

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 3-20-11 PM NOTES  
"SURRENDER: NOW WHAT?"  
ROMANS 12:2  
#60 in Series, "Verse by Verse through Romans"

**Romans 3:26b (NKJV)** "...that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus."

**Romans 5:10b (NKJV)** "...having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

**Proverbs 23:7a (NKJV)** "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."

**Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV)** "You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on You*, because he trusts in You."

**Matthew 22:37 (NKJV)** "Jesus said to him, '*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*'"

**Philippians 2:3 (NKJV)** "*Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*"

**Colossians 2:3 (NKJV)** "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

**2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV)** "casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

I. There Is Something That We Must Stop (v.2a)

**Romans 12:2a (NIV)** "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world..."

A. What Is the World?

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (NKJV)** "<sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God."

**Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV)** "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

Success – Knowing and doing the will of God.

**Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NASB)** "The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to every person.*"

B. What Does It Mean to Be Conformed?

**Romans 12:2a (J. B. Phillips)** "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold."

**Romans 12:2a (Kenneth Wuest)** "Stop assuming an outward expression which is patterned after this world, an expression which does not come from, nor is representative of what you are in your inner being as a regenerated child of God."

## II. There Is Something That We Must Start (V2b)

### A. What Does It Mean to Be Transformed?

**John 3:16 (NASB)** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Conformed—to take on an outward form that does not reflect who we are on the inside.

Transformed—to allow that which is on the inside to work its way to the outside.

**Matthew 17:2 (NKJV)** "and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light."

### B. How Do We Renew Our Mind?

**John 17:17 (NKJV)** "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

## III. There Is Something We Must Discern (v. 2c)

### A. What Is the Will of God?

#### 1. God's Will of Decree or God's Sovereign Will

**Acts 4:27-28 (ESV)** "<sup>27</sup>for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, <sup>28</sup>to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place."

**Revelation 13:8b (NKJV)** "...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

**Ephesians 1:11b (ESV)** "...having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will."

#### 2. God's Will of Command

**Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."

### B. How Is God's Commanded or Revealed Will Described?

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 3-20-11 PM  
“SURRENDER: NOW WHAT?”  
ROMANS 12:2  
#60 in Series, “Verse by Verse through Romans”

In chapters 1-11 of Romans, we have laid out before us in a very orderly and logical manner what Paul calls, “the mercies of God”. Let me summarize the mercies of God. We had no merit of our own, we were under condemnation, and we were without excuse. In that condition God showered us with His mercy. He gave His only begotten, His one of a kind Son and imputed our sins to Him, allowed Him to be abused and sadistically treated by men and to be nailed to a cross. On that cross, the Father poured out His wrath for sin upon His son and thus the wrath of God was satisfied or propitiated. This act of extreme sacrifice then allowed the Father to declare righteous (accepted) those sinners who believed on Christ. Just as their sins had been imputed to Jesus, now Jesus’ righteousness was imputed to them. God was able to remain just Himself and yet justify believing sinners because Jesus paid it all! **Romans 3:26b (NKJV)** “...that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” If that was all that God did, we would have cause to spend the rest of eternity praising Him, but that is not all that He did. In addition to justifying us, He also united us to Christ. The Holy Spirit baptized us into Christ so that we became partakers of Christ’s life. His crucifixion was ours in that the old us in Adam was crucified with Christ, freeing us from our slavery to sin. His future is ours and we will spend eternity with Him. Daily as we abide in Him as a branch abides in a vine, we will experience His power, His wisdom, His perspective, and His guidance that will allow us to live in obedience and communion with him. We were saved by His death, but daily we are saved by His life that we have been united with (**Romans 5:10b (NKJV)** “...having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life”). But that is not all of the mercies of God! We have absolute assurance and security that we will not face condemnation and that we can never be separated from this love of God in Christ Jesus. He who foreknew us has predestined us, called us, justified us and is so certain that we will be glorified with Him in Heaven that He speaks of this future blessing in the past tense. It is so certain that He counts it as already done!

When we get to chapter 12 of Romans, we are exhorted to respond based on these wonderful undeserved mercies of God. That response is summarized by the word, “surrender”. The picture God uses to communicate that surrender is presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice. When we do that, all of life becomes our reasonable service of worship. Our whole lives are poured out as an offering to Him for His glory. Ah, but that surrender is not the end. It is more of a beginning. If we experience Romans 12:1 and never apply Romans 12:2, we will be frustrated and never gain spiritual maturity. It is possible to be surrendered to the Lord and yet be spiritually immature. Verse 2 is the key to going on in maturity in our walk with Christ.

One of the key words in our text (Romans 12:2) is the word “mind”. It is the mind that gives us the ability to think. Recently Mark Noll wrote a book entitled “The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind”. The scandal is that most Christians no longer really think. The most dangerous place that Christians have been conformed to the world is that we have followed the world in becoming primarily “feelers” instead of primarily “thinkers”. I say “primarily” because feeling isn’t bad or undesired, but our feeling must always be submitted to our thinking. To put it another way, our minds must guide our emotions. When the emotions lead and push the mind to the background, you have what we see in our culture today. We are a culture consumed with amusement. The word for think is “muse”. To put an “a” in the front of a word is many times to negate it (for example, “moral” and “amoral”). “Amusement” means to not think. All that counts today is how you feel about something. People vote for someone often not because they have examined where they stand on important issues, but based on what they **feel** about a candidate. People choose churches based on how they feel when they attend instead of what is being taught or opportunities given to fulfill the Great Commission. They judge what is good or bad church music, not by the words and their alignment with Scripture, but by how they feel about the music style. Look with me at just a few

of the scores of passages in the Scripture that relate to the mind: **Proverbs 23:7a (NKJV)** “For as he **thinks** in his heart, so *is* he.” **Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV)** You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on You*, because he trusts in You.” **Matthew 22:37 (NKJV)** “Jesus said to him, *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” **Philippians 2:3 (NKJV)** “*Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in **lowliness of mind** let each esteem others better than himself.” **Colossians 3:2 (NKJV)** “**Set your mind** on things above, not on things on the earth.” That is only a small sampling of the verses relating to the mind in Scripture. I would challenge you to get a concordance and look up all the uses of “mind” in the Scripture. You will probably be surprised how much emphasis God puts on the mind. Our enemy knows that if he can capture our mind, he can control our emotions. When he has captured our mind and emotions, he controls our behavior. That is why we are told in **2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV)** “casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing **every thought** into captivity to the obedience of Christ”.

What we have in Romans 12:2 is what follows a surrendered life.

## I. There Is Something We Must Stop (V2a)

The tense used here indicates something that is happening that needs to stop. The NIV catches that tense: **Romans 12:2 (NIV)** “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world...” The world seeks to control your mind; God desires to renew your mind. The world applies pressure from without, but the Holy Spirit applies pressure from within to stop being conformed to the world. There are two key words that we must understand to rightly interpret this verse.

### A. What Is the World?

The word translated “World” in this verse is translated “age” in some other places (2 Corinthians 4:4). This world or this age has been simply defined as, “The values and beliefs of culture that leaves out God and His word.” This age or this world is not a place; it is a system of values, ideas, or perspectives that just leaves God out. Because this world leaves God and His word out, its values are the opposite of God’s values. Let me just give you some examples of this age or this world. Let me just pick three topics to illustrate the world that we must stop being conformed to.

\* Homosexuality – The Word of God says that this lifestyle is sin. It is included in several lists of sin. **1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (NKJV)** “<sup>9</sup> Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” The Scriptures call homosexuality, “vile passions” and “committing what is shameful” in Romans 1:26-27. The world presents quite a different picture. Those involved in this behavior can’t help it; this is just the way they were made. It is often compared to being left handed versus right handed. The world sees any negative things said against this act or lifestyle as being arrogant, mean-spirited and judgmental.

\* Abortion – The Word of God says that all human life is sacred and life starts at the moment of conception. God says to Jeremiah in **Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV)** “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” Luke tells us that John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit while still in his Mother’s womb (Luke 1:15). Psalm 139 makes it clear that the baby in the Mother’s womb is an individual that is formed in detail by God for His purposes. The world presents quite a different perspective. The world implies that the unborn child is a part of the Mother’s body and the Mother has the rights over her own body to remove the unwanted tissues forming in her or let it stay there until is born and “becomes a person”. The issue of protecting the life of the unborn child is not an issue to the world. It is all about the Mother’s rights to control what goes on in her own body.

\* Success – The word of God presents success as knowing and doing the will of God. Success has nothing to do with money, material things, prestige, or power. Solomon after having all four of those success markers plus many more said in **Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NASB)** “The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.” The world

generally elevates those who have money, prestige, power, looks, abilities, and / or great influence and calls them “successful”. We could go on with subject after subject and see that in most every area of life there are the values of the Word of God and the values of the world. Because the world is constantly trying to brainwash us with its values, we must be intentional about not becoming conformed to the world.

#### B. What Does It Mean to be Conformed?

To be conformed is speaking of assuming an outward expression that does not reflect inner reality. When a Christian is conformed to the world, they are thinking and acting in a manner inconsistent with their true identity. It literally is saying “Stop allowing the world system in which you live to force you into its scheme of thinking and acting which is inconsistent with your true identity in Christ.” The best known paraphrase of this verse is the J. B. Phillips paraphrase: **Romans 12:2a (J. B. Phillips)** “Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold.” I also like Kenneth Wuest’s translation of this verse. **Romans 12:2a (Kenneth Wuest)** “Stop assuming an outward expression which is patterned after this world, an expression which does not come from, nor is representative of what you are in your inner being as a regenerated child of God.”

After a time of surrender where our bodies have been presented as a living sacrifice, there is something that we must stop.

## II. There Is Something That We Must Start (V2b)

Let’s examine this part of our text by asking some more questions.

#### A. What Does It Mean to Be Transformed?

Being transformed is the only way to avoid being conformed. The words “conformed” and “transformed” are actually opposites. Whereas “conformed” means to take on an outward form that does not reflect who we are on the inside, “transformed” means to allow that which is on the inside to work its way to the outside. It is the same word used to describe what happened to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. **Matthew 17:2 (NKJV)** “and He was **transfigured** [the same Greek word translated “transformed” in Romans 12:2] before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.” At the transfiguration, Jesus’ veiled glory (what He was on the inside) began to shine to the outside. The “transformed” referred to in Romans 12:2 speaks of letting who we are in Christ on the inside work its way out into our behavior and attitudes on the outside.

In the Greek language, this is a passive command. Passive means that the subject is being acted upon. It could be translated, “be being transformed”. We do not transform ourselves by gritting our teeth and trying hard to do what Jesus would do. We are acted upon and transformed by God’s grace when we are renewing our mind. In other words you don’t have to be concerned about being transformed; you are to be concerned with renewing your mind and you WILL BE transformed. One definition of spiritual maturity that I like is that spiritual maturity is when your behavior begins to match your identity. Maturity is when what you are on the inside works its way to the outside.

Do you see the battle that is brewing here? The world is constantly putting pressure on the believer to conform to the world’s values that are set by the one who is called “the god of this age” in 2 Corinthians 4:4. The Spirit of God who lives within us and regenerated us and gave us a new nature like unto the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), is convicting us to be transformed by allowing who we are in Christ to shine out through us. That is the battle we are facing and will continue to face until this world is passed away (1 John 2:17)

#### B. How Do We Renew Our Mind?

The means of being transformed is the renewing of our minds. The “by” in this phrase is “by means of”. It reads, “and be transformed by means of the renewing of your mind.” The word “renewing” means a complete makeover, a total renovation. There was a problem with our minds. Our minds under the old man in Adam were darkened (Eph 4:18) and they were also wrongly programmed. There must be a reprogramming of our minds. How is that accomplished? The mind must be programmed with truth. What is truth? On the night before He was crucified, Jesus prayed to the Father in **John 17:17 (NKJV)**

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” Only as our minds are saturated with the truth of God’s Word is it renewed; only when our minds are renewed are we transformed so that who we are on the inside works its way out into our behavior. This renewing of your mind through the saturation of it by the Word is not something that is going to happen by default. It will be because you have purposed in your heart to do it and developed a plan and in the power of the Holy Spirit carry out the plan. It is called a “spiritual discipline”. We are to be so saturated with the Word that we think biblically. Our thought patterns are directed by the Word of God. That will not happen by listening to a sermon on Sundays. It is when we have a time daily in the Word, think deeply about what we read or hear (called meditation in the Bible), and listen to the Word being taught. Dr. Donald Barnhouse was traveling by train and was seated next to a young man who was reading a news magazine. Dr. Barnhouse had his Bible out preparing a Bible study or preparing to write an article (I have forgotten the details). The young man recognized Dr. Barnhouse and said, “Aren’t you Dr. Barnhouse?” He answered, “Yes I am”. The young man said, “I would give the world to know the Bible like you do”. Dr. Barnhouse answered him, “Young man, that’s what it will cost you”. It will mean turning off the TV, getting your time on Face book under control, giving up sleep, saying “no” to many social invitations, and other sacrifices, but it will be well worth it!

### III. There Is Something We Must Discern (V12c)

The word “that” means “in order that”. This is a purpose clause showing us the purpose of ceasing being conformed to the world and being transformed by the renewing of our mind. It is in order that we might prove the will of God. The Word “prove” means to discern, to test, or to distinguish. If success in knowing and doing the will of God, we ought to desire to know the will of God more than anything else. Keep in mind that until there is a surrender and you stop being conformed to the world and start being transformed by the renewing of your mind, you will not be able to discern the will of God.

#### A. What Is the Will of God?

Many of the Puritans divided the will of God into two categories.

##### 1. God’s Will of Decree or God’s Sovereign Will

God’s Sovereign Will is what He has decreed to come to pass and it will come to pass whatever decisions man makes or however much the devil opposes it. This sovereign will is described in **Acts 4:27-28 (ESV)** “<sup>27</sup> for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, <sup>28</sup> to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.” The cross was God’s decreed, sovereign will. Herod and Pilate and the Jews and the Gentiles involved in His crucifixion were certainly responsible for what they did, but it was going to happen because the cross was God’s decreed, sovereign will. **Revelation 13:8b (NKJV)** refers to Jesus as “...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The cross was in the sovereign will of God. It was going to happen. It is this sovereign will that is spoken of in **Ephesians 1:11b (ESV)** “...having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will”.

##### 2. God’s Will of Command

God’s will is what He commands us to do. The will of decree will be accomplished whether we want it to or not, but the will of command we can disobey. **Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." So God’s will of decree comes always comes to pass, but His will of command can be disobeyed and is every day.

Which will is Romans 12:2 speaking of? It is the will of command, the revealed will. We are to discern or distinguish what God reveals as His desire for us to do and then do it. Sometimes the sovereign will of God is called His secret will. A part of His sovereign will is indeed secret – we cannot know it. **Deuteronomy 29:29 (NKJV)** “The secret *things belong* to the Lord our God, but those *things which are revealed belong* to us and to our children forever, that *we* may do all the words of this law.” Since in Romans 12:2 we are to prove or discern His will, it cannot be His secret will in Romans 12:2.

#### B. How Is God’s Commanded or Revealed Will Described?

God's will is good. That means that His will is pure and always best even when it involves much pain. God's will is acceptable. That uses the language of the Old Testament sacrificial system and says that God's will is without spot or blemish. It is perfect in every way. Adrian Rogers used to say that if we could see what God sees, we would embrace the will of God even if it was for selfish purposes. God's will is perfect. That word "perfect" means complete and lacking in no respect. It speaks of something that has attained its full destiny and is lacking nothing.

I have done whole series on how to discern the commanded or revealed will of God and I don't have time to deal with it in this message. Let me simply say that when we are renewing our minds with the Word of God, we will find the vast majority of our questions answered in the Word of God as we fill our minds with it. We will know, either by command or principle.

#### CONCLUSION

After surrender comes the battle. Now we can recognize the world and stop being conformed to it. Now we can begin the lifelong process of renewing our mind with God's truth. As we renew our minds, the commanded, revealed will becomes clear by the time that we have to make a decision. You can trust God to reveal all of His will He wants you to know. You will find that it is good, acceptable, and perfect. (3533)