



# *The Journey*


*Lesson #4*

*The Battle for Our Minds*

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# In the world, but of the world ...

- How are we to live in this world, stay separate from sin, not come off as self-righteous, and still be effective?
  - How do we engage the culture without being engulfed by it?
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## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

- ❑ At times we must confront the value system of the world and those around us directly as Jesus did.
  - ❑ Calling his opponents snakes and children of the Devil was not tactful, but it was effective.
  - ❑ But they were opponents of the gospel – there were plenty of ungodly people for which his rhetoric was not so severe.
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## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.


- We are called to be a separated people, but not as hermits – we must participate in the culture to some extent if we want to affect it.
- I struggle with the “cocktail hour” at a lot of business social events, but I’ve come to believe that staying away rarely impresses anyone for Christ.
- As comfortable as it may make our flesh, people are rarely influenced for Christ by the things we don’t do.





## Romans 12:2

**Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.**

- Paul said he would become all things to all people so that he might by all means save (reach) some.
  - There must be cultural participation by believers or or there will be no cultural influence.
  - So how is it that we are to be witnesses for Christ to a world who mostly does not want to hear from us unless it is on their terms?
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## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

- ❑ Maybe step one towards success is to stop wondering how and start obeying what we've been told.
- ❑ Our first move is to cease and desist from trying to behave like the unsaved world around us.
- ❑ This must extend to something deeper than how we dress and how we entertain ourselves in this world.





## Some basic questions .....

- Why is it that the unsaved around us behave as they do?
- Why is it that they do not think long term?
- What are the immediate consequences of being a conforming or 'worldly' Christian?





## Some basic questions .....

- So there are some very real and serious immediate consequences behind the prohibition to live like the world.
  
- What are the long term consequences of worldly living as a Christian?








## Romans 12:2


Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

- Next we are told to “let God transform us”.
  - Does that mean God needs our permission?
  - No, but it does mean He has chosen to transform only those willing to be changed.
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## Romans 12:2


Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

- The phrase also implies that we can hinder God from doing His work in us.
  - Now it is only by His sovereign choice that we have that power, but He has delegated it to us.
  - The question of every hour of our lives is will we cooperate with God to effect change in us or not?
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## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

- ❑ The most familiar translations of this verse uses the words 'conform' and 'transform'.
  - ❑ When we allow the culture to press us into its mold we are conformed to the mold.
  - ❑ To be transformed is to be radically changed.
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## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.


☐ Transformation can be seen in nature ....





## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

- When we think being conformed or transformed we need to stop thinking these are things we do.
  - Rather, these are things that are done to us.
  - To be accurate, we allow one of the two to happen in our lives and we get to choose which one.
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## Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.


- Notice the method used to transform – by “changing the way you think”.
- There is a great battle going on for our minds between the Spirit of God and the Prince of this world.
- What we think and think about holds great sway over the quality of our lives – many just don't know it.





**Gen 8:21**

**"I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things.**

- ❑ A big part of our fallen nature is our fallen mind.**
  - ❑ We do not start out on a level playing field – we start out the game of life down 4 touchdowns.**
  - ❑ Until we change the way we think, nothing else will change either.**
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# The Context

- For the rest of this class I will not be arguing as to whether or not one who has been saved by trusting Jesus can still live like the world.
- The rest of today is about the quality of the life that is saved.
- One caution before we begin – if the rest of this class seems optional I would not rest too comfortably on the prayer you prayed or the aisle you walked.







# The Battle for Our Minds

□ Though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ....

II Corinthians 10:3-5





# The Battle for Our Minds

- ❑ If you believe as I do that everything we do originates in the mind then it is easy to see that whoever controls our minds controls us.
- ❑ Rom 7:23 But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.
- ❑ Rom 8:6-7 So **letting** your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But **letting** the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.





# The Battle for Our Minds

- ❑ 1 Cor 2:16 For, "Who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?" But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.
- ❑ The strange thing about the war we are in is that it seems like although we have the superior power and weapons we don't always use them.
- ❑ The Word of God, the Spirit of God, and prayer are often neglected and not even brought to the conflict.





# The Battle for Our Minds

- ❑ Thirty Six years of experience tells me that preparation is the most important thing I can do in the battle for my mind.
- ❑ There is no substitute for prayer, the word, and obedience.
- ❑ There is nothing new under the sun in terms of battle preparation – what worked in the past, works now, and will work until the end of time.





# Questions

