**The Transformed Life**

The world has always pressured individuals to conform to its twisted and distorted standards of behavior. Those committed to fashioning their lives according to the teaching of Scripture have always had to deal with the ridicule of those who feel no constraint of divine guidance. Peter said that they “are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you” (1 Peter 4:4).

In today’s world, the pressure to conform is taking a more sinister and dangerous form. Folks are losing their jobs and being vilified for refusing to publicly embrace wickedness and immorality. In many cases, one rejects the foolishness of leftist ideology at one’s own financial, legal and social peril.

But God’s admonition to us regarding the foolishness of the world is just as applicable today as ever. “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).

The Greek word for transformed is metamorphoo, the origin of our English word metamorphosis. Just as a caterpillar changes into a butterfly, the one who commits to following Jesus finds him or herself morphing into His image. Paul wrote, “We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18). While many around us are choosing to conform to the edicts of the world, the disciple of Christ is concerned only with His teachings and His standards. Conformity with the world and divine transformation are mutually exclusive.

It will be a sad day in this country if government persecution of New Testament Christianity becomes more widespread, but over the past two millennia that has been the rule among the nations instead of the exception. Christians are model citizens until the forces of wickedness take control of government agencies to criminalize those unwilling to conform to their immoral norms.

Disciples of Jesus are called to “present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship” (Romans 1:1). We should share in Paul’s resolution of Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” Conformity with the world won’t accomplish that; only the transformation of our lives by the teachings of our Savior.

**John McKee**

**West Murray church of Christ**