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## Four Essential Elements of Christian Maturity – Renewing Your Mind

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**You must know the truth of God's Word in order for His thinking to become your thinking.**

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.  
Romans 12:1–2

You've got to renew your mind to the Word of God, or it will be dangerous for you to be a living sacrifice. Satan can come along and pray upon your willingness to do whatever you think is God's good, acceptable, and perfect will. Because it sounds or seems good, you'll do it, and it'll get you in a mess.

The word "conformed" in Romans 12:2 means "to fashion alike" (*Strong's Concordance*), which is to be poured into the mold of. In other words, don't let the world's thinking mold you. Don't be easy prey for the devil to come along and deceive you. You must know the truth of God's Word in order for His thinking to become your thinking.

The word "transformed" in this same verse is the Greek word *metamorphoo*. It's where we get the word "metamorphosis" from, which is the process of how a caterpillar spins a cocoon and comes out as a butterfly. This is saying that if you want transformation like this, it comes from renewing your mind to the Word of God.

Look at this parable Jesus gave:

And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come." Mark 4:26–29

The seed is symbolic of the Word of God and the effect it has in your life. The ground is symbolic of your heart. The word for "herself" is from the Greek word *automatos*, and it's where we get "automatic" and "automatically." The earth brings forth fruit automatically. You cannot overstate this. If you would simply plant God's Word in your heart and do this consistently over a period of time, it would change you automatically. There are no exceptions. It never fails.

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The seed of God's Word is dependable (Psalms 119:89). It's incorruptible (1 Peter 1:23). If you aren't seeing it produce in your life, it's not the seed that's the problem; it's the ground – your heart. You've either got a hardened heart, you're caught up in the cares of this life, or you're being moved by persecution. To cleanse your heart of these, you have to give yourself to the Word. You must meditate in it day and night, as it says in Joshua 1:8 –

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Joshua 1:8

It's a lack of meditating on the Word day and night that prevents you from prospering and having good success. It's an un-renewed mind that keeps you from proving the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

Now, some people hear what I'm saying and think, this is awesome! I'm going to take God's Word and plant it today! But if they don't see total transformation within two or three days, they say, "well, it didn't work. I tried it." That's like a woman who has a physical relationship with a man and is disappointed when she doesn't deliver a baby in just a few days. That's not how it works. Most women don't even know they're pregnant until weeks after conception. In the same way, you've got to give the Word time to germinate in your heart before you know that it's working.

**You can't wait until a crisis situation and then spend all night praying and fasting for something to happen quickly.**

I don't care how badly you want a child today; you aren't going to have one if you haven't conceived months before. In the natural, people understand this principle, but in the spiritual, the vast majority of the body of Christ is violating it all of the time. They are praying for results, but they haven't planted the Word of God in their hearts. When things don't work out or they get worse, they wonder, "Why hasn't God done anything?" Not smart.

There are steps to renewing our minds that we can't skip, or things just won't work. It's "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (Mark 4:28), or it's the good, then the acceptable, and then the perfect will of God, as we read in Romans 12.

It takes a commitment to mix the Word of God with faith in order to see this process through (Hebrews 4:2). But if you'll do this over a prolonged period of time, it'll produce "some thirtyfold, some 60, and some a hundred" (Mark 4:20b). The only thing you need is a seed – a catalyst – to start this process. That's the Word of God. You take the Word, plant it, protect it in your heart by meditating on it, mix it with faith, and it will absolutely transform you by the renewing of your mind. You will grow and mature.

If you're wondering what your next step should be, I want to encourage you to shut down anything you can to spend as much time as possible in the Word of God. Maybe you need to come to Charis Bible College to be in a concentrated environment where you can sit under the Word for two years. I guarantee, you'll come out of here stronger than horseradish! This is how simple it is. People make change a traumatic experience. They'll say things like, "Well, my situation is unique." It's not. The Scripture says,

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Any time you get to thinking your situation is different and you need special consideration because the Word just won't work for you, you are in deception. Your devil isn't any worse than anybody else's devil. It's not true. You just take the Word of God and meditate in it day and night, and it will transform you!

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