

Mind Renewal

Romans 12:1-2

1 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.

I have never been a part of the military but I understand that when they induct you in they have a course of activities that are meant to bring you into the military way of thinking and acting.

During basic training they pour into you the military way and try to remove from you the thinking of how you used to do.

When God saves us and regenerates us He changes irrevocably some things about us. But He leaves many things that need to be worked out by us.

He makes us spiritually alive and imparts to us a measure of His own Spirit that will continually be with us. But there is a growth process that begins and continues the rest of our lives.

The process is to remove the world influences from us and conform us into the image of Jesus Christ.

This is what the Bible calls sanctification.

So Paul tells us not to be conformed to this world.

He tells us that we are to be transformed by a renewal of our minds.

Pr 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

So let us look at the rest of this passage this morning.

I. The World

- A. **this world** The world around us, being all astray from God; an immense system built up by the enemy, we cannot as Christians be conformed to it; only it is not a mere outward discordance, but a difference flowing from an inward renewing of the mind.

II. 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**.

III. 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”*.
- D. What does that look like?
 - 1. Eph 4:22-24 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.

2. 2Co 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.
3. Pr 4:23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.
4. 2Co 3:18 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.
5. Psalm 40:8 (NKJV) 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart."
6. Governs our prayers
 - a. Ps 143:10 Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.
 - b. Mt 6:10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.
 - c. Heb 13:20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.
7. Christ the Perfect Example of
 - a. Matthew 26:42 (NKJV) 42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."
 - b. John 5:30 (NKJV) 30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.
8. Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,
9. 1Jo 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

E. What it doesn't look like

1. 2. And be not conformed to this world: **Do not live as men of the world do. Do not follow the customs, the fashions, the principles of the world. “Be not conformed to this world.”**
2. Ro 13:13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.
3. Eph 4:18 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.
4. 1Pe 4:3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

IV. 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.*

V. 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.

De 12:30 “take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’

1Sa 8:19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, “No, but we will have a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

2Ki 17:15 And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them that they should not do like them.