

#5: "transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

What we mean by:

FRIENDS: *The people (actual friends, or co-workers, neighbours, family members etc.) God has sovereignly placed in your sphere of influence.*

ROMANS: *The letter written by Paul in which the important background information of the gospel is explained and the full gospel is revealed.*

MATEO: *Money – Abilities – Time – Energy - OPPORTUNITY*

As the actual gospel is being unfolded to us in the book of Romans we notice 3 BIG IDEAS:

RIGHTEOUSNESS (Of God): *God's perfect relationship with right and wrong.*

JUSTIFICATION: *God declaring us righteous, even though we are not.*

SANCTIFICATION: *The real-life experience by which we become more and more righteous.*

Today is not a new BIG IDEA, but a practical piece of the Sanctification puzzle.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE ACTUAL GOSPEL: "it makes our minds renewable"

You are the only person who really knows what goes on in your own mind:

- You know the harsh criticisms, the mean-spirited comments that drift through, the pride that tells you what you deserve, the lust, the jealousy, the anger, the bitterness.
- Those secret thoughts where you wish failure or pain on others. The prideful assumption that you deserve better than your current circumstances.
- We know that we need our mind revamped, reconditioned... RENEWED.

So, if when we are Justified, God declares us righteous, even though we aren't, and sanctification is the real-life experience by which we become more like Christ... then how does that process happen?

1. We need a new heart. (Mike's sermon two weeks ago, our heart is new when it is regenerated by God)
2. We need a renewed mind.

Today's Text – Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

There are two massive ideas imbedded in this verse:

- Transformation comes from the inside out.
- A renewed mind is able to discern the will of God.

TWO OPTIONS AFTER YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN:

1. You conform to the world.
2. You transform ... by the renewing of your mind.

Transform: Metamorph, only used once in the entire gospel accounts:

Mark 9:2-3 -- ² And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured (METAMORPHED) before them, ³ and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.

This wasn't just a subtle change, but a radically, physical metamorphosis... and it shows us the change God is looking for in the Soul of every Christian man and woman.

He gives you a new heart, and a mind that can be renewed... you can use these new gifts to either conform to the world, or be transformed (2 Cor 3:18 – into the likeness of Christ).

In the Sermon on the Mount, while teaching his disciples, Jesus shows us what this looks like:

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

- Hide it and be conformed, or put it on a stand and be transformed...

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT RENEWING YOUR MIND

1) It is God's formula for transformation.

- We know what makes us spiritually healthy: read your bible, memorize the word of God, pray, control your thought life, be discerning about what you watch and listen to: these are very ORDINARY practices that, by the Holy Spirit, have powerful ways to produce extraordinary results.
- **Kevin DeYoung:** "If you are thoroughly underwhelmed with my ... points for pursuing communion with Christ, I don't apologize. It may sound boring or out-of-date, but it just happens to be true: the way to grow in your relationship with Jesus is to pray, read your Bible, and go to church where you'll get good preaching, good fellowship, and receive the sacraments. I'm not suggesting Christianity can be boiled down to a few external requirements. I'm not saying that at all. I'm arguing that if you want to be Christlike you need to have communion with Christ, and if you want communion with Christ you need to do it on his terms with channels of grace he's provided. And that means the only way to extraordinary holiness is through ordinary means." *The Hole in Our Holiness*

2) Your mind is like a muscle.

- First this is true because like a muscle, you can train your mind like you can your biceps or triceps... they can become stronger, more developed, capable or more!
- think of nearly any physical discipline you have. (For me, it's the gym)
- It takes great discipline to go to the gym... because it's hard, and it makes you sore and it's not enjoyable... no one STARTS going to the gym, or running, or biking because they like it... they begin these disciplines because the RESULTS are appealing.
- Most of us want to feel healthy, we know what it takes to get healthy... eat right, and exercise. It's not a mystery... but we ALL look for a new mysterious (easier) way to do it. (Just watch any infomercial pushing a fitness product)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

... ⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you

... ¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

... ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Have you ever wondered why Christians are described as “free” when a Christian life seems to be controlled by many more rules?

- It’s because when you do what you *love* to do, you feel as though you are free...
- ...If what you *love* to do is what you *ought* to do, that’s REAL freedom. And that’s what transformation means: ***when you are transformed in Christ you love to do what you ought to do.*** That’s freedom.

And here is the (wonderful, glorious, beautiful) mystery: Because you were created to reflect the glory of God, and because you were given a NEW heart, when someone with a NEW heart begins to “set their mind on the things above” – when you get to the work of BEHOLDING Christ and reading the words of God then the TRANSFORMATION that happens first is that you begin to love what you ought to love.

WHAT TO ACTUALLY SAY:

a) “We are what we worship”

- We are all in the process of becoming...
- What we hold most dear, what we meditate on, what we wake up and fall asleep thinking about... what grips us... it’s what we’re worshipping, and we become like what we worship.
- Created as reflective beings... created to conform... and WILL transform... the question is, what are you worshipping/ beholding?

b) “How are you training your mind?”

- ***Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.***
- We spend our lives looking for meaning: *should I do this? Should I marry so and so? Should I go to school for...? Should I have kids? Should I go back to school? Should I quit my job? Should I pursue this?*
- To the non-Christians: You will live a restless life of bouncing from one idea of what will make you happy to the next because nothing you can pursue on your own is what you were created for. You were created to glorify God by becoming more like Jesus Christ... and if you’re sitting here this morning, restless because nothing has given you a true sense of joy and purpose, ask God for a new heart so that you can begin this process of renewing your mind.
- To the Christians: A new heart has been given to you by God... what are you doing with it? By saturation in the social ideals, intellectual ideas and damaging philosophies of the world are you being conformed? Or are you actively, aggressively working WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT to renew your old mind so that you can become more like Christ?