



TITLE:

Separation from the World (Not to be Conformed to the World)

TEXT:

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. [2] And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

This is one of the most practical Scriptures on separation from the world.

- To be conformed means to be pressed into a mold, to be fashioned according to a likeness.
- It is the Greek word *suschematizo*, which is elsewhere translated “fashion” (1 Pet 1:14).
- It is the basis of the English term “schematic,” referring to a drawing or representation of an object. The god of this world designed the schematic for this evil world system (Eph. 2:1-3).
- The world is very aggressive and evangelistic and enticing. It wants to shape our lives by its standards, its fashions, its entertainment, its principles, its philosophies, its music.

This key passage describes the proper motives for a separated Christian life.

1. First, we are motivated by a desire to please the God who has done so much for us (v. 1).
2. Second, we are motivated by the fact that living for God is “reasonable.” Indeed, living for God is the fundamental purpose of human life and it is the way of all blessing.
3. Third, we are motivated by the desire to know God’s will. Separation from the world is necessary to please God and to know His will. It is not an optional part of Christian living. It is not “legalism”; it is obedience. It is not loss but gain. It is not Pharisaical stupidity; it is wisdom!

Not only does Romans 12:1-2 exhorts us not to be conformed to the world, it also explains how we can have victory over the world.

- *First, the way to be victorious over the world is to have a sold-out, self-sacrificing, passionate relationship with Jesus Christ*, as we see in verse 1. The reason why so many young Christians are captured by the world is because they either have never been born again or they have never surrendered to Christ and they are not walking with Him day-by-day in intimate fellowship.
- *Second, the way to be victorious over the world is to have one’s life transformed by the renewing of the mind*. The internal pressure to resist the world must be greater than the external pressure to be conformed, and this internal pressure to resist the world comes through the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The believer that fills his heart and mind with Scripture, not just as a vain exercise and not just to impress someone or to win a Bible memory contest, but as a passionate way of life, will have the wisdom and power to resist the world.
- *Third, the way to be victorious over the world is through pursuing the perfect will of God* (Rom. 12:2) A moving object is not easily stopped. If the believer is passionately pursuing God’s will for his or her life, and is busy serving God with enthusiasm, he will not be easily turned aside by the vanities of the world. There must be forward spiritual progress. A backslider in heart is easily ensnared by the world and devoured by the devil (1 Peter 5:8).