

Romans (110)

I suggested this morning that verses 1-2 are two sides of the same coin—in v1 we have consecration to God, and in v2 we have separation from the world—this two must ever be joined together—[1] consecration without separation is HYPOCRISY—that is—claiming to love God without keeping His commandments, and [2] separation without consecration is MORALISM—that is—attempting to live morally without devotion to God...

I. Nonconformity—"do not be conformed to this world..."

II. Renewing the Mind—"but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

III. Proving the Will of God—"that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

I. Nonconformity—"do not be conformed to this world..."

1. V2—"And do not be conformed to this world"—notice two words that need defining—"world" and "conformed"...
2. [a] World—now as most of you know—the Scriptures use this "world"—in at least THREE distinct ways...
3. [i] Creation, Rom.1:20—"For since the creation of the WORLD His invisible attributes are clearly seen" Acts 17:24—"God, who made the world and everything in it..."
4. [ii] People, especially the Gentiles, Jn.3:16—"For God so loved the WORLD, that He gave His only begotten Son..."
5. [iii] Moral system, 1Jn.2:15—"Do not love the WORLD or the things in the world" 1Jn.5:19—"We know that we are of God, and the whole WORLD lies under the sway of the wicked one..."
6. Here "world" refers to this morally depraved world—as controlled and governed by Satan and his demonic hosts...
7. Gal.6:14—"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world..."
8. Thus—by "world" is meant—that system of moral thinking—controlled by Satan—and followed by fallen man...
9. [b] Conformed—"do not be conformed to this world"—that is—this wicked, Satan controlled, God hating—world...
10. The Gk word rendered "conformed" means to align or bring into agreement with—in thinking or behavior...
11. J.B. Phillips translation (or paraphrase)—"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould..."
12. That is—do not allow the world to squeeze you into its way of thinking—do not adopt the thinking of the world...
13. Thus—I suggest that Christians are NOT to be conformed to this world's—[1] religion, [2] beliefs, and [3] ethics..
14. [1] Do not be conformed to the world's RELIGION—this may seem strange to some people—that I begin here...
15. But the tragedy is—most professing Christians have no idea—how far the world has infiltrated into the church...
16. For example—many professing Christians have totally bought into a secure psychological approach to counselling...
17. Mandy churches (dare I say most churches)—have on-staff professional counsellors who counsel the serious problems...
18. Pastors are not competent to counsel because they've been trained in the latest and newest psychology methods...
19. Now—some of you might think I'm making this up—but I assure you—it has increasingly become the norm...
20. For example—back when I worked as chaplain for the City Rescue Mission—churches used to drop off people all the time...

21. Those addicted to porn, alcohol, drugs, stealing, laying—they all were diagnosed with various mental disorders...
22. Why were they sent to me?—but because I was the professional who was specifically trained for such problems...
23. Or, worse yet—they would take them to various rehab facilities—where they would be psychologically brainwashed...
24. Or else, think of many church growth schemes—do whatever it takes to get unconverted people to come back...
25. Or else, think of worship in many churches—they've through out many of the elements commanded by God...
26. Now—if you don't believe me, or if you think I am overstating things—visit your local Christian bookstore...
27. I guarantee what you'll find is—rows and rows and self-help books, psychology, and church-growth books...
28. Thus brethren—to put it plainly—this texts exhorts us—not to be conformed to this world's religious thinking...
29. [2] Do not be conformed to the world's BELIEFS—that is—to its values, priorities, traditions, and philosophies...
30. For example—think of the way in which a secular and worldly view of education has infiltrated the church...
31. What does the world say—a woman can and should be able to do anything that a man does—without exception...
32. Most professing Christians would be appalled at the assertion—that not every job is lawful for a woman to have...
33. Many, if not most, professing Christians would be shocked by the assertion that being a wife and mother are the normal callings of a woman...
34. I mean, brethren, just think for a moment—how the church has been influenced by the world simply on this issue...
35. [3] Do not be conformed to the world's ETHICS—specifically, the moral standards and practices—of this wicked and evil world...
36. For example—just look at the average young lady—in the average church—who's a professing Christian...
37. I guarantee you, she wears skin tight jeans, watches every R-rated movie, and listens to every secular band...

II. Renewing the Mind—"but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

1. V2—"but be transformed by the renewing of your mind"—notice three words [1] transformed, [2] renewing, [3] mind..."
2. [1] Transformed—"be transformed"—the Gk word is *metamorphoo* which literally means—to be changed or transformed...
3. Matt.17:2—"and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light..."
4. He was transfigured or transformed—His figure changed—this is what the word means—to undergo change...
5. 2Cor.3:18—"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..."
6. [2] Renewing—to "renew" means to—"renovate or restore"—it means here—to renew or change your thinking...
7. Eph.4:17-24—"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as

the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness..."

8. [a] What we were by nature, vv17-19—"you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness..."
9. [b] The initial change at conversion—vv20-21—"but you have not so leaned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus..."
10. [c] The ongoing change in sanctification—v22—"that you put off...v23 be renewed...v24 put on the new man..."
11. [3] Mind—here I simply want to underscore what I've already asserted—we are to be transformed by renewing our minds...
12. That is—we are to be transformed, or changed, by renewing our minds—that we would think according to Scripture...
13. Or—because Scripture is the word of Christ—another way of saying this would be—we are to be transformed into the image of Christ—that we would have the mind of Christ...
14. 1Cor.2:16—"For 'who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?' But we have the mind of Christ..."

III. Proving the Will of God—"that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

1. V2—"that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"—this is the result of the former statement...
2. That is—if we are transformed by the renewing of our minds—we will be able to PROVE the will of God..."
3. [1] What is meant by PROVE?—this single Gk word is variously translated—prove, test, or test and approve...
4. It fundamentally refers to the testing of metals—for the purpose of discerning—what is good and what is false...
5. The ESV has it—"be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God..."
6. The point being—as we renew our minds—we will be able to discern from Scripture—what God commands...
7. Barnes—"The sense is, that such a renewed mind is essential to a successful inquiry after the will of God..."
8. [2] What is meant by the WILL OF GOD?—now—most of you already know—by God's will is meant His desire...
9. Furthermore—most of your are well aware—that the Scriptures speak of God's will (or desire) in two ways...
10. The decretive will of God—this concerns God's eternal, sovereign, and secret will—that always comes to past...
11. The perceptive will of God—this refers to God's revealed will in Scripture which is often ignored and denied...
12. Simply put—the will of God referred to within this text—is God's perceptive will—or the Holy Scriptures...
13. 1Jn.2:15-17—"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..."
14. [a] Good—that is—His word is good, Rom.7:12—"therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good..."
15. [b] Acceptable—this is the same Gk word we saw this morning in v1—which literally means—well-pleasing...

16. Thus—what Paul means is this—the Scripture is the ONLY thing that tells us—what is well-pleasing to God...
17. Col.1:9-10—"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God..."
18. Col.3:20—"Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord..."
19. Heb.13:20-21—"Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen..."
20. 1Jn.3:22—"And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight..."
21. [c] perfect—that is—it's complete and lacking nothing—it contains all that is necessary to get right with God and walk with God...
22. Ps.19:7—"The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple..."

IV. Lessons

1. [1] The Christian life is one of renewal—that is—of constant and ongoing change, progression, and growth...
2. We must forever keep in mind the differences between our justification and sanctification, or position and practice...
3. Our justification, or position, is perfected at the moment we believe—we are FULLY forgiven and accepted...
4. There is no way possible to improve upon our standing before God—we are declared righteous before God...
5. Yet—this is not true with regards to our practice—this is a long process that continues throughout our lives...
6. For example—think of a run-down house—a wealthy investor purchases the building—and then renovates it...
7. [2] The Christian life is negative and positive—that is—we are to put off (negative), and put on (positive)...
8. Or—in the terms of Rom.12:2—we are to separate from the world, and be transformed by renewing our minds...
9. [3] The Christian life is conformity to Christ—ultimately speaking—Paul is exhorting us to Christ-likeness...
10. Heb.7:27—"For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners..."