***Do not be Conformed to the World,
but be Transformed
RO151-02***

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We are studying Romans 12:1-2. Our subject is "The Basis for Christian Service," and this is segment number two.

**Present Your Body as a Living Sacrifice to God**

Romans 12:1 begins the last part of the book of Romans which applies Bible doctrine which has been taught in the first 11 chapters to specific life situations. God the Holy Spirit calls upon each church-age believer to present his physical body as a living sacrifice to God. The members of the Christian's body are actually the instruments by which God does His work on the earth. Therefore, it is a legitimate question to look back upon this past week; this past month; and, this past year, and to ask ourselves: how much time did God actually have in terms of access to the use of my body in His service? Romans 12:1 presents that specific demand upon the Christian. The first thing he talks about in applying doctrine to experience is that God needs your body. Christian service is performed through the physical body, and that includes the brain.

This divine appeal here in verse 1 for the Christian's body is based upon the mercies of God in having provided salvation to preserve our physical bodies themselves from an eternity in the lake of fire. The body which is offered to God is furthermore to be preserved from debilitating effects of sinful activities, and of careless use of the body. In the Old Testament, you did not bring the lamb with a blemish as a sacrifice to the living God. In the New Testament, we do make the sacrifice of our bodies as Christians, as one of our spiritual sacrifices, and it is equally important that we do not bring a mutilated body to God as a result of our own sinful practices and habits. The body offered to God is to be preserved in holy living and in good judgment, because this verse tells us that that is well-pleasing to God. The better physical shape a Christian is in, obviously, the greater capacity he has for God's service. That's why the younger you are, the more seriously you want to consider this, because the Bible us: "As you days, so shall your strength be. And as you get older, you begin to phase out of the capacities that one has in earlier days. Therefore, you also find yourself with less capacity in doing God's work. Proper care and use of one's body is thus clearly the will of God in this verse, because our bodies are important to Him. Giving God an abused and damaged body is actually an insult to Him. And, worse, it invites personal suffering now, and it invites great loss in heaven.

**This is a Rational Thing to do**

Furthermore, verse 1 tells us that the offering of one's body to God is a rational thing to do. It is, in fact, an act of worship. It is an intelligent thing to do, because such a sacrifice of the body by a believer who is in temporal fellowship results in his earning treasures, which he stores in heaven, through the divine good works which he performs in that body.

**Financial Gifts to God's Work**

We pointed out that financial gifts to God's work represent the capacity of one's body, which has been used up in earning that money. Therefore, every time you make an offering, you have, in fact, given your body in God's service.

**The Mind**

The control center of the human being is his mind. What one believes determines, obviously, the treatment that he gives to his body, and the use that he makes of it. The mental attitudes determine the values that will govern the use of the body. There are only two basic outlook on life. We may classify them as human viewpoint – what people, by natural reason, think; and, divine viewpoint, which is information and an outlook which we can only secure through a knowledge of what the Bible teaches. The mind is a result of these two distinctive patterns in its thinking; and, consequently, in its conduct. The human viewpoint of Satan's world system promotes self-destructive habits and lifestyle. The divine viewpoint of God's word promotes ennobling, self-serving habit and lifestyle. The difference between these two is the direct result of what a person thinks in his mind (his outlook): his human viewpoint; or, his divine viewpoint?

So, we move on to Romans 12:2. In this verse, Paul reveals the tremendous truth about how to be a winner in life and in eternity through the proper use of one's body. I must confess right up front that this is one of the most enormously significant verses in the Bible. It has a depth of meaning and understanding, and it says things that have ramifications in all directions that I could not possibly touch on today, or even mention to you. I trust that your own background and the instruction in the Word of God will be extensive enough that you will make the connections as we go along, that there are whole areas of truth that you have already been instructed in, that now tie into this one verse. I'm not sure that I can do the job that is required of conveying to you the significance of what is here, but we'll give it the best shot we can.

**Be not Conformed to the Patterns of this World**

Verse 2 begins: "And be not conformed to this world." It begins with a negative statement of something that Christians should not do. It is a negative admonition about not being conformed. The word "conformed" is a very important, so let's look at it. And in order to know what it says, this is one of those classic examples that you'll never get from reading the English Bible. The people who read this originally in Greek immediately understood what God was saying here. The word is "suschematizo." This word means "to be fashioned after something externally," or "pattern after some external object." We're talking about externals: a fashion; or, a pattern. This is based upon the Greek word "schema." And you see it right in there. That's the basis of this word. And to know the meaning of this word, we have to go to this one upon which this word is based. This word means "a pattern." It refers to the external appearance of something. It's like an actor who is on the stage, who is not a soldier really, but who is playing the part of a soldier. You look upon him, and externally he looks like a soldier. He's acting like a soldier. We're talking about the external pattern of conduct. This word could be compared to what a woman does when she makes a dress. She lays out a piece of cloth, and then she puts upon it a paper pattern, and she cuts the cloth to the external appearance of that paper pattern.

This word is used, to illustrate it, in 1 Peter 1:14: "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves (that's the same word) according to the former lusts in your ignorance." What is this verse saying? Now that you know what fashioning means in terms of an external pattern of conduct, you can immediately see that that person is telling you that you, as a Christian, should not live as you did in the dog days when you were unsaved – when you were on an animal sensual level of operation and of living; and, when you were functioning on human viewpoint, completely devoid of real comprehension of what life is all about, and completely detached from the real world through which you were moving.

"Do not fashion yourselves after those old sinful habits." The Christian is not to be patterned after something in his personal conduct. Just happened to be in the present tense in the Greek language, which means that this is a condition that you should be constantly avoiding. This is not just a thing such that one would say, you know, "Be careful about it." I mean, this is a crucial thing that you should not do in your life. It begins in the Bible with this word "me," which is a negative. And it uses here a certain grammatical construction that indicates to us that these people were already doing this. The apostle Paul, when he wrote to the Romans, was able to say in the Greek language, "I want you to stop doing something that you already doing." That is one of the beauties of the language. People who read it said, "Aha, somebody has talked to him about us." Immediately, the way the thing was constructed, they knew that Paul was saying, "I'm aware that you people are doing this, and I'm telling you before God to knock it off – what you're doing with your body. Stop being patterned in your external conduct. That is the point here.

Interestingly enough, this is in the middle voice. When you have something in the middle voice, in the Greek language, it stresses the fact that this is going to be for your own personal benefit if you do it. And furthermore, God is not kidding about this. This is an imperative mood. And that means that it's a divine command. It's middle voice. It's for your benefit. And it's in imperative mood. It's a divine command for every Christian.

So, there's something that you and I should go around using our bodies, and living our lives as a pattern that we follow. And what is that? Paul says, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, "Don't pattern yourself after the fashion of the world." But in the Bible, it is not the word "world." It is the word "aion," which means "age." Aha! Don't live according to what people in our society, who are the opinion-makers and the fashion-setters are doing. But consider whether this is proper and fitting for you as a Christian to follow. What this is talking about is the things that are done in a certain period of time. This is a reference to the world system of Satan, but it is within the context of the characteristic of the age in which the Christian lives. And I need not tell you that we today live in a very evil society, and a world which is ruled by Satan, and which is organized, openly now, against God's moral standards, where nobody makes any apologies for the fact that they do not care about the controls that God has imposed morally upon the human race.

The word, thus, is to be understood as "Satan's work system." And when we say system, we needed organizational structure. All of the business world operates on Satan's principles. All of the educational world promotes the outlook of Satan's human viewpoint conclusions. The religious world promotes Satan's human viewpoint ideas. The social world is geared to human viewpoint objectives. So, Satan has organized this world in a system that is anti-God throughout, and is detached, thereby, from the real world that God has created.

In Galatians 1:4, the apostle Paul points out that the age in which we live is an evil age – this present evil age. It is an age that is characterized by that which God must condemn. In Galatians 1:4, Paul says, "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of God and our Father." So, right away, you should know, as a Christian, that when you walk out of your home, into the society that you live in, it's an evil place. Its ideas are evil; its instruction is evil; and, its social life is evil. The things that it advertises and promotes is evil. It's an evil system, because it is anti-God and anti-biblical.

Ephesians 2:2 indicates that this age is evil, not because people are not smart, or because people would not rather have it better. But it is simply because it is an age that is controlled by Satan: "In which, in times past, you walked according to the course of this world, an evil pattern of life, according to the prince of the power of the air (Satan), the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience." This age is controlled by Satan. He sets the pattern for it, and the primary motivations, therefore, of what compelled people to do things. The things that motivate people are all evil, because that's the way Satan has set up his world.

**Satan's World – Lusts and Pride**

In 1 John 2:16, the motivations of the world are spelled out for us. The people you're going to meet on the street; in your business; and, in your associations tomorrow, who are not Christians, are motivated by these three things: " For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh." They are motivated by fulfilling the lusts pattern of the sin nature, and they are very gross: "And the lust of the eyes." People are going to want to look at what is evil. They're going to look at what you have. They will become covetous. And, in fact, the covetousness will not stop there. It will become envy. It is bad enough to be covetous of what someone else has. But envy goes one step more, and that is that if they can't have it, they will see if they can take it away from you and destroy it, so you don't have it either. And that is "the pride of life." This is human arrogance and human confidence – that by human reason alone, one can arrive at the truth. This line of thought says that one is capable of living life autonomously – independent of the controls of the Bible, which spells out what you can do; what you can't do; and, what the real world is all about.

**Wisdom**

That's what it's all about in Satan's world – getting your sin nature satiated; having your eyes fulfill their covertness desires; and, and walking around with the pride of life, an arrogant attitude. The wisdom and the intellectual conclusions of this world, for this reason, the apostle Paul points out, are basically stupid. 1 Corinthians 1:20 puts it this way: "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" Now, God is not saying here that these people do not have good IQs. It is saying that they are ignorant intellectuals – that without the guidelines of Scripture, they can't be smart, no matter how much IQ they have. And God makes them come out looking foolish. The greatest philosophers of the world who have caught the imagination of the human race have ultimately come out looking stupid – many of them even in their own eyes, so that they changed their thinking as they grew older, and got really smarter. God has made to use the wisdom of this world.

1 Corinthians 2:6-8: "However, we speak wisdom," the apostle Paul says, "to them that are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age (not Satan's human viewpoint wisdom), nor the princes of this age (the rulers, and the opinion-makers) that come to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery – even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages, and to our glory; which none of the princes (the leaders of this age) knew, for having known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."

So, the world system of Satan is evil, and therefore it is (you should be aware) the unrelenting enemy of the Christian. Paul puts it this way in Ephesians 6:12: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood." Now, there is a doctrinal principle you should never forget. And I must confess that we are all, indeed, guilty of it. We zero in on the human beings as our point of conflict, when that human being is zilch in the picture. He is not the point of conflict. It is what is up in his head. It is his viewpoint. And the viewpoint that we are fighting is the thinking of Satan. And what we are resisting is what that person has been contaminated with by the powers of demons and of Satan. That is the battleground – not the individual. And we have to be very careful to make that distinction: "We wrestle not (as Christians) against flesh and blood." Human beings are not the battleground: "But against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." And all those categories there refer to various divisions of demons, and various power ranks that they hold.

For this reason, James 4:4 tells us that any friendship or compatibility on the part of a Christian with the world's lifestyle is an act of enmity against God. It's an act of declaration that you are an opponent and an enemy of God. James 4:4 says, "You adulteresses, don't you know that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Who, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." If you're going to be a friend of the world, no matter how altruistic you may be toward your association, and concern for human beings, if that concern (that association) is in violation of the divine viewpoint of Scripture, you have placed yourself as an opponent and an enemy of God. And the consequences will most certainly come home to roost sooner or later.

For this reason, Christians are to act in wisdom, and to live unspotted from the evil of this age, which is dominated by Satan. Titus 2:12 says, "Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age. And we have shown you that the apostle Paul calls this present age "evil."

One of the all-time sad examples of a Christian who could not buck the tide of the glamor Bible and the appeal of Satan's evil world system is, of course, one of the close associates of the apostle Paul in his evangelistic organization. That is the young man named Demas. And we have one of the saddest statements, I suppose, that you'll find in all Scripture, and perhaps all literature, of a man that was closely associated out there on the front line (on the cutting edge) of opposing and fighting Satan's world. But he abandoned the information that he had, and he fell in love with what the devil had to offer. So, he abandoned Paul. He abandoned the Christian lifestyle, and he went gung-ho to be part of the world system. 2 Timothy 4:10 puts it this way. Paul, in a poignant statement says, "For Demas has forsaken me, having lived this present world (and there the Greek word is 'age:' 'having loved this present age,' just as it is here in Romans) and has departed unto Thessalonica," one of the all-time great fun cities of the ancient world.

So, the fashions of Satan's world in this age, in short, are ugly; they are crude; they are vile; they are shallow; they are demeaning; and, they are put-on. Paul says, "Stop adopting and adapting your external conduct to the fleeting evil lifestyle of Satan's world." And don't forget that that's what the Bible says. It is fleeting. It is limited. It is doomed. And if that is the lifestyle you find, you will find that you have poured out your life, and you have wasted your life. And if you are a Christian, sure, you'll go to heaven, but you'll be up there in a poverty that will cause tears in your eyes compared to what you could have done, coming from a knowledge of the real world as you have found it in the Word of God.

Paul says, "Don't take the world society in which you live as your fashion plate. Don't use its language (its speech). Don't follow its evil, self-destructive habits. Don't dress like the world. I hope you ladies are listening. There is something about the way the world dresses that creates a major problem for us in the academy. We had to discuss it at the faculty meeting again this week, because girls are coming to school looking like uncouth clowns. I mean, whatever Michael Jackson wears, that's the latest thing for the girls to put on. I mean, the ideals, and the fads, and the fashion makers are absolutely ludicrous. And you wonder what must possess their mothers.

I've found with some of these mothers (I've seen them), they dress the same way. So, I know what the problem is. They dress the little kids in the same nonsensical fashion of the world, and the girls just look ugly. The miniskirts are coming back. And I certainly hope that rear-view mirrors will come as well, because a lot of ladies are going to need to be wearing them if the fashion catches on all over again. It was pathetic, and it was demeaning, and it was insulting. And people just don't understand that there's a group of people who set the pattern for the world. They're the world controllers of the fashion industry, and they make women look like fools, unless the woman has the quality of Christian character that says, "Wait a minute. You don't set the fashion for me. God sets the fashion for me. And I dress accordingly. I'll be in-date. I'll be in-fashion. I'll be attractive, I'll be stylish, but I'll not be made a fool of by you.”

So, don't take the world's view as you dress. Don't take the pattern of the world for your goals in life. And don't seek recreation the way the world seeks recreation. Don't accept the values that the world says, "This is the thing that you should pursue. Just don't take the viewpoint that the world cranks out. In short, just don't live like the devil. That's the negative admonition.

Romans 12:2: "Be not patterned in you external lifestyle to this evil age. But God the Holy Spirit says, "I want to make a very big contrast. Ordinarily, we find this word "de" as the Greek word for "but." However, when the contrast wants to be very great, it uses this word "alla." And this is what's here. Reading the Bible, you would notice that. But now you know God the Holy Spirit says that this is a very important distinction. And he uses a word to indicate that. He says, "What I want of you Christians is that you should be transformed. And the word is there is "metamorphoo." "Metamorphoo" means just the opposite of what the previous words meant. This one means to change inwardly into another form. The first one says, "Don't pattern yourself outwardly according to a certain way." This one says, "Pattern yourself inwardly after a certain pattern." Have certain qualities that are within. This also is based upon a basic word. This word is "morphe." And you can see that here in the verb. Morphe refers to inward characteristics. Therefore, this word says, "When you change, God says, "I want changes on the inside in a certain area of your being. It refers to inward characteristics.

Let me show you something about the use of this word in connection with Jesus Christ in Philippians 2:6-7. And I hope you brought your Bible. If you didn't bring your Bible, you're at a great disadvantage to know what we are talking about. And you will be the poorer for it. Philippians 2:6-7: "Who (referring to Jesus Christ) being in the form of God. The word "form" is this word "morphe." Aha! Immediately, you know that what this text is saying is that Jesus Christ on the inside was really God. He really was God within. You looked at Him, and you saw a human being – a male person. This word tells you that he really was a God-Man. Within Himself, He had the characteristic of deity. And for that reason, He did not think it a thing to be held onto, to be equal with God.

**The "Kenosis"**

This is the doctrine of the "kenosis" that we have taught you. That word means the setting aside of the manifestation of the Christ, so that you saw Him only as a Human Being – the willingness to take upon Himself forever a physical body. He put aside that characteristic of full deity you that you could see, though, He retained that characteristic completely. He was never less God for having to take on human form. But we didn't think that it was a thing that He should hold on to. That's what the word "robbery" in the King James text means. He didn't think He should hang on to that full deity. He said, "Yes, I'll take on humanity so that I can die, and pay for the sins of the world."

Verse 7 says, "But He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form (the 'morphe') of a servant." Now you know what that means, don't you? Jesus Christ on the inside was really a true servant of God. He was not like a lot of fake Christians who walk around pretending to be servants of God, because they like to do things that are the glamor life. He went about as a true, genuine servant of God, and was made in the likeness of man; that is, he appeared as a man, and he was genuinely human, but He was more than that. Jesus Christ was inwardly both a true God and a true servant. He was not just a put-on.

However, I want you to know this verse 8: "And being found in fashion as a man." The word "fashion" there is a word that we have looked at previously here. This is the word "schema." So, right away, you know that "fashion" means "externally." You looked upon him, and he sure enough looked like a human being because he truly was a human being: "Being found in the external appearance of a genuine human being, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," which is why He had to take on a physical body, so that He, as God, could die for the sins of the world. Philippians 2:8: "Fashioned as a man" is the "schema" word that you have in Romans 12:2: the outward appearance.

**Internal vs. External**

So, "metamorphoo," the word here in Romans 12:2 refers to the true essence of something. It's not just the external appearance. Let me illustrate this in another place in 2 Corinthians 11, that I think is interesting. In 2 Corinthians 11:14, Paul says, "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." This word in the Greek Bible is the word that uses this basic word "schema" in it – transformed how? Internally or externally? How do you think that Satan is transformed as an angel of light? Because on the inside he really is a godly angel of light? Or is it just that he's putting on an outward appearance – a con job? You know it's a con job. How precise are the Words of Scripture, because, lo and behold, you can look in the Bible? For you Greek students, it's "metaschematizo," which is this word right here (a variation of this verb here). It has the "schema" element that tells you it's external.

So, the devil is indeed a pretender to be an angel of light. And there are a lot of people who think they're listening to God when they listen to the devil, because he appears to indeed be a truly sincere religious person. But what he is, is an internal demon. He's an internal opponent of God. He is not a true source of light. Satan cannot change inwardly into an angel of light. Therefore, the Holy Spirit did not use the word for internal change ("metamorphoo"), but He used a word that indicated an external change – a pretense of being an angel of light.

**Our Transformation**

In 2 Corinthians 11:15, Paul talks about the preachers who follow Satan, and there are plenty who do. He says, "Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." Now what word do you think would be there for "transformed?" Is it the one that indicates that there's an internal change in these ministries, or an outward pretense? Obviously, it is an outward pretense. And sure enough, you get to the Greek Bible, and there it is. That word that does not use "morphe" in it (internal), but the word which uses "schema" (external). These con job artists are out there putting on. They're on television. They're putting on entertainment. They're getting wealthy. They're praising God. They're talking about God. They're outwardly parading as men of God. But inwardly, they are men of Satan. And if the Christian world could understand the difference between these two, to verify whether this impressive religious leader is internally a man of God, or just externally a pretender, they would save themselves from a lot of grief. And I will not reiterate to you the public news notoriety of those who are prime examples of creating public grief when people discover they were internally considerably different than they were parading externally.

So, Christians are to avoid, on the one hand, external conformity to the world's lifestyle by experiencing some kind of internal transformation. And that's what we're getting to. This transformation internally, however; this word "metamorphoo," being transformed here in Romans 12:2, I must point out to you, is present tense, which means it's a continual process of transforming. Interestingly enough, it's passive voice. You don't do it for yourself. You don't say, "I'm going to be a nice person." I'm going to do the things that please God." No, you won't. You'll say, "I'm going to promise God. I'm going to be very faithful in doing this, and not doing this." No, you won't. He knows it, and you know it. This word is passive because it says that this has to be done for you by something else. You can't do it on your own. You can open yourself up to this something else, and then it will happen. And it is imperative, understandably. It's a command of God. As the command was, "Don't be the world's system on the outside in the conduct of your body, so, it is the command of God that, inside, you be changed in a certain way. Christians are to be transformed inwardly into the very image of Jesus Christ – into His moral perfection, in some way. You can't do it. Something will do it for you.

2 Corinthians 3:18 puts it this way: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from one glory to another, as by the Spirit of the Lord." It says "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." What a tremendous statement. The glory of the absolute perfect Son of God is what God has planned for you. And you will be changed from one step of glory to the next one: going up, and up, and up by some means. How is that going to be brought about? This is the inward transformation that Paul is talking about.

**Worldliness**

Now, I want you to realize that, at this point, we've been talking about worldliness. Worldliness is a mental attitude, and it expresses itself externally. What you should understand now is that there is something on the inside of a Christian that then expresses itself externally. And that's what worldliness is all about. Yeah, worldliness is honky-tonking; worldliness is high living; and, worldliness is being a materialist, and covetous, and sexually immoral, and all that. But worldliness is not a matter of what you do or don't do. Therefore, worldliness is something totally different than these externals. We do not live according to the pattern of the world. But you must understand, as you have already had indicated, it is because something has changed on the inside. And it's useless to tell a person, "Hey, you shouldn't live like that. You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do that." If there is a problem on the inside, when you look at him, and you see an immoral lifestyle, you know that there's a problem inside. There has to be a change. That is a very difficult situation there. When a person has self-destructive habits, your heart goes out to him. You can say, "That's terrible. You ought to do this," and you bring these arguments. But that's not going to change the problem inside.

England has been carrying on a major public program, for a longer time than has the United States, of safe sex within the homosexual community, particularly to try to pull down the rising tide of AIDS. After several years, they've made the report recently, and said, "It's makes no difference whatsoever. All of the efforts we have made of the teaching people how to do this safely has not changed their habits and their ways of doing things, so that the AIDS virus (the AIDS infection) is as rampant as ever before." What are they telling us? They're telling us that until there's a change on the inside, as the result of something that you cannot do for yourself, you will not stop doing that which is evil. And we see that in this country. And all this talk about safe sex is stupid nonsense human viewpoint. And it's only the world system trying to contain something that's horrible and terrible. When the government is willing to finally admit to us that there are 50,000 people infected with AIDS in the United States now, and 400 coming online every month, and that increasing from month-to-month, can you put two and two together to figure out that by 1990, there will be several million people with AIDS? And when they get it, they are dying. They are doomed. It's just a matter of three or four years. In the meantime, somebody has to take care of them. Where are the hospital beds going to come from to be able to handle that many people? There are not that many in the United States now to care for people.

The internal change is the only way you can stop the external ravages of sin. And if a person does not have the internal control and the motivation, he's going to keep on a self-destructive course. In geographic locations, people have different ways of doing things. People have different temperaments. People have different cultural backgrounds. All of these enter into drawing up a list of what people should or shouldn't do. And there are always Christians, and fundamentalists have been characterized by this, who are drawing up a list of what is acceptable Christian conduct – the do's and the don'ts. But the lists always vary. And they vary from one part of the country to another. In certain Christian circles, it is considered very worldly for women to be putting on makeup. And I remember in my teenage days, and early preaching, I used to have some very powerful sermons about women painting their faces like Jezebel. It always made a big impact. Jezebel was a good illustration. You all know what happened to her. And I had the wisdom to attribute that to the fact that she used cosmetics. But there are certain circles where using makeup has no spiritual problem. As a matter of fact, I've noticed that, in churches where they have the custom that it is worldly to use makeup, the women always look like made-over death. And there is nothing very attractive about it. But some people are very powerfully moved.

In some parts of the country, you can have men and women swimming together in the same lake, or the same pool. We call miniskirts worldly. They're not really worldly. It's just an enormous expression of bad judgment; bad taste; and, low self-esteem. That's what it's all about. Movies; the use of tobacco; gambling; and, dancing – they're all listed as worldly in certain Christian circles. But that's not worldliness. The worldliness is up here in the head. It is a mental outlook (a mental attitude). Then it expresses itself in a human viewpoint, external conduct. And that's what Paul is really trying to tell us here – that there are acts that are characteristic of the world, that if we pattern ourselves after them, we are acting in a worldly way. Bing in a certain place or in certain activity reflects our mental attitude.

The place that you're in, or the activity that you're doing does not constitute worldliness. Some of the most worldly Christians among us are those who sit in church. They sit here, and they nod their heads: yes; and, no. Their eyes are glued to the speaker, but their minds are on going to the lake; that vacation; that business deal; or, that cute doll that they met yesterday. Their minds are wandering on other things, but they're here making a pretense of being in church, and being devoted to God. That's worldliness – one of the grossest kind of worldliness. If you stayed at home, and did all that thinking, people would not think well of you. So, you show up in church and do that. There are thousands of Christians who, because of their mental attitudes, are worldly, but they don't know it. Consequently, they're slaves to the circumstances of their lives. They try to be spiritual through a list of "do's" and "don'ts." The production of their life is human good from the old sin nature. It's useless with God. They're the kind that will play ball for personal gain instead of doing right for God's reward.

**The Opposite of Worldliness**

So, what's the opposite of worldliness? The opposite of worldliness is preoccupation with Jesus Christ and with the Word of God. That is what brings us into divine viewpoint. And that's what the apostle Paul says: "Here's the solution." He's told us, "Don't leave externally like the world system." It's not befitting a Christian. It is demeaning, and degrading, and it is often self-destructive.

**The Renewing of your Mind**

However, he says, "That you will do. You will not leave the world's lifestyle only as a result of an internal change. And that internal change has to be specifically," he says, "the renewing of your mind." It looks like this in the Greek Bible: "anakainosis." This Greek word means "a complete change," "a revolution," or "a renovation for the better." It connotes making something fresh or new. It's a complete alteration of something in the Christian. And what is to be altered? What is to be altered is the mind. It is called the "nous." It is the mentality of the soul that must be transformed. When that happens, very wonderful, dramatic things take place in the life of a Christian. Then he has contact with the real world. Then he knows what to do with his body. Then he knows what to do with a life so that it is a life that he will not look back upon, decades later, with regret.

What this specifically refers to is the perceptive side of the mind. We have run out of time today, so we will give a little preview. Here is the mind, and the mind has two basic functions. It perceives (it learns things), and then it makes decisions. Now that mind is going to make decisions on the basis of what is in it – of what information he has. I don't have time to go through this system, but this is the answer to every human being able to function in life on an acceptable way, and not to be a victim. It is Proverbs 23:7 that says, "As a person thinks, that's how he is." That's how he acts. And when Paul says, "I want you to change your 'nous" (your mind), he says, "Here is what I want you to change – this place where information comes in. The information that comes into your mind, and which you believe, is what makes the difference in how you act. And once you receive information from God (the principles of doctrine), and you believe it, a tremendous system is set in motion within the human being that enables that information now to be taken and stored in the human spirit, and cycled back up to the elements of one's soul so that your mind has information on which to make decisions. It cycles information to your emotions, so that, in spiritual and temporal things, you have God's guidance for making information. It cycles information to your volition, so that you act on positive volition responses. And then you are able to provide divine, good actions.

Now, there's a great deal to say about how the system works, and how to put it into motion. I can show you, with a chart, very quickly how it is set up within the Bible, but it's going to take a little more explaining to see how this cycle is going to work so that the results of your having a change that you cannot bring about by yourself will be brought about through the Word of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit. And we should look at that system next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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