

Rom 12:2 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 begins this passage with the instruction that since we have been redeemed by the mercies of God he urges us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. As we have previously noted the indicative precedes the imperative. That is the doctrine precedes the doing. We are saved by grace alone through the mercies of God and therefore we are to respond with a thankful obedience. Our good works follow our salvation. As Paul pointed out to the church at Ephesus, that they had been saved by grace that they might respond with good works. Eph 2:8-10 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand **that we should walk in them.**”

Last Lord’s day we noted that this presenting of ourselves as a living sacrifice is first accomplished by not being conformed to this present age. And now Paul instructs us further that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds that we might know the will of God. In a sense we have moved from justification to sanctification; from an act of God in our behalf to a work of God in us. Therefore, I want us to consider three questions this morning. 1. How are we transformed, 2. Where does this transformation take place in us, and 3. What shall be the means whereby our minds are transformed?

A. How are we transformed?

1. First I would remind you that as we noted last Sunday the first step in being transformed is to stop conforming to this present age.
2. Instead of conforming we need to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.
 - a. The Greek here is “metamorphoste” sound familiar? Metamorphous?
 - b. Changing from one shape or life form to another.
 - c. From one appearance to another
 - d. As Paul so ably pointed out to the Ephesian believers.

Eph 2:1-3 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 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, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

- e. This is the life story of all of us who have been redeemed by the grace of God.
3. It is an interesting usage of the Greek grammar, for the word is a passive imperative. (a passive command).
 - a. A sinner cannot make himself a Christian, the sinner cannot make himself a saved person.
 - b. The sinner must be transformed by a work of God in him.
 - c. But now that you have been raised from the dead and made alive live as one who is now alive in Christ.
 - d. Be what you are.
 - e. It’s an act of surrendering your selfish desires to God for the sake of His kingdom.
4. You are a new creation – live as a new creature.

*2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

- a. This is not something one works up.
- b. It is begun by our new creation.
- c. Again, we are not talking about “making yourself a Christian”
- d. We are talking about responding as a Christian, responding as a new creation in Christ.

B. Where does this transformation take place? - *be transformed by **the renewing of your mind***

1. Paul tells us that it begins with the mind
 - a. As a man thinks in his heart so is he.
 - b. That is the real person. Prov 23:7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.
 - c. Your Christian walk is not to be just an outward show Let this new creation be your deepest love and desire.
 - d. But this transformation can only take place after one has been made alive, after one has become a “new creation”.
2. The word translated “mind” properly denotes intellect, as distinguished from the will and affections.
 - a. But not so here.
 - b. Here would properly include your understanding, will, and affections.
 - c. The whole person is to be renewed.
3. Another way to say this would be to “Think God’s thoughts after Him”.
 - a. Seeing the world as God sees the world.
 - b. Having a godly world view.
 - c. Responding in what the world would say is an unnatural way
4. It is a “reprogramming” of our minds.

C. By what means shall this transformation take place? By what means shall this renewing of your mind take place?

1. Many today say by “Looking within”?
 - a. Problem – heart is deceitful and desperately wicked.
2. Trust your feelings?
 - a. Many things that may **feel** right – may be seriously in error
 - b. Some of what is called worship today – certainly make the spectator feel good, but is God being exalted?
 - c. Some of the entertainers in the church today are no doubt please with the accolades and applause they get, but who is being glorified – the entertainer or God.
 - d. Dare not trust our feelings – too closely related to the flesh.
3. Then there is that old adage - Let your conscience be your guide.
 - a. How safe is that? Can be seared
 - b. Can be misdirected by false teaching, false views
4. The conscience can only be trusted **IF it is bound by the Word of God**
 - a. Conscience **guided by feelings** is unsafe.
 - b. Conscience **bound by Word of God** may be trusted for only then can it be of value.

CONCLUSION: The only right way to reprogram your mind is to fill your mind with the Word of God, with Holy Scripture.

The Psalmist had it right. - *Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You. Ps 119:11*

He delighted in the Word of God

He meditated upon it – day and night Ps 1

This is why sound teaching is necessary if we are to be renewed in our minds.

This is why our cry must always be – Scripture Alone to teach us what to believe and **how to live.**

Be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.