

Be Transformed
Romans 12:2
January 19, 2022

Question: How is OT Israel an example of a lack of transformation?

Question: How is Peter an example of transformation?

Review and Context

Theme of Romans: The gospel of God (1:16-17)

Chs 1-11 The gospel as the power of God for salvation – The indicatives

12:1-15:13 The gospel and the transformation of life – The imperatives

- 12:1-2 Consecration
- 12:3-8 Humility
- 12:9-21 Love

15:14-16:27 Conclusion, final greetings, and benediction

In the previous verse, we as believers were exhorted, on the basis of the mercies received from God in the gospel, to consecrate our bodies to our God who has saved us.

Our text instructs us how we are to live a life consecrated to God our Savior.

1. Do not be conformed to this world

“this world”

1. CSB “this age”
2. A world that is under the influence of Satan
 - **1 John 5:19** “...the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”
3. A world that is perishing

We once belonged to this world, but no longer

- **Gal. 1:4** “[the Lord Jesus Christ] gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age,”
- In salvation, God set us apart from the world

To continue living like the world would be contrary to the new nature we have received in Christ

The influence of this world upon our life is an influence we must continually resist

2. Be transformed by the renewal of your mind

Question: This verse instructs believers to be transformed. What does this mean and involve?

Five truths about this transformation

1. The goal of this transformation
2. This is a progressive transformation (progresses throughout the whole Christian life)
3. This is a transformation that occurs by the powerful working of God in us
 - **Phil. 2:13** “for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”
4. This is a transformation in which we have responsibility
5. The means by which we are to be transformed is “the renewal of your mind”

Question: What is the goal in the renewal of the mind?

The phrase, “by the renewal of your mind,” separates biblical teaching on conduct from other types of moral teaching

- Other types of moral teaching do not address the corrupted nature, but start and end with the conduct itself

Biblical transformation starts with radical renewal of the mind

- First the mind’s renewal in regeneration
- Second the mind’s continuous renewal in sanctification

God has designed the mind as man’s “mission control”

1. Synonymous with “heart,” but emphasizes man’s mental processes
2. The seat of man’s thoughts, understanding, desires, moral reasoning, and willing (Prov 4:23; Mark 7:20-23)
3. A holy mind produces holy behavior. A corrupt mind yields corrupt behavior. A renewed mind bears renewed behavior.

The fall had a radical effect upon man's mind (**1:18, 21, 24-25, 28-31**)

1. 1:28 "a debased mind"
 - NASB "depraved"
 - LSB "unfit"
 - Useless for its proper purpose of glorifying God
2. Fallen man "is unable to discern, to love, or to choose the things that are pleasing to God"¹ (Gen 6:5; 8:21; Rom 8:5-7; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 4:17-19)
3. The mind is rebellious, turned inward toward self rather than outward toward God, proud and self-exalting rather than God-exalting, spiritually blind, and exchanges the law of God for a law of one's own making

The reversal of the fall's effect on the mind starts with **regeneration** by the Holy Spirit

1. In regeneration, the Spirit creates a new mind in us (recreates our heart and mind), changing our nature with its inclinations and desires (Eze 36:26-27; John 3:3-7)
2. The Spirit puts the life of God in the person who formerly was spiritual dead. This life of God is a new controlling principle within us that enlivens us to use all our faculties, including our mind, in an entirely new manner
3. God shines His light into our minds that formerly were darkened (2 Cor 4:6), enabling the new mind to perceive and understand spiritual truth
4. God writes His law on our minds (Jer 31:33). Consequently, the mind that once was hostile to God now delights in the law of God (Rom 7:22), because it now truly delights in God Himself.

The reversal of the fall's effect on the mind continues with **sanctification**

1. At the heart of sanctification is the ongoing renewal of the mind spoken of in our text
2. This is not a renewal of the nature of the mind (regeneration), but a renewal of the mind's conduct (thought patterns) and the mind's understanding and grasp of spiritual truth
3. This involves learning more of the truth of God's Word, learning to stop thinking in the old fallen ways, and choosing moment-by-moment to cling to the truth of God

¹ Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 453.

Many people are changed for a time in some area of conduct, who are not changed in heart and mind by the Spirit through the Word.

- Such change is superficial, and generally temporary.

But the change of life brought about the Spirit through the Word is a change produced by the renovation of the mind, in the understanding, the affections, and the will.

- Though we continue to struggle throughout sanctification, this change produced by the Spirit is deep-rooted, and generally it lasts.
- This amounts to true growth and maturing

What does the renewed mind increasingly look like?

1. It is set on the things of the Spirit rather than the things of the flesh (Rom 8:5)
2. It exults in the cross of our Savior (Gal 6:14)
3. It understands and is conscious of the Christian's new position in Christ
4. It is continuously discerning God's will (Rom 12:2)
5. It views God's will as good, acceptable, and perfect (Rom 12:2)
6. It loves God deeply and is fixed on him (Mark 12:29-30)
7. It is humble before God and before others (Phil 2:3-8 "...Have this mind...")
8. It is submissive to God's law (Rom 8:7)
9. It sees all things through the lens of God's Word

The renewal of the mind is not just a matter of reading and understanding Scripture, but a matter of letting your thinking and mindset be formed by Scripture

The renewal of the mind involves...

1. Acquainting yourself with Scripture and understanding it
2. Meditating on the truth, praying about it, and saturating your mind with it
3. Being captivated and controlled by the truth, so that our lives are governed by the truth
4. When your mind slips back into the old grooves, pulling your mind out of those grooves and directing it in the new way
5. Reminding yourself of the truth (2 Pet 1:9-15)

The renewal of the mind is what the Holy Spirit uses to produce deep-seated transformation in those whom He has regenerated.

Next week: **3. Discern the will of God**

Conclusion

Question: How should you apply this verse to your life this week?

Question: Where do you find it challenging to live out this verse?