Transformed” - μεταμορφόω

- This verb occurs in two other settings in the New Testament:
 1. **Matthew 17:2/Mark 9:2** – “he was *transfigured* before them”
 2. **2 Corinthians 3:18** – “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are *changed* into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

**The Change Paul Speaks of
Is not a change effected
externally; it is a radical
metamorphosis that begins deep
within our new heart.**

**The world seeks to change you from without.
The Lord seeks to transform you from within!**

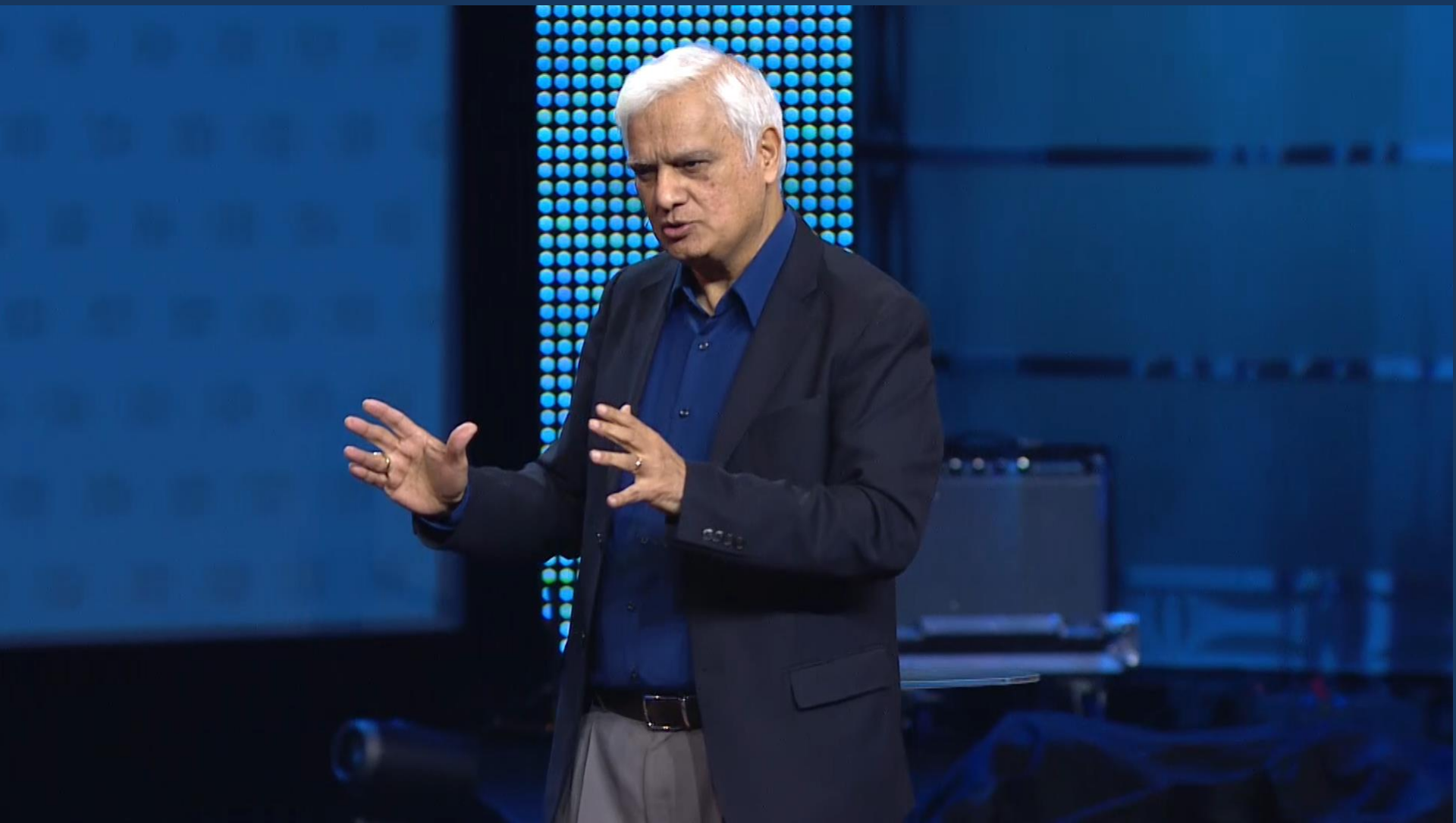


A Personal Soapbox

It's an issue I like to describe as:

The Myth of Progressive Sanctification





Romans 8:28-30

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. **29** For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; **30** and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

You Need a Renewed Mind

- A renewed (or transformed) mind is concerned with those issues in life that are of lasting and eternal importance.
- Our natural mind dwells in the moment.
- Our renewed mind seeks the will of God.

And Knowing God's Will is

“good and acceptable and perfect.”

- **Why is it good?**
 - Because it brings about moral and spiritual growth.
- **Why is it acceptable (well-pleasing)?**
 - Because it is an expression of His very nature.
- **Why is it perfect?**
 - Because it comes from a perfect God.

Western Culture

- Is losing the ability to think deeply.
- And therefore, the process of renewing our mind is all the more important in today's world.

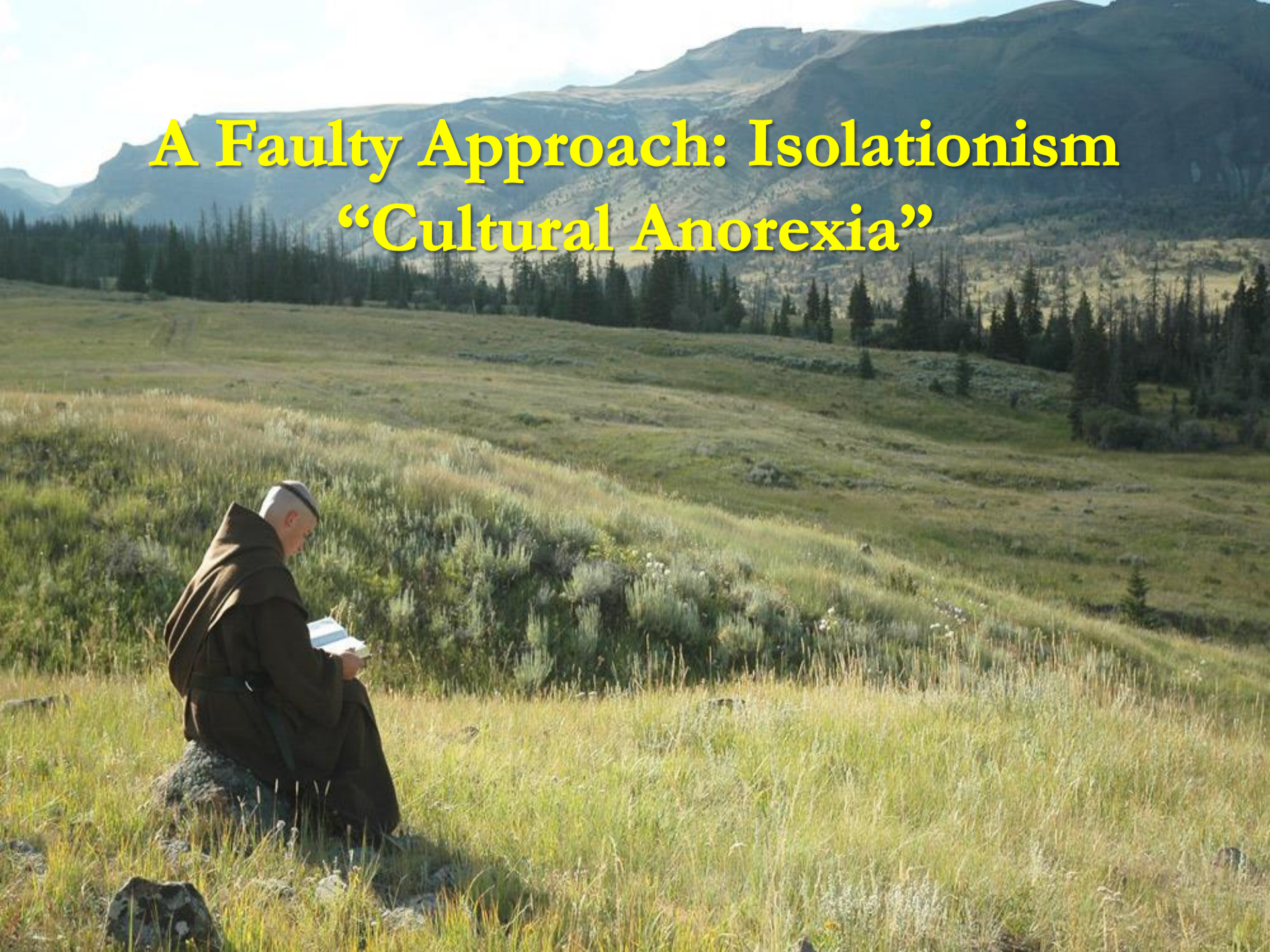
Let's close with an examination of something we all encounter regularly.



Let Me Begin With The Obvious

- There are clearly movies, television shows, videos, and music in which no Christian should be indulging, including:
 - Pornography
 - Nudity
 - Gratuitous Sexual images
 - Blatant Vulgarity and Profanity
 - Blasphemy Against God

A Faulty Approach: Isolationism “Cultural Anorexia”



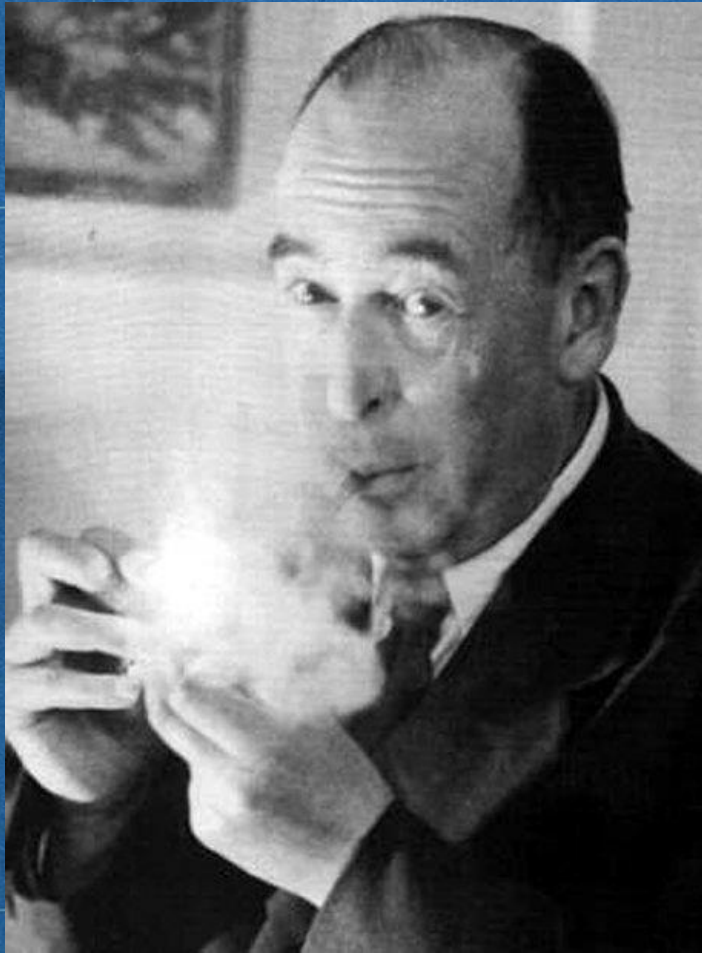
A 2nd Faulty Approach: Assimilation “Cultural Gluttony”



What is your mind
absorbing on a daily
basis?

And what is that doing
to your heart?

C.S. Lewis Said:



“The most dangerous ideas in society are not the ones being argued, but the ones that are assumed.”

As A Believer

**You are both challenged
and changed!**

And if neither are true...

Paul Never Got Over The Mercy of God!

