

Transformed

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)

12 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.* ² 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.

Conformed: to fit into a fixed pattern

- God doesn't want us to fit into the pattern of the world
- This pattern isn't God's pattern
- God wants us to act better, above the world's standards
- He wants us to be transformed

Transformed: “metamorphosis”

- A metamorphosis is a complete change
- When a caterpillar enters a cocoon and emerges a butterfly
- Those two stages of life represent both a complete end and a new beginning

We are transformed by the renewing of our minds

- The mind is the part of our soul that activates or originates behavior
- By renewing our minds, we can know and do *God's good, perfect, and acceptable will*

5 Truths About Attitudes

You Choose or Change Your Attitude

Attitudes Are Not Caused by People or Circumstances

Happiness is a Chosen Attitude

God Rewards Good Attitudes and Disciplines Bad Ones

Attitudes Precede and Predict Your Future

We Need to Define Success the Way God defines success

- Failure is not the opposite of success
- Failure is not something that happens if you don't achieve success in a single area
- In the Bible success and failure have a broader application
- God's definition of success is quite different from the world's definition

Seven Ways the World defines success

Wealth

The world defines wealth (or financial prosperity) as having enough money to buy everything you desire

- For many people that is the only standard
- Nothing else matters if they have money

Popularity

Many people seek popularity through physical attractiveness, personality, talent or some other means

- They want others to know, accept, and like them
- If you live your life for popularity it will become an idol

Power and Influence

Some people seek power and influence through social rank, authority, or ability

- They believe it will give them power to do as they please
- They believe it will also represent and protect those about whom they care
- Many people believe if they achieve a certain rank they will have success

Relational Happiness

Relational happiness is loving others and being loved by them in return

- Everyone yearns for the kind of connection found in meaningful relationships
- In the world's definition these relationships may take place outside of biblical moral standards

Intellect and Education

Many people seek success through intellect and education

- They define accomplishment through high intelligence and formal education

Giftedness

Some people see success as possessing special gifts, such as artistic ability, athletic prowess, musical talent, or any other area that fulfills their desires and makes them feel noticed and appreciated

Strength and Security

Some people feel they have achieved success when they are living in an environment of peace and safety

- One they have the ability to protect
- Different cultures view this in different ways
- But the feeling is universal

As you look at theses standards of success none of them are bad or evil in and of themselves

- In fact, we can use them righteously
- However, you could have all seven and still be a complete failure

None of the world's standards address your spiritual life

- Most of the world doesn't have a spiritual measure of success
- You could have money, looks, power and popularity and still not have success

God Has a Different Definition of Success

One of the best biblical examples of how God views these seven standards can be found in the life of Solomon

- He became the wisest and most powerful person in the world
- No person on earth will ever possess Solomon's wealth
- Only Jesus surpasses his wisdom

2 Chronicles 1:12 (NKJV)

¹² wisdom and knowledge *are* granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings have had who *were* before you, nor shall any after you have the like.”

1 Kings 10:23 (NKJV)

²³ So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

- Solomon had all seven standards of success
- Yet, a problem arose

1 Kings 11:1–10 (NKJV)

11 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, *and* Hittites—² from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. ³ And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. ⁴ For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of his father David. ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as *did* his father David. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that *is* east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. ⁸ And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. ⁹ So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰ and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded.

- God appeared to Solomon twice and made him the wisest person on the earth
- Solomon later wrote the book of proverbs

God repeatedly told His people not to inter-marry with the pagan nations

He told Solomon not to marry foreign wives the way the other kings of his time did

- He must have thought God really didn't mean what He said
- He not only married one foreign wife, he married one thousand of them
- The Bible says he clung to them in love

He also built a monument and a place to worship for every wife he had, so she could worship her foreign gods

- Solomon used the wealth God had given him and built altars for these women's gods
- This worship included, orgies, temple prostitution, and other sexual perversions
- Their gods also required offering babies as sacrifices
- Killing them and throwing them on fires

Solomon was the most powerful man on earth

- He had a thousand wives to love him
- He was the richest man on earth
- He was incredibly educated and intelligent

Solomon met the seven standards of the world for success, yet the Lord's anger burned against him

- Again, there is nothing wrong with these standards if we use them in positive ways to serve God and others

Jesus Christ is Our True Example of Success

- He met none of the seven standards we've mentioned
- For a short time, He was popular, and the crowds followed Him
- Those same crowds soon shouted for execution
- Jesus never gained favor with the authorities
- He didn't have strength and security
- The soldiers took Him, and He offered no resistance
- Isaiah says He was nothing special to look at – **Isaiah 53:2**
- We don't know if He was attractive at all
- Jesus never had financial wealth
- He died penniless, and they buried Him in a borrowed grave

In spite of all of these “shortcomings” our Savior was the most successful person who ever lived

- No one will ever have the success of Jesus!

Philippians 2:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth

- The world may judge Jesus as a failure and Solomon as successful
- God sees it just the opposite

Five Results of the Wrong Standards for Success

A Flawed Sense of Success or Failure

- Some people consider themselves a success, but in God's eyes they're not
- We have a flawed sense of success or failure when we use the wrong standards to judge them

Wrong Parenting and Modeling

Your children depend on your example – **Proverbs 22:6**

- Some parents have adopted the wrong standards of success
- They teach their kids to be busy with school, with sports, with their friends; and then God comes last

When you raise your kids this way, when they grow up and become adults they will....

- Put money first
- Put friends first
- Put popularity first

All those things will become first

- Then, they will fit God in if they have the space or time

We must raise our children to love God first, and then everything else comes after that

Wrong Decision Making

Having the wrong standards will cause you to make wrong decisions

- Choose a career that fills your heart first and your pocketbook second
- Do what God created you for

Some of the most important people in society do not get paid enough and never will

- Police officers, firefighters, teachers and other professions like that
- Military people do what they do because they have a calling to do it
- They sacrifice wealth to do what they love and were created for

If you make a lot of money, good for you

- God may have called you to do that
- Are you honoring Him with it? – **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

All I'm saying is don't choose a career exclusively for the money that you'll make

- That's what the world tells you
- But what does God say?

Lack of Inner Fulfillment

This happens to so many people when we have the wrong standards for success

- God has a good, acceptable, perfect will for your life!

Not Accomplishing God's Best

When you use the wrong standards, you will not accomplish God's best for your life

- King Solomon died a failure
- He did not finish the race well

Remember, the only way to be a success is to be “*Transformed*” by the “*Renewing*” of our mind

- God's word has much to say about morals, speech, money – everything that's important in life

If you want true success, then you must follow God's definition and not the worlds

Proverbs 3:5–8 (NKJV)

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. ⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. ⁸ It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.