

# "Grace & Peace to You"

## A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia  
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### ROMANS LESSON 77 PART ONE: BE TRANSFORMED

**ROM 12:1-2** *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Having made an appeal to the Believers to respond to the "mercies of God" by offering their lives in "worshipful service," Paul now introduces the "keys" by which this can be accomplished. There are 3-points that stand out in **ROM 12:2** which set the stage for all which follows in the coming Chapters.

- Stop being "Conformed..." [WHAT]
- Allow yourselves to be "Transformed..." [HOW]
- So that you can "Make Proof of God's Will..." [WHY]

Each step in this progression draws upon the previous one, and/or allows for the next one.

In these first two verses, Paul brings the believer from responding to the "mercies of God" to becoming a "living sacrifice" by "making proof of God's Will" in through their life. HOW can this be accomplished?

### STOP BEING CONFORMED

**12:2a** *"Do not be conformed to this world..."*

Some Greek phrases in the New Testament are difficult to translate in a way that presents the subtle meanings of the combined words. **ROM 12:2** is one of those. Here are some of my most used Translations:

- [NLT] *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world...*
- [PASSION] *Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you...*
- [VOICE] *Do not allow this world to mold you in its own image...*
- [MESSAGE] *Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking...*
- [JB PHILLIPS] *Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold...*

The first principle to apply when "offering our lives" is to STOP what we have been doing and seek a change. In the context of Paul's instruction, these first and second principles are "mutually exclusive" (you cannot be doing both at the same time).

As we will see, being "Transformed" is what we want. But we can't be transformed as long as we are "Conforming" to the ways of this Age.

#### ➤ CONFORMED

Our idea of being "conformed" would be to take the form of another, or adapt ourselves to another's way of thinking. That is good but loses some of the power that is in the Greek word.

**Conformed** is "**Sunschematizo**" coming from the root "**Schematizo**" referring to *the act of an individual assuming an outward expression that does not come from within him, nor is it representative of his inner heart life.*

The prefixed preposition "**Sun**" adds to the meaning of the verb the idea of assuming an expression that is patterned after some other thing.

**Schema** is the word for an outward form, the "*fashion*" of a thing. So, to "*conform*" was to take upon yourself the fashion of something you were NOT.

I like to use the word "**masquerade / disguise**" – to dress yourself as one thing so as to conceal what/who you really are

This idea is expressed by the use of this word in 2 COR 11:13-15

*"For such men are False Apostles, deceitful workmen, **disguising themselves** as Apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And no wonder, for even Satan **disguises himself** as an Angel of light. <sup>15</sup> So it is no surprise if his servants, also, **disguise themselves** as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."*

➤ **DO NOT BE...**

The real power of Paul's statement comes with the Verb form he uses. The Greek language had "2" forms of "negation"

- **Do Not allow / Don't let THIS be the result...** – Used often by Paul to "admonish" the Believers to adapt a certain attitude or action that would KEEP THEM from sin, danger, harm, or failure.

But there was another form that Paul used.

- **STOP what you ARE doing...** To cease a certain activity or way of thinking that was a hindrance to their Christian testimony, or was sinful. This one was stronger, and more direct, and used as correction or rebuke.

**THIS** is the one used here.

➤ **THIS "AGE"**

Paul's correction indicates he is addressing *existing conditions*... what WAS happening. In Rome, as in our day, there was great pressure to "*adapt oneself*" to the attitudes and lifestyles of the time.

- **Kosmion** – referring more to the "culture / arrangement of things" during a time period
- **Aion** – "Age" – unmeasured period distinguished by certain events of actions

GAL 1:4 [Christ] who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from **the present evil age**, according to the will of our God and Father..."

Many of the Believers were just coming OUT of paganism and INTO Christ, and they brought some of their past manners and customs with them.

In order to "present their bodies as Living Sacrifices" some things MUST be left behind.

➤ **SUMMARY**

The Believers were to STOP "allowing themselves" (passive voice) to be forced into adapting an image that was patterned after the current "Evil Age" – one that did NOT represent who they truly were.

## ROMANS LESSON 77 PART TWO: BE TRANSFORMED

### ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE TRANSFORMED

ROM 12:2B "...but be transformed by the renewal of your minds..."

The alternative for the Believer to being "*conformed*" is to be "*transformed*".

While conformation is outward, transformation is inward.

However, notice the pattern. Not being conformed is something WE must do, and it must be replaced by being transformed.

- **Transformed** – "**Metamorphoomai**" – changing the outward expression from that which one has to a different one, an expression which comes from and is representative of the inner being.

- From the root "Morphe" – *the essence of a thing irrespective of shape*
- Used of Jesus at the "Transfiguration"
- The Verb is "Present Passive" meaning that this is an ongoing process that I must ALLOW to have effect upon me...
- *The renewal... – "Anakainosis" – a renewing that causes the thing to be different than it was in the past – it is NOT replacement... NOR recreation... It is a process affected by another agent*
- This is NOT a verb "renewing" but a Noun "renewal" – *it is not a process of renewing, but the result of a renewal...*
- The Holy Spirit... – JOHN 14:16-17; 25-26
- The Word of God... – JAMES 1:21-25
- Prayer
  - For self or from others – EPH 1:15-22
  - "In the spirit..." – JUDE 20-23
- *Of the mind... – Where as our "spirit" was recreated at New Birth... the Mind is "renewed"*

### PROVING THE WILL OF GOD

12:2c "...so that [you may prove by demonstration] what is the will of God: what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- *So that...* that which is the result of what preceded
- *May Prove...* (Dokimazo – to show the reliability of a thing by "testing" – to prove / approve – to make demonstration...
- *The Will of God...*  
 Three uses of the word *will* in relation to God:
  - First, God's Sovereign Will, which is hidden and is not revealed to us except as He reveals it
  - Second, God's Moral Will, which is revealed in Scripture
  - Third, God's Specific Will For Individuals, which is what people are usually thinking about when they speak of searching for or finding God's will – revealed to us by the Holy Spirit
- *What is Good...* (Agathos) – *Good by its nature whether apparent or not*  
 There are 2-Words
  - Kalos – Apparent Good – Outward / Noble / Beautiful / Desirable
  - Agathos – Inherent – Inward / Perfect / Absolute
- *What is Acceptable...* (Euarestos – "good pleasing") – It is "Pleasing before (God) therefore pleasing to me..."
- *What is Perfect...* (Teleios – complete / having fulfilled its purpose) -

IF we are to make demonstration of the Will of God through our life (*what is illustrated in CHAPTERS 12-16*) then we must STOP allowing ourselves to be Conformed to the image of this Age, and allow ourselves to be Transformed by the Renewal of our Mind!

Next Session: "TO EACH ONE"