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5 February 2015 NT Professor, Asian Christian Academy

Session 6

**Living a Thoughtful Service**

***Romans 12:1-2***

**Topic:** Service

**Subject:** How can we live a thoughtful service for Christ?

**Complement:** Present your body and replace your conformance to the world with mind renewal.

**Purpose:** The listeners will dedicate themselves wholly to God.

# Introduction

### Interest: Wang Zhi Ming was a pastor martyred in China on December 29, 1973. There were 130,000 Christians in his province, where he was educated as a believer and ordained in 1931. He was arrested with 21 Christian leaders in 1969, including his wife and son. Four years later Wang was executed in a stadium with 10,000 people witnessing his death.

### Background: We all love the first eleven chapters of Romans, which tells us the theology. But we must realize that it is incomplete without Romans 12–16.

# I. We must present our bodies to God (12:1a).

## Stephen presented his body to be stoned (Acts 7), or like Pastor Wong, we must be willing to die for Christ.

## Jews were familiar with sacrifices, but there was only one living offering—the grain offering that was called a sweet aroma to God (Lev. 5).

## The text has “bodies” (plural) but “sacrifice” (singular) as Christian sacrifices are a collective offering offered singularly to God.

# II. Offering our bodies is our thoughtful service (12:1b).

## A group of monks sought to take all their thoughts captive to Christ, so they eliminated talking, then all food but bread, then devoted themselves to painting, but none of these could stop them from thinking evil things.

## God designed the mind to be continually active—thus 46 of the 47 persons on Andrew’s MRT train last night were looking at their phone (all but him). We cannot stand being idle and must think something. So what do we do?

# III. We should follow God’s two-step process to control our minds.

## Do not conform to this world.

### The word is the origin of our word “schematic.”

### The schematics of the world require for us to be happy…

#### Height: Short people want to be taller while tall people want to be shorter.

#### Money: Andrew’s friend was a member of the millionaire club, but was unhappy as he was not in the two million dollar club. Once there, he sought the ten million club, then the one hundred million club. Andrew was content while his friend us unhappy, as Andrew enjoined traveling with him.

#### Degrees: Dr. Etta Linneman earned three doctorates, so she was supposed to be called Dr. Dr. Dr. Linneman, according to German custom.

## Rethink how you have been living.

### The Greek is metamorfouvsqe, “to change form” or “to change inwardly in fundamental character or condition, *be changed, be transformed*” (BDAG).

### “After the Cultural Revolution, official attempts to placate the Miao included a compensatory payment of 1,300 (then $250) to Wang's family. However, the real compensation for the great suffering of Wang and the other Christians in Wuding has come in church growth. When Wang Zhiming was arrested, there were 2,795 Christians in Wuding. By 1980 the church had grown to about 12,000, and Wuding now has over 30,000 Christians and more than 100 places of worship. Sporadic persecution in Wuding continues” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wang\_Zhiming\_%28Christian%29).

# Conclusion

### (MI).

### Main Points

### Exhortation/Application