

Not Conformed to the World

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Romans 12:1-2

As Christians, we have given our lives over to God. This necessarily means we will be different from the world – not conformed, but transformed. Yet too often we are tempted to be like the world. How might we be tempted to conform to the world? We'll notice four ways in our lesson.

We Are Not to...

Conform to the Sins of the World (1 John 2:15-17)

- This may be the most obvious – we see the wickedness in the world and know that we must avoid it; the lusts and pride of this world are not from God (cf. James 1:13-15)
- This world is passing away – judgment is coming (2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Peter 3:9-10); we must choose eternal life in Christ over the wages of sin (Romans 6:23)

Conform to the Priorities of the World (Matthew 16:26)

- The things the world values as important all pertain to this life – again, the world is passing away; even if we could gain the world, it's not worth our soul; our soul is eternal (Luke 12:19; Matthew 25:46)
- We are to set our minds on things above, not on the earth (Colossians 3:1-2) – our goal must be to attain to the resurrection (Philippians 3:7-8); press on to that goal (Philippians 3:14)

Conform to the Worries of the World (Matthew 6:25-27)

- There are always things we could be anxious about, especially this year – though the world may worry about matters of this life, we need to put our trust in God (Matthew 6:32-33)
- We are not to be anxious for anything (Philippians 4:6-7) – we can have the peace of God; the world cannot; this doesn't mean we are to be apathetic about earthly concerns, but keep some perspective (James 4:13-14)

Conform to the Fears of the World (Hebrews 2:14-15)

- The world can be a scary place for those who don't know God or have hope in Christ – it is different for us; Jesus didn't take away death (yet – 1 Corinthians 15:26); He takes away the fear of death

- We do not need to fear those who can take our lives (Matthew 10:28) – God is with us (Hebrews 13:5-6); we can have a peace that the world does not have (John 14:26-27); so take courage (John 16:33)

Conclusion

- While the world is given over to sin, we must be transformed to righteousness
- While the world prioritizes the things of this life, we must be transformed and put spiritual things first
- While the world worries about the future, we must be transformed and take comfort in our hope
- While the world fears death, we must be transformed and take courage to face whatever is before us
- We can be transformed in this way if we give our lives over to Christ (Romans 12:1) – become servants of righteousness (Romans 6:16-17) by conforming to His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4); then continue to present ourselves as a living sacrifice to Him (Romans 12:1)