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## ROM 12:2 = SANCTIFICATION (The renewal of your mind...)

#SCRIPTURE READINGS: Romans 12:1-2, Ephes 6:12, 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, John 10:10, 2 Timothy 3:16, Matthew 4:1-11

#SERMON=INTRODUCTION: A new year and our new plans/intentions/resolutions. What are yours? *What are the things you would love to change/accomplish in order to truly live an abundant life/a victorious lifestyle?*(JOHN 10:10) Am I right that most of the things you/we are contemplating, *are not necessarily physical things but rather things on a "different" level - that most of these "things" involve relationships?* Your relationship with your spouse /children/in-laws/friends? *Because it is indeed true that these things "that money can't buy", play a pivotal role in our quality of life?..*

+TRANSITION: And then we haven't even mentioned a word about our intentions/dreams *re our Eternal journey - things we would love to change/attain in order to live a victorious Kingdom lifestyle! The things we would love to conquer, the strongholds we would love to see tumbling, in order for us to (in a Spiritual sense) leave/escape Egypt at last and enter the Promised Land.* And yes, the latter should be our main focus, because we aren't (in the 1st place) physical beings with a spirit, *we are Spirits with a temporary dwelling place - preparing for our eternal/permanent Home. (2 COR 5:1)*

+EXEGESIS&APPLICATION: If you want to be a victorious Christian, *you have to invest time&effort educating yourself in the Word. On the one hand you have to study it, on the other hand you will have to apply all that is written. Study it: Read/memorise it. Why is it so utterly NB (as His Bride) to fill your mind/thoughts with God's Words?* Because you have to *watch your thoughts - they become your words. Watch your words - they become your actions. Watch your actions - they become your habits. Watch your habits - they become your character. Watch your character - it become your destiny...* Apply it: Confess&practically do it. *Immediate, radical* ("bride's" disobedience/the watered-down Gospel she preaches, has made normal "*Just do it*"-obedience to appear "radical"), *practical obedience has taught me more about God's workings and His love for me, than 10 years of Bible Study.*

\*Where/how does one stop circling "the mountain in the desert" & move into "The Promised Land"? *The attitude we have while in the wilderness, determines how long we'll stay there: You complain - you remain. Your attitude will determine your altitude.* 1 THESS 5:18 says *"...in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you".* But HOS 4:6a adds *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."* EPHES 6:12 confirms we're involved in a battle with satan & his agents; 6:13-20 then explains the armour of God to use during these battles. B/S, *why is it so NB to know the Word* = to be able to quote it/refer to certain Scriptures? *Why is it so NB to know/understand these Spiritual weapons?* When we look at MATT 4:1-11 where satan tempts Christ, we immediately notice 2 *battle principles: (1) Satan will attack your identity*, therefore you must know who you are in Christ Jesus. [*By the way: How does satan attack/talk to us? Either by "planting" thoughts in our minds or by using another person/people to "deliver" his message*] (2) When the Son of God/God the Son was tempted/attacked *He answered by quoting the Word!* Dear Beloved, start by quoting the Words/Scriptures/Promises God gave you when He adopted you as His everlasting child = when you were born-again (for example, in my case, *March 1976 - ISAI 43:1-4*).

But 2 COR 10: 4-5 adds *"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."*

\*B/S, what are these “strongholds” Paul refers to?.. *A stronghold is a fixed opinion about something/someone that resists the word of God.* It’s an attitude/opinion I have re someone that (specifically) humiliated/hurt/betrayed me, and on top of it - more than once. *My perception of this person is blurred by the repeated rejection/betrayal. This becomes a stronghold, i e I’m of the opinion not even God can change him/her, because there is either no willingness on this person’s side to “work on it”. Their excuse is: “This is who I am”; Or an inability to see the problem.* Strongholds... Now we’re going to get very practical!

\*B/S in CJ, in GAL 5:19-21 Paul names the “works of the flesh” (adultery, hatred, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, etc), but in 22-25 he writes about the “fruit of the Spirit” - and he pleads with the Bride to “walk in the Spirit”. In other words - *God instructs us (through Paul) to substitute carnal behaviour with Spirit-filled behaviour= that we have to renew our minds!* It’s all about *the battlefield of our minds* (soul-area=senses/emotions)... *Research has shown that repeated negative attitudes/behaviour towards us, creates something like a “footpath/groove” on our brainlobes (=stronghold), and this must be neutralised by speaking/hearing “positive” words - for the Bride, the Word/living Words!.. Research has also shown that when we get angry/a fright, sound (for a moment) takes preference to/above our emotions.*

The nett-result is the following: Let’s use the ICU of a SA-hospital as an example. The doctors have “a plan in place” for every potential seriously injured patient. When the paramedics rush in with the blood covered patient, the doctors on duty shout out the “ABCD” emergency plan: *Airway* (open?) / *Breathing* (normal?) / *Circulation* (blood) / *Defibrillation* (shocking the patient with those electrical pads to get his/her heart going again). *What they say within that emergency situation, determines their behaviour.*

When we enter the “war zone” out there (remember, every truly born-again child of God is an enemy of the world - JAMES 4:4), *we must be positioned in the Word to cast down arguments against the Kingdom and handle attacks Spirit-filled...* I’d suggest that if you recognise yourself as being in such a situation (at present/whenever), you start your day (as always) with quiet time - *but then you start to loudly proclaim God’s promises for your life and you read/quote GAL 5:22-25 aloud!* Prayer example: “Triune-God, *thank you* for everything You taught me this morning (**be grateful**). *Thank you* that Your Word is indeed a double-edged sword. *Thank you* that I am the person You love as much as You love Jesus (**confirm your ID**). Abba, *thank you* that You allow me (with a humble boldness) to remind You of this&this promise You’ve given me during Our marriage. *Thank you* that I can ask You now, through the Holy Spirit/the Spirit of Love, *to once again ‘activate’ in me love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Let my ‘body language’ be a sacrificial language to Your glory (= living sacrifice)!* Amen & amen!”

B/S, by doing this (and if it has to be - you do it morning-after-morning; it’s not an empty ritual - it’s sincerely seeking God’s honour!), *two things happen simultaneously: (1) You’re being renewed/transformed = washed by the Word (EPHES 5:25-27), & (2) you’re overcoming satan = pulling down strongholds.* Bottomline is: *You are moving out of (Spiritual) Egypt and slowly but surely entering/conquering the Promised Land.*

\*What about (1) the “fiery arrows” (EPHES 6:16) that penetrate our souls, most of the time through the “ports of weakness” in our soul area (our senses = the things we see/hear; when I see my “hurter/rejecter”, I’m back on the same “footpath” on my brainlobe, etc) & (2) *those “enticing” thoughts* (neurological research confirms satan has the ability to “send/down load” such a thought randomly)?.. See 2 COR 10:5b = *take it captive & put it at Jesus’ feet!*

+**CONCLUSION:** HEB 4:15 = “For we do not have a Highpriest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” Hallelujah & amen!

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