Dependence in the Life of Jesus (02)

Jan Philip Svetlik · Romans 12:2 · December 25, 2025



Conformity or transformation?

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB)

In Romans 12:1, we are called to offer our bodies to God as a living sacrifice in gratitude for what He has done for us. God wants us to surrender ourselves to Him unreservedly, so that we live a life of devotion to Him. This raises the question of what such a life looks like and what exactly each of us should do for God. To find out, we should examine what the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God is for us. This requires dependence.

In addition to our willingness to make ourselves completely available to God, Paul mentions two things that should help us to live in dependence on God:

1. We should not conform to this world.

2. We should be transformed by bringing our thinking into line with God's thoughts.

Before we take a closer look at the dependent life of the Lord Jesus, let us first ask ourselves how we can put the two points just mentioned into practice.

What does Paul actually mean by the term “world” in Romans 12:2? What characterizes this world, and why is it so dangerous for God's children? A brief journey through history will help us to understand a little better why we are called not to be conformed to this world:

Trust or mistrust? –“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John 2:15, NASB)

About 6,000 years ago, God placed Adam and Eve in paradise, a wonderful environment where they lacked nothing. But even though they saw the loving care of their Creator every day, they doubted His love for them and consciously decided to act against His will [FN 1]. They want to be on the same level as God—to be like Him—and make their own decisions apart from Him.

Does this sound familiar? Isn't it often the case that we fear God wants to withhold something from us that we consider good? Sometimes we are simply afraid that God's will does not coincide with our own, and therefore hesitate to leave the choice to Him.

Yet today, compared to the first humans, we have even more reason to trust that God has only the best intentions for us, for He proved His love for us in an unsurpassable way on Calvary! What does faith conclude from this? *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32, NASB).* If He did not withhold the most remarkable thing He had from us, then He will also give us everything else that is good for us. If we have trusted God for our eternal salvation, why should we not also trust Him in the daily things of life?

The Lord Jesus rested in His Father's love at all times. The daily awareness of this love was His joy (John 15:10-11). He trusted Him and was therefore able to say “Yes, Father” even in difficult times (Matthew 11:25-26). Day and night, He sought His counsel and involved Him in every decision of His life (Psalm 16:7-8).

How is it with us? Do we also rest in God's love? Do we trust that He has only the best intentions for us every day? How does this trust manifest itself practically in our daily lives and in how we make decisions?

FN1: The moment Eve listens to the devil and turns away from God, she sees that the forbidden tree is good for food, a delight to the eyes, and desirable for gaining insight (Genesis 3:6). The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life characterize the world (1 John 2:16) and inevitably take control when God is excluded.

Source https://thebiblestudy.site/article/dependence-in-the-life-of-jesus-02/