

TRANSFORMATION AND RENEWAL OF 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."
Romans 12:2*

REFLECTION

We live in a world of competing values and claims on our life. The decisions we make, our attitude towards other people, our view on controversial issues, our ambition, the friends we choose, the lifestyle we adopt - all these would have been influenced by certain ideas we picked up from our families, our schools, the media and our exposure to the cultures of our time. Christians would say that how we live should be instructed by what we learn from our faith teachings and our relationship with God. Being shaped by our faith should be the desire of every Christian who loves God and who seeks to follow the way of His Kingdom.

However, in a world which is opened to all kind of influence on our life, it is not easy for us to be diligent in our quest to follow after Christ and His teachings. It seems much easier for us to be lured by the attractions of the world. So we look at our life through the lenses of what the world has set for us instead of the direction which God planned for us.

There are many widely accepted worldviews which are highly influential. For this short reflection, we shall look at one. And that is the subtle influence of a consumerist culture which says to us that the more we acquire, the happier and more important we are. Their mantra is probably what Gordon Gekko in the movie, *Wall Street*, says, "Greed is good." It is a culture which says that the latest model of cars, mobile phones, and jewellery from Milan and Paris is the best. At the bottom line, a consumerist culture is a culture of waste. It is a culture which has contributed to the depletion of rainforests, and the pollution of the environment when natural resources are exploited to produce goods to feed the avaricious consumers. This is a culture which has infiltrated many people's thinking and influenced how they view their life and human worth.

Paul reminds us not to be conformed to the world. The world may be pressing us to buy more into their value-system of wasteful extravagant lifestyle, and to measure human worth by the income they generate, properties they own, and the collection of branded outfits they have in their

wardrobes. Consumerist culture is so widespread that Christians have mindlessly, though for some knowingly, bought into such worldly values. But that is not the way to go.

What is expected of us is to apply our renewed mind to be more critical of the godless and often dehumanizing values of the world. We do so by opening ourselves to the transformative work of God in our life. It is when we are transformed and our minds are renewed that we will be enabled to test and discern the will of God, instead of just following and accepting the way of the world.

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for giving us a mind. We pray that you will renew it regularly as a sanctified vessel that will think thoughts that are pure, clear, thoughtful, holy and loving. Use our mind for the service of your Kingdom. Amen.

SUPPLICATION

- Thank God for the Bible schools/colleges which train Christians for ministries. Thank Him for providing the seminaries with well-qualified lecturers. Pray that the seminaries and teachers will be faithful in their tasks of equipping the saints for the works of God's Kingdom. And that the needs of the seminaries for human and material resources will be constantly supplied by God.
- Thank God for blessing Singapore which many of us call home. Our Lord has given us outstanding leaders in politics, the academia, business, medicine, sciences and even the churches. We pray that God will give us more competent and wise leaders. We entrust to God our future, asking for many more years of peace and progress with justice and a spirit of grace and generosity.
- Pray that God will guide and bless those involved in Christian education in our local churches. Thank God for the service of Sunday School teachers and small group leaders. We ask that those going through our Christian Education programmes will be well prepared to live a faithful life as fruitful followers of Christ.

"Take my life and let it be, consecrated Lord, to thee."

- Frances R. Havergal

***If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly
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