

## Renewing of the Mind

Today we will look at the renewal of our minds according to the Word (Rom. 12:2); and how you cannot renew your mind without a relationship with God.

*I want to start by looking at what 'renewal of our minds' are.*

### ***I. What did salvation accomplish within you? Are you still the same as before? Or did something change? Is it only a change of beliefs?***

So many times I would **encounter people** that tell me that they 'believe in God'. "Believe in God" what does that even mean? Again, we **have certain theological paradigms** in which we function. We approach God and the Bible from within these paradigms. Our paradigm today is one that looks to the **belief system**. If I have a certain **belief system** then that **qualifies me** as 'Christian' or 'atheist' or 'agnostic'.

**London underground story** - "Peter are you religious" - reflects the mind of the secular paradigm. Belief in God is just that, a belief system with no real bearing upon the individual not even to speak of supernatural power. You are placed within a certain 'religious category' based on your set of beliefs.

This is not the paradigm of the Bible. The **Biblical truth** is that to be saved to be 'born again' is not merely a change in perspective or a religious category. But a **spiritual transformation**. This is Christianity 101. It's not about believing in the existence of God. The demons know that God exists and they shudder. And so many Christians function on this level. Someone would say I struggled believing in "God" or "I believe in God". I'm not sure if God exists.

And please I'm not belittling anyone's spiritual path and spiritual walk. We see things differently and experience God in different ways. However, I want to criticize the Church body as a whole (not this Church, but the global Church) that we have neglected the deeper things of God, constantly feeding the sheep with watered down milk. Forgetting that the Gospel is not just a 'different point of view about God and salvation', but that it is the power unto salvation that brings the power of heaven to bear in a person's life.

So not a set of beliefs, but spiritual transformation.

### ***II. Now the next question is - are we already transformed, or are we being transformed?***

2 Corinthian 5:17 <sup>-17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Salvation is therefore not a change in perspective, but a transformation of the creature. 2 Corinthians 5:17 is not telling us that the creature is new through a change of perspective, but rather that the perspective is new because the creature is new.

When Paul exhorts his readers 'to put on the new creature' or that they are 'new creations in Christ'. He is not talking about positive thinking. He's not saying that they should keep on thinking that you are a new creation and then be transformed, no. Rather you should let your thought life and imagination be conformed to your spiritual reality.

Let's repeat that: We live our lives as if we still have a sinful nature. Now when we read that we should 'put on the new creature' or that we are 'new creatures in Christ', we think, this is talking about a change in beliefs of perspective. But, it's not. See... Paul tells us that we have been made new. The creature does not have a sinful nature anymore, but that the nature has been made new. And now what is left is for the mind to be transformed; for the mind to align itself to the spiritual reality. You are not spiritually transformed by the renewing of your mind, but as your mind renews, the transformation will be made manifest in your soul.

There is a subtle but crucial difference here. This is not a play on words or a difference in semantics. No, either the creature gets transformed by re-aligning their thought life or the creature is already transformed, what is left is for the thought life to align to that truth. A subtle but profound difference.

### **Definition of a human**

We will better understand this when we understand what a human is: Human consist of a body, soul & spirit.

Body being your 'xarks' flesh, your soul being your mind/personality, and your spirit is where the born again transformation took place.

When a person believes on the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The man of Galilee who bled and died and was resurrected on the third day. When you believe that this person was truly God and truly Man and that He reconciled you to the Father and that you are saved by grace through faith. Not a change in perspective, but a spiritual act of placing faith in the salvific and historic act of placing faith in Christ. It is then, and only after that spiritual act of believing on the one and only name, that something profound takes place.

A spiritual union takes place between your spirit and the spirit of Christ. In your spirit you are sealed by the Holy Spirit. 'An absolute spiritual transformation. Behold the old has passed away all things have been made new.' And now you 'have been blessed' (past tense) with all blessings in heavenly places. And now through your relationship with Christ you are seated (past tense) with Christ.

Not abstractions that have no bearing on the day-to-day, but an amazing reality that will profoundly impact your everyday life when understood and applied. But when we receive this revelation, it will totally transform our lives forever. I have been made new, what is left is for my mind to align to that spiritual state.

We all know that we are still sinners. We all know that after we came to Christ, that all our addictions and emotional issues didn't vanish. The Lord already transformed us, but we do not see the Kingdom of God in our lives, because we do not conform our thought life/our mind to Kingdom and Scriptural truth. Our minds are still carnal and un-renewed.

### **Johan Preek Video Clip: Selfbeskouing & Aksie**

#### **Transformation & Drawing Closer**

How does "Drawing Closer" tie in with the 'renewal of the mind'. Because transformation of the mind, of the soul, is impossible without relationship.

**2 Corinthians 3:18 <sup>1</sup>And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.**

You are nothing without the vine. You are but a branch. You are transformed in the spirit, because you are part of the vine. If you get plucked from the vine then there is no life giving transformation. You are not transformed in yourself, but through your unity with Christ. And as you draw closer, the reality of that unity will manifest in you.

You are not transformed by works, but by grace. It is when you behold the Lord Jesus Christ in the Scriptures, through worship, through praying, through praying in tongues, through meditating on the Scriptures. That you are transformed. Sanctification/transformation by grace. All you do is to look at Him; to behold Him.

The idea of being made new in the Spirit without relationship with the Lord is total nonsense. You cannot access the spiritual realm without relationship with Christ. To do so is witchcraft. Witchcraft is just that - accessing the spiritual realm moving in the spiritual realm, without relationship with the Triune God. Relationship with our Lord is crucial. Thus, to draw closer to Him is crucial. Your relationship with the Triune God determines everything and should be the crux of your life.

Image of sunflower always looking at the son.

Receives energy and the ability to photosynthesize



**What does this even mean for our day-to-day? And how do we even implement these truths in our lives.**

This makes for a good sermon or Ted Talk, but these are but abstractions impossible to implement. I might be a new creature in Christ, but that does not change the way I feel. I still struggle with lust, I still struggle with depression. These are realities that I feel in my flesh.

**III. We will discuss one Kingdom principle which will help us to draw closer to the Lord and to be transformed into His image.**

1. What you focus on, you will eventually connect with spiritually

What you focus on you will connect with spiritually.

Paul understood this. The human is a creative vessel. What he/she focusses on they meditate on will be conceived in the soul and bear fruit. Whether good or bad.

**James 1:13-15** - <sup>13</sup> *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God, "for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.*

<sup>14</sup> *But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.*

<sup>15</sup> *Then desire (lust) when it has conceived (arrest/take hold of - ovXkap.fa.v03) gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death*

Meditate on pornography long enough, it will eventually lead to sexual immorality. That seed will bear fruit whether you want it or not. And what you digest you will meditate. What you take in you will meditate on. And not even sinful things. Example: games, movies, books.

Focus long enough and hard enough on something and 1) you will develop an appetite for it (a desire for it) and 2) start meditating on it whether you want to or not. Most of the time the fruit will be an obsession with the thing. You are constantly playing games, watching movies... constantly fixated on something other than God, because you have developed an appetite for it. You have made a connection and meditation has begun.

This is how the Lord made us. His intention was that we focus on Him. That we commune with Him daily. Thereby developing an appetite to want to be with Him and thereby meditating on Him and His word. Beholding Him and being transformed by the renewing of our minds through beholding and meditating on Him. Paul understood this. We see it in Romans and in Philippians.

**Philippians 4:8-9** - **8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.**

We should start being very snobbish when it comes to our eye gates and ear gates. Only the highest quality food. No junk food. Because when something has entered the eye gates it's very hard to get it out again. You see what you watch, hear (what you take in) you will start digesting. It's like food. While

the apple is still outside of the mouth, it's an apple. But when you eat the apple the apple will impart to you what it has. Apples are awesome you get vitamins and fiber from apples. It imparts some of its properties to me and becomes part of me. The same with spiritual matters. Focus on and meditate on evil and it will start imparting that to you.

Some of you might have heard the name John Maxwell. Mr. Maxwell is a theologian that has written extensively on leadership. I don't care much for those kind of books, but you know how life goes. Sometimes you do things you don't want to do. Anyway Mr. Maxwell said something that I remember till this day, even though I detest self-help manuals 'be the best that you can be' (and this book was one of those).

He said that if he could only spend 48 hours with an individual. He would be able to fairly accurately gauge what that individual would be able to achieve in life through watching what the person is reading and spending their time on. In other words meditating on.

I think Mr. Maxwell is very arrogant in saying that, but he did touch on one important matter. That is, that if you are constantly spending time receiving things that are contrary to the truth of God, that your life will start taking on those characteristics (being contrary to the truth of God). What you meditate on or 'behold' matters. An impartation does take place whether you believe it or not.

AUGUSTINE'S REALITY – AS NEW CREATION

STORY: **"I know it is you, but it is not I..."**