

Be Transformed! (Part 2)

Romans 12:1-2

Thought for the Day: The transformation of our lives into the image of Jesus Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit but we must cooperate with Him in that process by saturating our minds with the Word of God.

Romans 12:1-2 is the crucial turning point in the Apostle Paul's development of the theme of Righteousness in the book of Romans. If there is a "silver bullet" for living a victorious and fruitful Christian life, Romans 12:1-2 is it. The key to transformation—change, spiritual growth, maturing toward Christlikeness—is the renewing of our mind. Proverbs 23:7 (KJV) – "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (TEV) "What he thinks is what he really is." Therefore, it is very important that we understand and put into practice the principles that are taught in these two verses. What does it mean to "be transformed by the renewing of our mind" and what is our part in this process?

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship.

#1 – We must offer our entire selves as living sacrifices unto God.

This is an intentional, once-for-all commitment. We commit ourselves—mind, heart and will, our whole being—to being disciples of Jesus Christ. (*J. Dwight Pentecost, Design for Discipleship*)

#2 – We must renew our commitment to be a living sacrifice unto the Lord on a daily basis.

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

#3 – We must stop letting the world around us pressure us into thinking and acting as the world does.

#4 – We must actively participate in the transformation process by continually filling our mind with the Word of God.

The two verbs in verse 2 are both in the passive voice:

- **Do not be conformed** (*NASB, NKJV, ESV*) – "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mould..." (*J.B. Phillips*)
 - The world around us is continually pressuring us to think and act the way it does.
 - When we allow the world to squeeze us into its mold, we are being conformed to the image and likeness of the god of this world, Satan. (Ephesians 2:1-3)
 - We are allowing the world to squeeze us into its mold when we are "...gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts."
 - When we allow the world to squeeze us into its mold, we are joining Satan in his rebellion against God.
 - We are conforming to the pattern of this world and allowing it to squeeze us into its mold when we are controlled and empowered by our old sinful nature manifested in:
 - The lust of the flesh – craving and indulging physical pleasure and sensual gratification.

- The lust of the eyes – greed and coveting that which we do not have.
- The boastful pride of life – being proud of who we are, what we have, or what we think we have accomplished. (1 John 2:15-17)
- In order to stop being conformed to the pattern of this world, we must stop allowing our old sinful nature to control and dominate our lives.
- **Be transformed by the renewing of your mind**
 - We cannot transform ourselves but we can and must actively participate in the process of renewing our minds.
 - The word “transformed” is the translation of the Greek word from which we get our English word, *metamorphosis*, to be changed from the inside out.
 - But changed or transformed into what? Into the image of Jesus Christ.
 - As followers of Jesus Christ, we are in the lifelong process of being changed into His likeness in our character and conduct. (Romans 8:28-30; Matthew 10:24-25)
 - God the Holy Spirit is at work within us transforming us and making us more like Jesus in our character and conduct. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)
 - As Moses spent time in the Lord’s presence in the Tent of Meeting, he began to reflect the Lord’s glory but the glory would soon fade.
 - The Holy Spirit is the Agent of transformation.
 - Our mind is renewed (brought into conformity to the mind of God) as we spend time in the presence of the Lord beholding and contemplating His glory.
 - Spending time, much time, in the Word of God is the necessary key to the renewal of our mind which produces the transformation of our life.
 - Psalm 1:1-3
 - Vs. 1 – a progressive conformity to the pattern of the world: The man who is blessed by God does not conform to the thinking and behavior of this world.
 - Vs. 2 – The man who is blessed by God delights in and meditates on the Word of God day and night. (Hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, meditating)
 - Our mind is renewed and our life is transformed as we delight in God’s Word, meditate on God’s Word and live in obedience to God’s Word.
 - Joshua 1:6-9
 - Joshua needed to be strong and courageous as he led the people of Israel in to take possession of the Promised Land.
 - “You will find what you need as you meditate on My Word day and night and obey its teachings. You will be transformed from the inside out by renewing your mind with my Word.”
 - Psalm 119:9-11; Romans 13:11-14; Philippians 4:8-9; Romans 8:5-8; Colossians 3:1-11; John 15:5-8.

“Spiritual transformation starts in the mind and heart. A mind dedicated to the world and its concerns will produce a life tossed back and forth by the currents of culture. But a mind dedicated to God’s truth will produce a life that can stand the test of time. We can resist the temptations of our culture by meditating on God’s truth and letting the Holy Spirit guide and shape our thoughts and behaviors.” (NKJV Study Bible, p. 1901)