

CONFORMED OR TRANSFORMED

Greetings precious people, this week we will look at the words: conformed and transformed as they are used in the Word of God the Bible to describe the Christian life.

The word conformed has two meanings, one good and the other bad. In Romans 12:2 we are admonished, “And be not conformed to this world.” The word conformed means to: fashion alike; conform to the same pattern. The reason that we are not to be conformed to this world is because this world (the system, its values, morals (or lack thereof) ideas, etc.) are contrary to God. The reason the world is opposed to God is because Satan is the god of this world and is setting its course.

One more thing, in 1 John 2:15-17 we are told, “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. 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. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

This world is always attempting to conform us to its way. One of the most noticeable ways is through the media: entertainment; news agencies both TV; radio; magazines; newspaper; et al. the education system is also a major contributor to conforming society to its image. They tell us what “they” want us to know so our thinking will conform/reflect this world.

On the contrary, God is at work to conform us to His image. In Romans 8:29, we read, “For whom He foreknew (those who would trust in Him), He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” This work of conforming the believer to the image of Jesus is a work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

This work of conforming accompanies the second word “transformed” which is found in Romans 12:2 “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.”

This word transformed comes from the Greek word metamorphosis. The best way to understand this word is to consider the radical change which takes place when a caterpillar is transformed into a butterfly. A caterpillar goes into its cocoon a multi legged worm like creature (rather unattractive) and comes out a beautiful multi winged flying machine.

In like manner as man comes into this world he or she is born a sinner in rebellion against his Creator, living for himself. This unregenerate life is capable of some very ugly practices. The Bible calls them the “works of the flesh” and are found in Galatians 5:19-21, “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries.”

But when a person is born again (born of the Spirit, born from above) a radical transformation “begins” to occur from the inside out. Unfortunately the works of the flesh do not automatically disappear (they must be contended with one’s entire life and by the Spirit they can be overcome).

The Spirit of God now begins a new and beautiful work in the life of a believer which is known as the “fruit of the Spirit.” In Galatians 5:22-25, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

What about you? Are you being hopelessly conformed to this lost and dying world or are you being transformed by the Spirit of God?

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