



Battling Brokenness

Sadly, the nature of brokenness with which we are faced, is generally not healed by zealous biblical study, how many times you visit a religious location, or even the people with whom you associate. To heal brokenness, we must seek mental transformation, precisely that written in Romans 12:2—the renewing of our minds. Since this is true, brokenness is the result of a mental transformation.

(Rom 12:2 KJV) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We are designed to live a thriving life of wholeness spiritually, mentally and physically. Our relationships are to reflect this wholeness, but often, they do not.

If you remember the Eden story, after God’s man and



woman sinned, they hid themselves. God came walking, asking where they were. Their response was that they were ashamed, naked and in hiding. For true deliverance to befall us, we must come out of hiding and embrace the more than abundant life in all of its essence.

Let us never forget that God came to us while we were yet sinners.

Conformed to this world

To be conformed to something means, ‘to be fashioned’ after something. Verse 2 provides the object of fashion—the world. We are told to *not* fashion our-

selves to this world. This world is a mighty big place with untold offerings. Consequently, we are to *not* fashion ourselves to worldly things which includes all worldly things.

The exact Greek word translated ‘conformed’ in Romans 12:2 is suschematizo and is used twice in the New Testament. Let’s look at the second usage.

(1 Pet 1:14 KJV) As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

“Fashioning” means, ‘to fashion alike.’ It’s talking about taking a pattern and making yourself look just like the pattern. Electronics producers do this; they take schematics and reproduce electronic circuitry. Seamstresses do this; they take patterns and repeatedly produce like clothing. Christians can do this with the world, fashioning themselves according to a

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worldly pattern and looking just like someone else, others, in the world. Christians do this mentally, making themselves appear to be worldly citizens. Christians cannot do this spiritually because they have Christ on the inside. Certainly, they can be affected by world-spirits, most notably the ones governing religious establishments. Perhaps if we lose the worldly patterns and schematics, we'll stop reproducing worldly products? Just a thought.

Longings can be managed

1 Peter 1:14 tells us to *not* fashion ourselves according to former or previous lusts. 'Lusts' means, 'longings.' Further, 'ignorant longings.' These definitely occupy a mental category even though you might think otherwise, and that, because they are feelings, they are soul-matters. Let's be clear: longings can be managed.

This teaching is focused on 'battling brokenness' and stems from learning and understanding your innate longings**, and that, once understood, causes brokenness to vanish from your life. We have longings; we are

not to maintain 'ignorant' longings.

Ignorance

The Jews killed Jesus through ignorance.

(Acts 3:17 KJV) And now, brethren, I wot [know] that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

God winked at man's idol-worshipping ignorance (before Christ's advent).

(Acts 17:29-30 KJV) Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. {30} And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men

**In *Free to Thrive*, McDowell and Bennett propose that there are seven universal longings in every person. When met, an individual can flourish in life. The seven longings are: Acceptance, Appreciation, Affection, Access, Attention Affirmation of Feelings, and Assurance of Safety.

every where to repent:

In this case, repentance toward Christ is the 'fix' for the absolute ignorance displayed by idol worship. Repentance is a perfect start to repairing brokenness.

Ignorance stems from mental ignorance.

(Eph 4:18 KJV) Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Alienation from God's life promotes ignorance. Ignorance darkens your understanding, alienates you from God's perfect life, and blinds your heart. Perhaps a foremost target of such ignorance is to prevent your love for God? We are supposed to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Previous longings are absolute, but alterable, worldly longings.

(1 Pet 1:14 KJV) As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former [previous] lusts

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[longings] in your ignorance:

We're familiar with this verse; it's time to take it to heart. Identify your longings and take the lead; manage them. Now's where you'd begin to focus on addressing the seven innate longings, ones that are called 'universal longings.' It's far more prudent to forget the world and to embrace the godly.

(1 Pet 1:15 KJV) **But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;**

We are instructed to be holy in *all* manner of conversation [ways of life]. That pretty much sums it up, doesn't it? Clearly, we can and should manage our longings.

Managing your internal affairs

(Rom 12:2 KJV) **And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

Another reading of Romans 12:2 should solidify the truth that you can manage your internal affairs. It says, 'but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.' No matter how seasoned a Christian you are, these words should never grow old.

Self Inflicted

Most, if not all, of our mental duress is caused by our choices. You choose what to think, where to live, with whom to associate, what to eat, where to work, etc., etc., etc.. You are a product of your imagination; you brought yourself to where you are, and you can take yourself away from where you are. A quick discussion with anyone about any personal conflict will usually yield this fact—their conflict is self-inflicted. Of course, age and maturity form certain boundaries, but when talking about responsible adults, this holds true. You've heard, 'if you don't like where you are at in life, *change*'. This is good and wonderful. Guide your ship to *your* harbor of choice.

Prove it

(Rom 12:2 KJV) **And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

We've all yearned for some 'shine-time'. Some are more captivated by this than others. Now is your time to shine. Prove God's will as you manage yourself according to His Word. God's Word is good, acceptable and perfect. Can you imagine anything better to put into your thoughts and actions?

God's Acceptance

(Rom 5:8 KJV) **But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

This should impact you a few degrees beyond imagination and it should introduce to you the beauty of God's acceptance. God accepts you no matter what you've done and no matter who you are.

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(Luke 18:16 KJV) But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Even the little children, along with their child-like innocence and rambunctious ways, are accepted.

We should consider a child's ways, free-wheeling and fancy-free. It is this that God accepts. These ways are not forbidden to God.

“There may be nothing that brings greater joy to the human heart than for another person to know all your faults and failures and accept you anyway, as you are, win or lose, no strings attached. Being approved of, accepted, and included sets us free to be vulnerable about what is broken and painful in our lives and helps us connect and really engage with others.” Taken from *Free to Thrive*, p21.

David's Life—from the least to the greatest

We can learn a great deal about acceptance from David's challenging life.

(1 Sam 16:11 KJV) And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest [least], and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, *Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.*

Jesse considered him the 'least' of the litter so to speak, so much so that he didn't present him to Samuel along with his other sons. This is what Jesse thought of David; In this historic move, David wasn't accepted by his father. Can you imagine?

But, God thought differently.

(1 Sam 16:12 KJV) And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.*

He had David anointed King of Israel. He had taken the least and made him the greatest. God accepts us no matter how small we see

ourselves. We are always great in God's eyes. He accepts us no matter what.

Relationships

I'd like you to consider the following: There are two sides to every relationship—good and bad. This is true for healthy relationships too. Relationships cradle both beauty and brokenness. “We are blessed by relationships when they are healthy and hurt by them when they are not.”

Earlier, we read Romans 5:8. Even in our worst state, God still wants an intimate and personal connection with us.

David suffered through the pressures of unacceptance; maybe you are going through that too? God made David King; God is willing to take you to the greatest heights of the more than abundant life. He will take any broken part of you along on that ride. We are tasked with acceptance as well. While we crave God's acceptance, we also must be accepting of God's Word. We must believe God's Word in this subject of acceptance. You might feel broken, but God still accepts you. There's a reason you

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are broken (if you are). It is to keep you from God. What you are today is the total sum of your entire life. Enter the longing for acceptance. This is where you need to accept the truth that God accepts you no matter what. This is the start of recovery. Accept God's acceptance, accept the Word of God and begin healing brokenness.

Much love in Christ

Jerry D. Brown