

# *Loyal Heart* MINISTRIES

---

[www.loyalheartministries.com](http://www.loyalheartministries.com)

## A Whole New You – Romans 12:1-2

A Devotion for Women by *Stephanie Little*

We've all been there; standing in the checkout line the first week of January, resisting the urge to grab and devour a Snickers bar, we quickly look away from the candy. Our eyes land on the magazine rack where beautifully airbrushed women taunt us with images the world dictates we should emulate. Brightly colored catchphrases beckon us to purchase this treasure map of secrets and ideas for a new and improved life. Promises such as: *Lose 10 pounds without exercise, You Can be a Mountain Climber, Catapult Your Child to the Honor Roll, You can be Your Own Boss* intrigue our thoughts as we wait in line. Other glossy covers prompt us to: *Organize Your Closets! Rid Your Kitchen of Clutter Forever! Revamp Your Wardrobe-Create a New Look! Have the Home of Your Dreams! Find the Marriage You've Always Wanted!* From our bodies, to our homes, to our children, each of these titles promises complete transformation and miraculous results by Valentine's Day. As we flip the pages, amidst the cleverly-placed ads, we see the ultimate: *"10 Easy Steps to a New You!"* Wow! Ten steps-that's not hard. We all could use a new "us," couldn't we? Not all self-improvement advice is inherently evil; however, "10 Steps to a New You" is simply the world's attempt to transform a person into a model of society deems successful: beautiful, powerful, youthful, rich. Why do we fall prey to the hype? We fall because all of these things seem so important to our happiness here on earth. Even godly women can fall into the trap of believing the world's lies on some level. Yet we are each called by God to follow a different plan—one that doesn't make false promises and doesn't require 10 steps. God's plan promises true results and involves one eternal leap; from death to life, from false hope to faith, from disappointment to delight. God has laid out His plan in the pages of His Word and He reveals His desires in the softness of a willing heart. He wants to transform us too, not into the image of an air-brushed model, but into the image of His magnificent Son, Jesus Christ. As we seek true transformation this New Year, let's not look to the pages of the latest women's magazine or to the worldly advice of some talk show host, but let's look together into the pages of Scripture. There, we'll find the path of true wisdom and the way to a completely transformed life, yes, a whole new You! Let's take a look at our key verses for the first week of this brand new year. Romans 12:1-2 says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service, And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."* Whereas, women's magazines encourage us to focus on ourselves, Paul, the writer of Romans, encourages his readers to focus on God. In the very first phrase of verse 1, Paul refers back to the end of the previous chapter. By using the word "therefore," he is calling us to act while remembering the truth of Romans 11:36, which says, *"For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."* Because everything in our lives really is about God and not about ourselves, we are to present ourselves to Him, to be used by Him for His purposes. How? Paul says it's by the mercies of God. What are His "mercies"? All that He gives to us, as John MacArthur's commentary states, "The gracious, extravagant, divine graces Paul expounded in the first 11 chapters, including God's love, grace, righteousness and the gift of faith." God gives us what we need to live the kind of sacrificial life He desires for us to live. God calls us to be holy as He is holy (I Peter 1:16). How can we even begin to live a holy life? Through the transformation He offers. First, we have to turn away from the advice, teaching and thinking of the world and begin the renewal process of our mind. The Greek

# Loyal Heart MINISTRIES

word for renewing means *renovation*. If you've ever renovated a house or even a room in your house, you know renovation takes effort and lots of hard work. God has not promised an easy transformation, but He has promised an equipped transformation. He has given us all we need to renew, renovate and transform our mind. He has given us His Word. We can go there on a daily, hourly, even moment by moment basis to seek His wisdom and guidance for every step we take. Just as in a home renovation, a mind renovation calls for the hard work of demolition and rebuilding. Just as stained, musty, dusty carpet must be ripped out and thrown away, so thoughts stained with Satan's lies have to be torn out and replaced with new, fresh thoughts of truth and purity such as those extolled in Phil. 4:8: "*whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*" Daily, our mind renovation calls for a tearing down of walls, pride and insecurities while allowing God to rebuild with the truth of Who He is and who we are in Him. Join me in the transformation as we renovate together through the weekly study of His Word. Submit to the Lord and watch Him create a whole new you!