

Don't be Pressed Into the World's Mold **Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)**

12 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. 2 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.

Paul tells us that we should be a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. That is a high order.

We so much want what we want in our old nature.

But as we said last week, we are bought with a price and should glorify God in our body and in our Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

But still we are in the world and the world presses in on us in every way to make us like them.

We don't want to be like water, taking the shape of whatever we are in.

But to be solid in our new spirituality that God has place in us.

We need to allow what is in us (God's Spirit) to determine what shape we take. Don't let us take the shape from without but from within.

I. DO NOT BE CONFORMED

- A. A negative passive imperative is used with a permissive sense (“do not allow yourselves to be conformed”), with the present tense conveying a general precept. *David G Peterson, Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation – Commentary on Romans, (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Reference, 2017), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 440.*
- B. Our whole way of thinking needs to be transformed—reprogrammed—by the Spirit; cf. the promise of the new covenant in Jer 31:33: “I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts” (cf. Ezek 11:19; 36:25-27). *Philip W. Comfort, ed., Cornerstone Biblical Commentary – Volume 14: Romans and Galatians, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 186.*
- C. Ezekiel uses the same language as Jeremiah,
 - 1. Ezekiel 11:19 (NKJV) 19 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh,
 - 2. Ezekiel 36:25-27 (NKJV) 25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all

your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

D. Paul gives us a method

1. Colossians 3:1–11 (NKJV) 3 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
2. 5 Therefore **put to death your members** which are on the earth: **fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.** 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves **once walked** when you lived in them.
3. 8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: **anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language** out of your mouth. 9 Do not **lie** to one another, since you have put off **the old man** with his deeds, 10 and have **put on the new man** who is **renewed in knowledge** according to the image of Him who created him, 11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.
4. He reminds us of who we are.
5. Philippians 3:20 (NKJV) 20 For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

E. Jesus Himself spoke of our difference from the world and what we were to be.

1. Matthew 5:13–14 (NKJV) 13 “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

F. Peter spoke of what we were to do.

1. 1 Peter 1:14 (NKJV) 14 as obedient children, **not conforming yourselves to the former lusts**, as in your ignorance;

II. TO THIS WORLD

- A. For since the whole world lies in wickedness, it behooves us to put off whatever we have of the old man, if we would really put on Christ: *John Calvin, Calvin's Commentaries, WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Chapter 12"*.

1. 1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world.
- B. Paul reminds us that is once were we were.
1. Ephesians 2:2 (NKJV) 2 in which you once walked **according to the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
 2. Ephesians 4:17–24 (NKJV) 17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should **no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind**, 18 having their **understanding darkened**, being **alienated** from the life of God, because of the **ignorance** that is in them, because of the **blindness** of their heart; 19 who, being **past feeling**, have given themselves over to **lewdness**, to work all **uncleanness with greediness**.
 3. 20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that **you put off**, concerning your former conduct, **the old man** which grows corrupt according to the **deceitful lusts**, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you **put on the new man** which was created according to God, in true **righteousness and holiness**.
- C. Jesus died for the very purpose of delivering us from this evil age.
1. Galatians 1:4 (NKJV) 4 who gave Himself for our sins, **that He might deliver us from this present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father,

III. BUT BE TRANSFORMED

- A. μεταμορφουσθε is a present passive imperative. Although God brings about the transformation, we must voluntarily place ourselves at his disposal so it can happen. He will not “transform” us against our will. The present tense suggests that the process is to continue throughout life. Transformation is not instantaneous. *Robert H. Mounce, Romans, vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995).*
- B. This word **transform** is the same as **transfigure** in Matthew 17:2. It has come into our English language as the word “**metamorphosis**.” *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 554.*
- C. The transformation of which Paul spoke in Rom 12:2 is not a change effected from without but a radical reorientation that begins deep within the human heart. *Robert H. Mounce, Romans, vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 232–233.*
- D. We surrender our wills to God through disciplined prayer. As we spend time in

prayer, we surrender our will to God and pray, with the Lord, “Not my will, but Thy will be done.” We must pray about everything, and let God have His way in everything. *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 554.*

- E. “Change your outward expression from that which you had before salvation, an expression which came from your totally depraved nature and was representative of it, to an expression which comes from your regenerated inner being and is representative of it. *Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 208.*
- F. Paul speaks of this metamorphous
 - 1. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV) 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

IV. BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND

- A. It is only when we yield the will to God that His power can take over and give us the willpower (and the won’t power!) that we need to be victorious Christians. *Warren W. Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 554.*
- B. “Renewing” is *anakainosis*, ἀνακαίνωσις, which Trench defines as “the gradual conforming of the man more and more to that new spiritual world into which he has been introduced, and in which he now lives and moves; the restoration of the divine image; and in all this so far from being passive, he must be a fellow-worker with God.” Thayer defines the word, “a renewal, renovation, complete change for the better.”
- C. bidding adieu to our own counsels and desires, and those of all men, we may be attentive to the only will of God, the knowledge of which is true wisdom. *John Calvin, Calvin’s Commentaries, WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: “Chapter 12”.*

V. THAT YOU MAY PROVE

- A. The word “know” (*dokimazein* [TG<G1381>, ZG1507]) implies “discern, accept, and obey,” not simply “recognize.” The work of God’s Spirit in our hearts gives both a deeper understanding of God’s will and a desire to obey it. *Philip W. Comfort, ed., Cornerstone Biblical Commentary – Volume 14: Romans and Galatians, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 186.*
- B. “Prove” is *dokimazo* (δοκιμάζω, δοκιμασία), “to put to the test for the purpose of approving, and finding that the thing tested meets the specifications laid down. *Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the*

English Reader, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 208.

VI. WHAT IS THAT GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD.

- A. God's will is always good and acceptable and perfect, but we are the ones who have doubts about that.
- B. It is Satan who suggests that God is not to be trusted; that He plans for us some unpleasant experience; that He will let us down and leads us into anguish, pain and loss. Satan ever seeks to frighten us into a lack of trust of God. But God's will is good. *John Phillips, The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring Romans: An Expository Commentary, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2002), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 187.*
- C. Finding God's will is not hard. But unless we are conformed to that inner being that God has given us we can never accept it.
 - 1. Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV) 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
 - 2. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 (NKJV) 3 For this is **the will of God, your sanctification**: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;
 - 3. John 15:12 (NKJV) 12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.