

The Transformation of the Mind

Romans 12:1-2

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Introduction

The battleground for sanctification is the mind. What you think and how you reason greatly affects your worldview and the application of it. There can be no personal holiness without a biblical thinking process.

For years now, much of the evangelical church has been emotionally driven. Seeking the new feeling or experience, hoping for an encounter with God that will transform their walk with Christ. This approach has led to weak and shallow preaching dominated by practical application devoid of a

Biblical foundation. Some churches have opted for entertainment oriented services to attract the crowds believing that being more like the world will make the church more relatable and needed.

Just this past week, I read of a mega church that was going to make their church service on Super Bowl Sunday themed around this event.

One church has this advertisement,

Catch the big game on the big screen!

Join us for a full day of football fun including your favorite gameday snacks, games, and more!

As you walk in for our normal worship services on Sunday morning, (9:00 AM & 10:30 AM) there will be games to play and a great community to spend time with!

Join us AGAIN that afternoon at 3:30 PM, for a tailgate party with your favorite snacks, more games and more fellowship! When the game begins, we will have a watch party in the worship center on the big screen! (Bring your favorite chair!)

Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to blend worship, fellowship, and the thrill of the Super Bowl in one

unforgettable day. Bring your friends, family, AND snacks to share—it's a Sunday like never before! All ages are welcome to enjoy the festivities!<https://fairviewvillagechurch.com/event/22897302-2024-02-11-super-bowl-sunday/>

This is a symptom of a bigger problem that has been growing more and more in the last few decades. Our worship and walk with God has become more external than internal and more fleshly than spiritual. We place more emphasis on success than sanctification and on how someone feels than how one thinks.

This minimization of the mind is a dangerous place to be in the Christian life.

RC Sproul stated, Christians are called to a different way of life, and that will only happen if we pattern our thinking after the Word of God. We are called to be nonconformists. But our non-conformity rests, not so much in diet, or in clothes, or that kind of stuff, but in what? In transformation of our lives by the renewing of our minds. That our uniqueness is to be discerned, first of all, in how we think.

We are intellectual nonconformists. That's the first mark of the Christian lifestyle, if it's going to be authentic. We are intellectual non-conformists. We do not buy the values of this world. We do not buy the axioms of this world. We do not buy the evaluations or the judgments of this world. Because we look at the world, we look at man, we look at the state, we look at the church, we look at the whole creation from the perspective of God himself, if we have the mind of Christ.

Our non-conformity is to be built upon the transformation of our being by means of the renewal of our minds, through patterning our thinking after the mind of Christ. And that doesn't come magically, intuitively, or mystically, or experientially. It comes by rigorous discipleship, disciplined study of the scriptures. Now I'm not saying that because a person can recite the right answers to what the Bible says, or that if he knows it intellectually he will automatically implement it in his life. We know there's always a gap between theory and practice. But how can we even begin to do what Christ wants us to do? How can we even begin to be with Christ wants us to be? How can we ever begin to know what it means to bear witness? If we don't first understand His Word. <https://www.ligonier.org/podcasts/>

ultimately-with-rc-sproul/transformed-by-the-renewing-of-our-minds

The devil has understood this from the very beginning when he tempted Eve in the Garden by asking the question “Has God really said...”. This was intentional to get Eve to think. To Question, to reason, to think logically

Genesis 3:1–6 (NKJV)

3 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ”

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and

ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Notice, Satan challenges what Eve heard God say and more importantly what he meant and why he said it.

In verse 2 Eve repeats back to Satan what God said with one exception, she adds, “nor shall you touch it”

But she rightly concludes in her thinking that God said if you eat it, you will die!

But Satan places in her mind a doubt by saying in verse 4

You won't die. In fact, all God is doing is keeping you from your full potential, He is keeping you from your best life now. If you eat this tree, God knows you will be able to know like God knows, you will understand more and comprehend more than you ever can without eating it.

I mean, think about it Eve. Why would God create you and give you this wonderful man Adam as a husband and place you in this beautiful place only to put a tree in here that has the potential to kill you. That makes no sense.

After all, when God created it all, He said it was all good. So there are only a few things possible here Eve.

1. Not everything in the Garden is good, so God is lying about that.
2. And God is cruel and has placed a tree here that could kill you and your children and tempts you with it daily.
3. And He really is a kill joy and does not want you to reach you full potential
I mean think about it Eve.

So as a result of the devil leading Eve to think differently about what God said, she started thinking outside the box, literally. She discarded her Biblical worldview of the character of God and the trustworthiness of His Word and opted to believe the lie.

Satan knows that battleground for the souls of men and the sanctification of the saint is in the mind. You are extremely naive if you do not understand this is happening all around you and to you.

TV, Social Media, Youtube, and books you read and even some preachers you may listen to are all used to mold your mind.

And the devil has found his way into all of this.

What used to be unthinkable morally and highly offensive in our cultural just 10 years ago is

now approved of, rewarded and given a place of honor.

This did not happen over night. There have been years of dismantling the Biblical world view and placing the Christian community in the kettle warming us up slowly the the unbiblical and ungodly way of thinking.

TV has played a huge role in this. Hours upon hours upon hours sitting passively in-front of the tube watching things and hearing things that would have made many of our grandparents sick. What used to shock us and enrage us doesn't anymore. What used to cause us to want to look away no longer is in place. Now we say, well, there was only one bad scene or only a few bad words.

I learned while over in India, that explosion of smartphones in the hands of the Indian people was a result of Covid and their inability to meet when restriction where so high. you could be and poor village but many had cell phones that could take picture and access the internet.

While this can be a good thing for the India people, to access the good teaching and good things available. It also is opening the door to the cesspool of immorality and ungodly thinking.

According to one research group.

The average time spent daily on a phone, not counting talking on the phone, has increased in recent years, reaching a total of 4 hours and 30 minutes as of April 2022. This figure is expected to reach around 4 hours and 39 minutes by 2024. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1045353/mobile-device-daily-usage-time-in-the-us/>

According to a survey from [Reviews.org](https://www.reviews.org),

Americans check their phones an average of 144 times a day, which is a 58% decrease from their last cell phone usage survey published in January 2022. You could say we're obsessed.

In a viral tweet from the weekend, entrepreneur Jess Chan wrote, "My screen time is getting out of control. I can literally feel my brain chasing dopamine hits multiple times a day. Any tips for breaking this habit?" <https://fortune.com/well/2023/07/19/how-to-cut-back-screen-time/#>

The most important physical organ you have in your body is your brain. What ever that organ does or doesn't do affects the rest of the body. And we are now learning what ever the body does can affect the brain. Many of us are very careful to avoid certain

foods or chemicals so as to not adversely affect our bodies, we may work hard at exercise to keep our body healthy and strong, but too often we are sloppy when it comes to keeping our brains healthy and our minds pure.

Paul understood the importance of how we think and what we think about.

Colossians 3:2 (NKJV)

² **Set your mind** on things above, not on things on the earth.

Pres. Act Imperative

^{30.20} **φρονέω^b; φροντίζω; σκοπέω^d; μελετάω^a**: to keep on giving serious consideration to something— ‘to ponder, to let one’s mind dwell on, to keep thinking about, to fix one’s attention on.

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 351). United Bible Societies.

Philippians 2:5 (NKJV)

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Why Paul? Why so much emphasis on the mind.....?

Romans 8:5–7 (NKJV)

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

Jesus knew the Battle was for the Mind.

Matthew 16:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

²² Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”

²³ But He turned and said to Peter, “**Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.**”

2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (NKJV)

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ 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,

⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down **strongholds**,

ὀχύρωμα *ochúrōma*; gen. *ochurōmatos*, neut. noun from *ochuróō* (n.f.), to fortify, which is from *échō* (2192), to hold fast. A stronghold, fortification, fortress (Sept.: Is. 34:13). Used metaphorically of any strong points or arguments in which one trusts

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Ultimately Paul is referring here to the false arguments of his opponents, calling them figuratively “*strongholds*.” This Greek word (ὀχύρωμα, *ochurōma*) is used only here in the NT.

Biblical Studies Press. (2005). [The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible](#). Biblical Studies Press.

⁵ casting down **arguments**

λογισμός *logismós*; gen. *logismoú*, masc. noun from *logízomai* (3049), to reckon. A reckoning, calculation, consideration, reflection (Rom. 2:15). In the Class. Gr. writers,

used of the consideration and reflection preceding and determining conduct

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

λογισμός^b, οὐ *m*: fallacious and deceptive reasoning and, by implication, based on evil intentions—‘false reasoning, false arguments.

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 350). United Bible Societies.

casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the **knowledge** of God

28.17 γνώσις^b, εως *f*: the content of what is known —‘knowledge, what is known.

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 335). United Bible Societies.

bringing every thought into **captivity** to the obedience of Christ,

αἰχμαλωτίζω^b: (a figurative extension of meaning of αἰχμαλωτίζω^a ‘to take captive in war,’ 55.24) to gain complete control over, either by force or deception—‘to get control of.

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 474). United Bible Societies.

νόημα *noēma*; gen. *noēmatos*, neut. noun from *noéo* (3539), to perceive. A thought, concept of the mind

(2 Cor. 10:5); a device, contrivance (2 Cor. 2:11); the understanding, the mind (2 Cor. 3:14; 4:4; 11:3; Phil. 4:7).

Syn.: *enthúmēsis* (1761), an inward reasoning,

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Ephesians 6:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Any war has battles on a number of fronts but one of the areas that is most often overlooked but is highly critical is the propaganda war. The desire of this strategy is to get people to think a certain way or accept a certain viewpoint.

Hitler's rule that led to the holocaust understood the critical nature of changing the way people think regarding Him and his leadership through propaganda.

Erwin Lutzer, in the Book "Hitlers Cross" wrote in the chapter entitled, "Propaganda Can Change a Nation"

"Hitler had to learn the hard way that propaganda could serve his purposes even better than a political

revolution could. In 1923, he tried to overthrow the Bavarian government by organizing a march through Munich, but it was aborted and ended in failure. He was tried for treason, but given the opportunity to defend himself, and to his delight his speeches were widely read in the newspapers. Already then he knew how to tap into the anger of the German people by railing against the unfair treaty of Versailles and by propagating the widespread belief that the Jews were responsible for the loss of World War I. Hitler knew that the masses could be led if only he could tell convincing lies.

At the end of his trial, he was sentenced to ten months in the Landsberg prison for treason. There he had time to write Mein Kampf, in which he outlined a basic plan to implement his agenda. He had time to reflect and to articulate the value of propaganda, and he showed how with a (skillful) use of disinformation, he could almost certainly accomplish what his Brown Shirts could not. I've taken the time to carefully read what Hitler said about the power of propaganda. He explained the techniques he used to win a hostile crowd to his side. He knew how to tap into their anger, how to handle their objections before they voiced them, and how to get them to see the reasons for his philosophy. In my opinion, he was a master at

reading human nature and knowing how to manipulate the masses to gain a zealous following. Hitler believed that books could never bring about a revolution; only the spoken word, delivered by a person who could connect with his audience could convert them to a radical agenda. He said that when you want to tear down a world and build another in its place you must first of all separate the supporters and the members. The function of propaganda was to attract supporters, and change people's minds so that they would be in agreement with the aims and philosophy of the movement. A member was one who has taken a further step and not only supports the movement but is willing to fight on its behalf. Notice what he wrote in Mein Kampf: The first task of propaganda is to win people for subsequent organization ... The second task of propaganda is the disruption of the existing state of affairs and the permeation of this state of affairs with the new doctrine, Hitler knew that propaganda must be used to prepare the people for something much more drastic, namely, a revolution that would send them down a different path. "The most striking success of a revolution," he wrote, "will always have been achieved when the new philosophy of life as far as possible has been taught to all men, and if

necessary, later forced upon them.”² Yes, what begins as information turns out to become the law of the land, and woe to those who dare to oppose the law! “Hate,” he said, was “more lasting than dislike.” If he portrayed the Germans as victims and the Jews as the victimizers, hatred would fuel his agenda. It is chilling to think of what Hitler could have done if he could have used today’s media to gain followers. His speeches, broadcast on radio and propaganda movies, were persuasive, but with the modern means of instant communication, his task would have been much easier. Thanks to the Internet and television, a passionate leader with an appealing message and the power of oratory could quickly create another cultural movement that would be destructive to the world.

In Hitler’s Germany the people were to see and hear only what the government wanted them to see and hear. The Nazis censored film productions and textbooks to be used in schools. Books that did not match the Nazi ideal were burned or outlawed. Children’s picture books demeaned the Jews and emphasized the glories of the Aryan race. And it worked.

In Oceania, George Orwell’s chilling totalitarian state in the novel 1984, we have a compelling description of how the so-called Ministry of Truth used a subtle,

sinister language, “Newspeak,” to brainwash the people. The slogan of Oceania was “War is peace; freedom is slavery; ignorance is strength.” The New Thought Police were able to control the ideas that determined the political and moral views of the culture. The withdrawal of individual freedoms was sold to the population as a plus. Slavery to the state was presented as the gateway to freedom and prosperity.

Recently I toured Auschwitz, the concentration camp in Poland where 1.2 million people were murdered. When we saw the display of thousands of children’s shoes—shoes that belonged to the little ones killed in the camp—we all turned away to find a corner to weep. When Hitler starved children, he called it putting them on a “low-calorie diet.” And the extermination of Jews was called “cleansing the land.” Euthanasia was referred to as “the best of modern therapy.” Children were put to death in “Children’s Specialty Centers.” Hitler’s cronies seldom said they were going to kill people; even when plans were made to exterminate millions, the leaders spoke only in abstract slogans such as “the final solution.” Sanitized terms were used to camouflage unspeakable crimes. Planned massacres were spoken of in clinical terms to

mislead the naïve and to assuage the conscience of the perpetrators.

We do the same, of course. No one speaks of killing preborn infants. Rather, pregnant women are only removing “a product of conception” or a woman is simply “terminating a pregnancy.” Politicians speak of being in favor of “a woman’s right to choose ...” but they seldom complete the sentence. Somehow to say they are in favor of a woman’s right to choose to kill her pre-born infant, is too honest, too clear—we might add, and too chilling. Homosexual behavior turns out to be nothing more than “an alternate lifestyle.” And adultery is reduced to the more innocuous word: affair. Schools that demean religion and promote immorality are said to be “value free,” and laws that deny religious speech are promoted as “the fairness doctrine” or simply promoting “localism.” Historically, horrendous crimes have been committed in the name of liberty.

Perhaps the most enduring lesson of Nazi Germany is that ordinary people, simply concerned about living their own lives, can be motivated to become a part of an evil movement through the power of compelling compelling propaganda, intimidation, and mass euphoria. Yes, it is possible for ordinary people to commit atrocities they never thought possible when

they are swept up into a cultural current where everyone is both expected to fall in line and be rewarded for it. In such a climate, anyone who swims against the stream is demonized by misrepresentations, false evidence, and ridicule. With such pressure, even rational and decent people who refuse to be co-opted begin to question their own sanity. Can they alone be right when everyone else is wrong? Bonhoeffer warned Germany about Hitler when he was declared the chancellor of Germany, but no one listened because they yearned for a strong leader who would lead them into prosperity. So they closed their eyes to Hitler's excesses. Warning signs were overlooked because of this passion of people to believe. And, once the cultural current was widening and flowing with increased speed, anyone swimming upstream was deemed subversive. As Richard Terrell wrote, "Create a critical mass of people who cannot discern meaning and truth from nonsense, and you will have a society ready to fall for the first charismatic leader to come along."⁵ Churchill was right: "The desire to believe something is much more persuasive than rational argument." Like ancient Israel who wanted a king so badly that they refused to listen to God, so people today are prone to want what they want and don't care about the consequences. If everyone

wants it, who can resist the momentum? Thus a make-believe world is created where the seamier side of reality is routinely dismissed.

Lutzer, Erwin W.. When a Nation Forgets God (pp. 85-86). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition. Lutzer, Erwin W.. When a Nation Forgets God (p. 85). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition. Lesson

I. The Desired Presentation

1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

II. The Determined Transformation

For some, they believe when you speak or our worship by means of the mind, and reason, the intellect and thinking, they believe you have made it too academic.

But that is not true.

It is academic.

God gave us a book, not a feeling.

He gave us words, phrases, thoughts.

He have a mind to reason, to think, to discern truth
form error.

plain emotion not ground in the truth of scripture will
lead to error.

Worship arises from correct thoughts about God.

False worship occurs with false thoughts about God.

The centrality or correct thinking in worship is born
out in the next verse. The words that are chosen
clearly point to the mind as the issue.^{of 57 82}

2 And do not be conformed to this world,
but be transformed by the renewing of your
mind, that you may prove what is that good
and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Not one word in this text refers to your feeling or
emotion, But all three phrases refer to the mind and
the thinking of the mind or mindset.

1 And do not be conformed to this world,
2 be transformed by the renewing of your mind, 3
prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect
will of God.

1 And do not be conformed to this world, και μη
συσχηματιζεσθε τω αιωνι τουτω

do not be conformed

syschēmatizesthe

συσχηματίζεσθε

be conformed

V-PMM/P-2P^{of 58 82}

Pres Middle or Passive Imperative.

Middle

Do not be conforming yourself to the world

Stop conforming yourself to the world

or

Passive

Do not be being conformed by the world Stop being conformed by the world

suschématizó: to conform to

Original Word: συσχηματίζω **Part of Speech:** Verb

Transliteration: suschématizó **Phonetic Spelling:**

(soos-khay-mat-id'-zo) **Definition:** to conform to

Usage: I conform to.

Because the verb συσχηματίζεσθε (from

συσχηματίζω,

“form by,” “conform to,” or “guide by”) is in the

present tense

and middle voice (probably not here in the passive

voice)^{of 59 82}

Longenecker, R. N. (2016). *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. (I. H. Marshall & D. A. Hagner, Eds.) (p. 922). Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

4964 sysxēmatízō (from 4862 /sýn, "identified with" and sxēmatizō, "having outward shape") – properly,

assuming a similar outward form (expression) by following the same pattern (model, mold).

conform to, fashion self according to.

From sun and a derivative of schema; to fashion alike, i.e. Conform to the same pattern (figuratively)

-- conform to, fashion self according to.

Be not fashioned (μη συνσχηματιζεσθε [*mē sunschēmatizesthe*]). Present passive imperative with μη [*mē*], stop being fashioned or do not have the habit of being fashioned. Late Greek verb συσχηματιζω [*suschēmatizō*], to conform to another's pattern (1 Cor.

7:31; Phil. 2:7). In N. T. only here and 1 Peter 1:14

Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ro 12:2). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

1 Peter 1:14 (NKJV)

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to

the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance;^{of 60 82}

Be conformed is from *suschēmatizō*, which refers to an outward expression that does not reflect what is within. It is used of masquerading, or putting on an act, specifically by following a prescribed pattern or scheme (*schēma*). It also carries the idea of being transitory, impermanent, and unstable. The negative *mē* (**not**) makes the verb prohibitive. The verb itself is passive and

imperative, the passive indicating that conformation is something we allow to be done *to us*, the imperative indicating a command, not a suggestion.

Paul's gentle but firm command is that we are **not** to allow ourselves to **be conformed to this world**. We are not to masquerade as a worldly person, for whatever the reason. J. B. Phillips translates this phrase as "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould." We must not pattern ourselves or allow ourselves to be patterned after the spirit of the age. We must not become victims of the world. We are to stop allowing ourselves to be fashioned after the present evil age in which we live.

New Testament scholar Kenneth Wuest^{of 61 82} paraphrased this clause: "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" (Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955], 1:206–7).
MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 2, p. 149). Chicago: Moody Press.

1 And do not be conformed to this world, και μη
 συσχηματιζεσθε τω αιωνι τουτω
 this world

ΤΩ ΑΙΩΝΙ ΤΟΥΤΩ

to this world

165 [e] aiōni

αἰῶνι

age

N-DMS

aión: a space of time, an age **Original Word:**

αἰών, ὠνος, ὄ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine **Transliteration:**aión^{of 62 82}**Phonetic Spelling:** (ahee-ohn') **Definition:** a space of time, an age**Usage:** an age, a cycle (of time), especially of the present age as contrasted with the future age, and of one of a series of ages stretching to infinity.

165 aión (see also the cognate adjective, 166 / aiónios, "age-long") – properly, an age (era, "time-span"), characterized by a specific quality (type of existence).

According to this world (τῷ αἰῶνι τουτῷ [*tōi aiōni**toutōi*]). Associative instrumental case. Do not take this age as your fashion plateRobertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ro 12:2). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.**World** translates *aiōn*, which is better rendered “age,” referring to the present sinful age, the **world** system

now dominated by Satan, “the god of this world (*aiōn*)” (2 Cor. 4:4). **World** here represents the sum of the demonic-human philosophy of life. It corresponds to the German *zeitgeist* (the spirit of the age) and has been well described as “that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world,^{of 63}
82

which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitute a most real and effective power, being the moral, or immoral atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again

inevitably to exhale” (G. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973], pp. 217–18).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 2, p. 150). Chicago: Moody Press.

It is not uncommon for unbelievers to mask themselves as Christians. Unfortunately, it also is not uncommon for Christians to wear the world’s masks. They want to enjoy the world’s entertainment, the world’s fashions, the world’s vocabulary, the world’s music, and many of the world’s attitudes—even when those things clearly do not conform to the standards of God’s Word. That sort of living is wholly unacceptable to God.

The world is an instrument of Satan, and his ungodly influence is pandemic.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 2, p. 150). Chicago: Moody Press

James 4:4 (NKJV)

4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know

that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.^{of 64 82}

1 John 2:15–17 (NKJV)

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

Colossians 2:8–10 (NKJV)

8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy

and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

These ideologies of the world have so infiltrated the church that it is hard to tell the difference.

Sadly most of the time the difference amounts only^{of 65 82}

to were you are on Sunday morning and if you have a fish emblem on you bumper.

The thinking relatively the same.

The Stats verifies this tragic reality philosophies

like Darwinism, Humanism, Relativism, Materialism pragmatism, psychology, anthropology, sociology, ecclesiology, political science, philosophy regarding the family, marriage the raising of children and discipline.

education, economics,

The current love of the church of Social Justice and Critical Race theory.

the list could go on and on.

There is no single word that perfectly describes how the world thinks, but *secularism* is good for general purposes. It is an umbrella term that covers a number of other “isms,” like humanism, relativism, pragmatism, pluralism, hedonism, and materialism. *Secularism*, more than any other single word, aptly describes the mental framework and value structure of the people of our time.^{of 66 82}

The word *secular* also comes closest to what Paul says when he refers to “the pattern of this world.”

Secular is derived from the Latin word *saeculum*,

which means age. And the word found in Paul's phrase in verse 2 is the exact Greek equivalent. The NIV uses the word *world*, but the Greek actually says, "Do not be conformed to this *age*." In other words, "Do not be 'secularist' in your worldview."

There is a right way to be secular, of course. Christians live in the world and are therefore rightly concerned about the world's affairs. We have legitimate secular concerns. But secularism (note the "ism") is more than this. It is a philosophy that does not look beyond this world but instead operates as if this age is all there is.

The best single statement of secularism I know is something Carl Sagan said in the television series *Cosmos*. He was pictured standing before a spectacular view of the heavens with its many swirling galaxies, saying in a hushed, almost reverential tone of voice, "The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be." That is bold-faced secularism. It is bound up entirely by the limits of of

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the material universe, by what we can see and touch and weigh and measure. If we think in terms of our existence here, it means operating within the limits of life on earth. If we are thinking of time, it

means disregarding the eternal and thinking only of the now.

We have it expressed in popular advertising slogans like “You only go around once” and Pepsi’s “Now Generation.” These slogans dominate our culture and express an outlook that has become increasingly harmful. If now is the only thing that matters, why should we worry about the national debt, for example? That’s not our problem. Let our children worry about it. Or why should we study hard preparing to do meaningful work later on in life, as long as we can have a good time now? Most important, why should I worry about God or righteousness or sin or judgment or salvation, if now is all that really matters?

R. C. Sproul writes, “For secularism, all life, every human value, every human activity must be understood in light of this present time.... What matters is *now* and only *now*. All access to the above and the beyond is *blocked*. There is no exit of

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from the confines of this present world. The secular is all that we have. We must make our decisions, live our lives, make our plans, all within the closed arena of this time—the here and now.”

Boice, J. M. (1991–). *Romans: The New Humanity* (Vol. 4, pp. 1524–1525). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

1 And do not be conformed to this world,
2 be transformed by the renewing of your mind,

P. Pass. IMPerative.

metamorphoó: to transform

Original Word: μεταμορφόω **Part of Speech:** Verb

Transliteration: metamorphoó **Phonetic Spelling:**

(met-am-or-fo'-o)

Definition: to transform

Usage: I transform, transfigure.

3339 metamorphóō (from 3326 /metá, "change after being with" and 3445 /morphóō, "changing form in keeping with inner reality") – properly, transformed after being with; transfigured.

[3339 (metamorphóō) is the root of the English terms "metamorphosis" and "metamorphize."]

Be ye transformed (μεταμορφουσθε^{of 69 82}

[*metamorphousthe*]). Present passive imperative of μεταμορφωω [*metamorphoō*], another late verb, to

transfigure as in Matt. 17:2 (=Mark 9:2); 2 Cor. 3:18,

which see. On the distinction between σχημα [*schēma*] and μορφη [*morphē*], see Phil. 2:7.

There

must be a radical change in the inner man for one to

live rightly in this evil age, “by the renewing of your mind” (τῆ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοοῦ [*tēi anakainōsei tou noos*]). Instrumental case. The new birth, the new mind, the new (καίνοσ [*kainos*]) man Robertson, A. T.

(1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ro 12:2). Nashville, TN: *Broadman Press*.

Matthew 17:2 (NKJV)

2 and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.of 70 82

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 be transformed **by the renewing of your mind**

renewing of your mind

anakainósis: renewal

Original Word: ἀνακαίνωσις, εως, ἡ **Part of**

Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: anakainósis

Phonetic Spelling: (an-ak-ah'-ee-no-sis)

Definition: renewal

Usage: renewing; a renewal or change of heart and life.

342 anakainósis (from 303 /aná, "up, completing a

process," which intensifies kainō, "make fresh, new"; see 2537 /kainós) – properly, a new development; a renewal, achieved by God's power.

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)^{of 71 82}

5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

nous: mind, understanding, reason Original

Word: νοῦς, νοός, νοί, νοῦν, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine **Transliteration:**

nous

Phonetic Spelling: (nooce)

Definition: mind, understanding, reason

Usage: the mind, the reason, the reasoning faculty, intellect. 3563 noús (a masculine noun) – the God-given capacity of each

person to think (reason); the mind; mental capacity to exercise reflective thinking. For the believer, 3563 (noús) is the organ of receiving God's thoughts, through faith.

Ro 12:2,3: "2And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (3563 /ólynthos), so that you may prove what the will (2307 /thélēma) of God is, that which is good

and acceptable and perfect. 3For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to^{of 72}
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think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith (4102 / πίστις)" (NASU).

There must be a radical change in the inner man for one to live rightly in this evil age, “by the renewing of your mind” (τῆ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοοῦ [*tēi anakainōsei tou noos*]). Instrumental case. The new birth, the new mind, the new (καίνοσ [*kainos*]) man.

Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ro 12:2). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

Ephesians 4:21–32 (NKJV)

21if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

25Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.^{of 73 82}

26“Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go

down on your wrath,
27nor give place to the devil.

28Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

29Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

32And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

The Holy Spirit achieves this transformation **by the renewing of the mind**, an essential and repeated New Testament theme. The outward transformation is effected by an inner change in the mind, and the Spirit's means of transforming our minds is the Word. David testified, "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee" (Ps.^{of 74 82} 119:11). God's own Word is the instrument His own Holy Spirit uses to renew our minds, which, in turn, He uses to transform our living.

Paul repeatedly emphasized that truth in his letter

to Colossae. As he proclaimed Christ, he was “admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ” (Col. 1:28). By receiving Christ as Lord and Savior, we “have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him” (3:10). Consequently, we are to “let the word of Christ richly dwell within [us], with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in [our] hearts to God” (3:16).

The transformed and renewed **mind** is the mind saturated with and controlled by the Word of God. It is the mind that spends as little time as possible even with the necessary things of earthly living and as much time as possible with the things of God. It is the mind that is set “on the things above, not on the things that are on earth” (Col. 3:2). Whether good or bad, when anything happens in our lives,^{of}

75 82

our immediate, almost reflexive response should be biblical. During His incarnation, Jesus responded to Satan’s temptations by hurling Scripture back into His adversary’s face (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). Only the mind that is constantly being renewed by God’s

Spirit working through God's Word is pleasing to God. Only such a mind is able to make our lives "a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is [our] spiritual service of worship."

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 2, p. 151). Chicago: Moody Press.

2And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Today when Christians talk about discovering the will of God what they usually have in mind is praying until God somehow discloses a specific direction for their lives—who they should marry, what job they should take, whether they should be missionaries, what house they should buy, and so forth. This is not exactly what proving the will of God means, nor is it what Romans 12:2 is teaching. The will of God is far more important than that.^{of 76 82} We may not know what that specific will is, and we do not need to be under pressure to "discover" it, fearing that if we miss it, somehow we will be doomed to a life outside the center of God's will. We are free to make decisions with what light and wisdom we possess.

Nevertheless, we can know that God does have a perfect will for us, that the Holy Spirit is praying for

us in accordance with that will, and that this will of God for us will be done—because God has decreed it and because the Holy Spirit is praying for us in this area.

Boice, J. M. (1991–). *Romans: The New Humanity* (Vol. 4, p. 1557). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

that you may prove

dokimazo: I put to the test, prove, examine

Original Word: δοκιμάζω **Part of Speech:** Verb

Transliteration: dokimazo **Phonetic Spelling:**

(dok-im-ad'-zo)

Definition: to test, by implication to approve

Usage: I put to the test, prove, examine; I distinguish by testing, approve after testing; I am fit.^{of 77 82}

Cognate: 1381 dokimázō (from 1384 /dókimos, "approved") – properly, to try (test) to show something is acceptable (real, approved); put to the test to reveal what is good (genuine). See 1384 (dokimos).

1381 /dokimázō ("to approve by testing") is done to demonstrate what is good, i.e. passes the necessary test. 1381 (dokimázō) does not focus on disproving something (i.e. to show it is bad).

That ye may prove (εἰς το δοκιμαζειν [*eis to dokimazein*]). Infinitive of purpose with εἰς το [*eis to*], "to test" what is God's will, "the good and

acceptable and perfect” (το ἀγαθον και εὐαρεστον και τελειον [*to agathon kai euareston kai teleion*]).

Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Ro 12:2). Nashville, TN: *Broadman Press*.

what is that good

agathos: good

Original Word: ἀγαθός, ἡ, ὄν

Part of Speech: Adjective **Transliteration:**

agathos **Phonetic Spelling:** (ag-ath-os')

Definition: good^{of 78 82}

Usage: intrinsically good, good in nature, good whether it be seen to be so or not, the widest and most colorless of all words with this meaning.

18 agathós – inherently (intrinsically) good; as to the believer, 18 (agathós) describes what originates from God and is empowered by Him in their life, through faith.

and acceptable

euarestos: well-pleasing Original Word:

εὐάρεστος, ον

Part of Speech: Adjective **Transliteration:**

euarestos

Phonetic Spelling: (yoo-ar'-es-tos) **Definition:**

well-pleasing

Usage: acceptable, well-pleasing (especially to God), grateful.

2101 euárestos (from 2095 /eú, "well, good" and

700 /aréskō, "to please") – properly, well-pleasing (gratifying) because fully acceptable.

In using *euarestos* (**acceptable**), Paul again borrows from Old Testament sacrificial language to describe the kind of holy living that God approves,^{of}
79 82

a “living sacrifice” that is morally and spiritually spotless and without blemish.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 2, p. 152). Chicago: Moody Press.

and perfect will of God.

theléma: will

Original Word: θέλημα, ατος, τό

Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter **Transliteration:**

theléma

Phonetic Spelling: (thel'-ay-mah)

Definition: will

Usage: an act of will, will; plur: wishes, desires.

2307 thélēma (from 2309 /thélō, "to desire, wish") – properly, a desire (wish), often referring to God's "preferred-will," i.e. His "best-offer" to people which can be accepted or rejected.

[Note the -ma suffix, focusing on the result hoped for with the particular desire (wish). 2307 (thélēma) is nearly always used of God, referring to His preferred-will. Occasionally it is used of man (cf. Lk 23:25; Jn 1:13.)

teleios: having reached its end, i.e. complete, by

ext. perfect^{of 80 82}

Original Word: τέλειος, α, ον

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: teleios

Phonetic Spelling: (tel'-i-os)

Definition: having reached its end, complete, perfect

Usage: perfect, (a) complete in all its parts, (b) full grown, of full age, (c) specially of the completeness of Christian character.

Cognate: 5046 τέλειος (an adjective, derived from 5056 /τέλος, "consummated goal") – mature (consummated) from going through the necessary stages to reach the end-goal, i.e. developed into a consummating completion by fulfilling the necessary process (spiritual journey). See 5056 (telos).

[This root (tel-) means "reaching the end (aim)." It is well-illustrated with the old pirate's telescope, unfolding (extending out) one stage at a time to function at full-strength (capacity effectiveness).]

Perfect carries the idea of being complete, of something's being everything it should be. Our wills should desire only what God desires and lead us to^{of}

^{81 82}

do only what He wants us to do in the way He wants

us to do it—according to His will and by His power. Our imperfect wills must always be subject to His **perfect** will.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 2, p. 152). Chicago: Moody Press.

The Will that is proven here is not the details of individual choices. The Will here is determined by its context. The Context is that you give yourself as a living sacrifice to God, as holy and well pleasing not conforming to the age and mindset we live in and transform our minds by the word of God and in doing so we will prove, or show the favorable, good and pleasing will of God that is complete for us.

If you will do this, all the other details will fall into place.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly

Be filled with the Holy Spirits.

Saturate yourself with the Word of God and do what you will.

Goodspeed(i) 1 I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by this mercy of God, to offer your bodies in a living sacrifice that will be holy and acceptable to God; that is your rational worship. 2 You must not adopt the customs of this world but by your new attitude of mind^{of 82 82}

be transformed so that you can find out what God's will is—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

With this wonderful programme of salvation before you offer to God a sacrifice, not of slaughtered beasts, but of your living selves, your own bodies, pure and free from blemish, your spiritual service. Do not take pattern by the age in which you live, but undergo complete moral. reformation with the will of God for your standard.

Sanday, W., & Headlam, A. C. (1897). *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle of the Romans* (3d ed., pp. 350–351). New York: C. Scribner's Sons.