



## Week Four | Small Group Guide



# Transform Our Mindset

**Review:** Thus far in our Transform series, we have considered, Why Transform?, Transform Our Hearts, and Transform Our Trust.

Is there anything from those weeks or the sermons you'd like to talk about?

Our Transform theme verses from Isaiah 43 say "past faithfulness is an indicator of future faithfulness by the Lord, the Holy One." He's always up to something new and only desires that we will honor for all the world to see. What an awesome challenge and calling.

## Week 4

**Opening:** Think of a time you changed your mind about a person, product or decision. What led to that change?

### Transform Theme Verses | Isaiah 43:14-21

This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:

"For your sakes I will send an army against Babylon,

forcing the Babylonians to flee in those ships they are so proud of.

15 I am the Lord, your Holy One, Israel's Creator and King.

16 I am the Lord, who opened a way through the waters,

making a dry path through the sea.

17 I called forth the mighty army of Egypt with all its chariots and horses.

I drew them beneath the waves, and they drowned,

their lives snuffed out like a smoldering candlewick.

18 "But forget all that—it is nothing compared to what I am going to do.

19 For I am about to do something new.

See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness.

I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.

20 The wild animals in the fields will thank me, the jackals and owls, too,

for giving them water in the desert.

Yes, I will make rivers in the dry wasteland so my chosen people can be refreshed.

21 I have made Israel for myself,

and they will someday honor me before the whole world.

**Overview:** This session we focus on Transform our Mindsets. In the power-packed verses of Romans 12:1-3, we will consider what shapes our mindsets and thinking. In the second part, King David illustrated how his mindset was changed about building God a temple.

# Change Your Mind

Comparing various Bible versions helps us deepen our understanding of a passage. Explore the similarities and differences of these three versions. It's a fun way to drill down and focus on what God wants to say to us.

**Activity:** Divide into 3 groups. Each group looks at one of the versions of Romans 12 below: Put a check mark ✓ by each word or phrase that is a new way of thinking. Then, underline results of thinking differently.

## Transformer Fun

Who has the best mind of the Transformers?

Who has a twisted mind?

Why do certain transformers follow others' lead?

### **Read Romans 12:1-2 New International Version (NIV)**


*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)*

### **Romans 12:1-2 New Living Translation (NLT)**

*And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (NLT)*

### **Romans 12:1-2 The Message**

*So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. (MSG)*



English pastor J.B. Philips, in 1956, translated vs. 2 “Don’t let the world squeeze you into its mould.”

### Section 1 - Discussion Questions

Jot down a list of the ways our world/culture squeezes us into its mold or how we copy the behaviors, customs or patterns of this world.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

### Further exploration

Many Bible verses make us think about how we think. Here are a few of them:


- Proverbs 3:5-6
- Romans 1:28
- 2 Corinthians 10:5
- Col. 3:2-5
- I John 1:8

## A Prayer for Transformation

To the church in Noblesville, by the White River, in Cicero, Arcadia, Fishers, Westfield, Carmel and the uttermost parts of central Indiana: May God the Father bring grace and peace to you, and may He give you the power to be transformed in heart and trust and mind. If any of you is in Christ, you are a new creation. The old has gone, and the new has come. May God give you power to no longer live in your former ways.

As you know, the cross was an instrument of death. On one, Christ gave himself as a living sacrifice and died for you and me. In response, it is reasonable to follow His lead. May you give yourselves as living sacrifices each day, all day as acts of worship to God: your work, your attitudes and your actions. When you are all-in like this, His will first and only, your life offers true, holy and pleasing worship to the Father.

Now, whatever part or pattern of the world still holds sway over you, I pray that God would help you to stop chasing after such things, to stop investing in or even worshipping such. As



new creations, you are dead to the patterns of the world. You are no longer defined or bound by your past. You have been set free!

May Christ transform you in increasing measure, then He will give you a new way of living, a new way of being. With the indwelling Holy Spirit, He will develop healthy patterns of thinking and processing of your feelings. When you see all this happening, you will know your mind is being transformed and you will understand God's good, pleasing and perfect will for you. His will is the transformation of your soul, all of you.

May the grace of God be with all of you who are a part of White River Christian Church. As He continues to transform all of your hearts and your trust and your minds, you, together, will transform — a life, a church and a community. In the Name Jesus, whose life was and is a living sacrifice, I declare Amen!

## A New Way of Thinking

**Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17** (Not printed here. Please turn to 2 Samuel in your Bible.)

Commentary: David was crowned king around 1010 BC. He has built Jerusalem into a new capital city. David's life illustrates what happens when God is "with" someone. The commitment of Yahweh to David and the nation of Israel is unwavering and, as we will see, unprecedented.

In verses 1-3, the LORD has brought peace through the warrior King David for a brief period of time. In David's mind, the time seems right to build a permanent structure to house the ark of God. (See note below for more info about the ark.) David's thought process made sense, "I have a palace, God has a tent. He deserves better." Nathan, a prophet of God and David's primary confidante, agrees, "Go ahead and do what you have in mind, for the LORD is with you." (vs. 3). While their plan made sense, God would reset their mindsets.

Here's how: As we looked at Romans 12, do you remember, "don't conform to the customs of the world" or "be squeezed into its mold"? In David's day, temples were built for pagan deities who were really powerless. The "worshippers" thought they could please or appease a god through the grandeur of a house, shrine or temple. We don't know if David's plan was influenced by the surrounding nations' practices, but it isn't a stretch to think so. We are often subtly, or not so subtly, influenced by our world. The LORD God didn't need a temple to be like the gods of other nations. He didn't feel left out or less-than because He didn't have a temple. God had not asked David to do this.

However, well-intentioned his plan, the gift or sacrifice God wanted from David, like us, was ... just himself. Available. All-in. The LORD here declares I will not be bought-off by or contained in a temple. (No quid quo pro.) I want a relationship. The temple would be built on God's terms by David's son, King Solomon, who said at the temple dedication around 950 BC, "But will God really live on earth? Why, even the highest heavens cannot contain you. How much less this Temple I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27).

**Ark of the Covenant:** This is not the big boat, a football field and a half long which Noah built, but an elaborately decorated box inlaid and overlaid with gold measuring 2 ¼' x 2 ¼' by 3 ¾' and carried with long poles. It was a testimony of the faith of Israel and a symbol of the presence of Yahweh with Israel. According to Hebrews 9:4, the ark of the covenant contained the golden pot with manna (God's provision of food during the exodus), Aaron's rod that budded (God's selection of the priestly line to come through Aaron), and the stone tablets of the covenant (the covenant laws of God). Somewhat crassly said, the ark was Israel's logo or brand.



### God transforms David's mindest

God talked to Nathan later that night. In that conversation, Yahweh surprises Nathan with an amazing and unbelievable plan:

He says that as I blessed Moses and Abraham with my divine presence, leadership and purpose, Nathan, tell David he rules by my authority and at my pleasure. My Spirit rests on him. I've known him since before his shepherding days. I know he wanted to do something for me, all in due time. However, I will build a permanent homeland for the nation through David's kingship. As he serves as a role model-King and as I have chosen Israel to be my people, I now formalize our relationship. I adopt David as my own son, "I will be His father, and he will be my son." (2 Sam 7:14); and, "My love will never be taken away from him." (2 Sam 7:15)." I will establish David's reign for eternity (vs. 16).

While His covenant relationship with David will never waiver, the covenant does have expectations and promises. If David, a future king or the nation sins, God can and will use other nations to punish and correct them. Yet the hopeful promise, though some leaders in future generations will fail, a king like David will come, a messiah. (Hint: For unto you this day in the city of David, a Savior has been born and he is Christ the Lord!)

Wow! We think we want to bless God. We may think that we will give Him this or that — a few pennies here or a little time there, to please God. Yet, God says, "I'm not looking for your beggars' gifts. I want living sacrifices. I will offer you the deliverance from bondage, torment, evil, and eternal punishment, and I will give you my love eternally. My love is a steadfast, never-ending, relational loyalty. I am in this relationship for the long haul. I will never leave nor forsake you. Will you give me your all?"



## Section 2 - Discussion Questions

1. What do you learn about the personal interest God has in the nation of Israel?
2. Do you believe God is as interested in your personal life? Why or why not? It's okay to be honest and a bit vulnerable here.
3. What else catches your attention in the first half of 2 Samuel 7?

### Commentary

Now we turn to David's response to see how God reset David's mindset. David responds to God with a prayer. He yields his will and thoughts to God's. This prayer offers a model of how to pray. As you go through the passage, note helpful ideas or topics that you might not usually include in your own prayers.

2 Samuel 7:18-29 (Turn in your Bible and read)

1. What do you see or hear David including in his prayer than might help you pray?
2. What kinds of ideas or topics do you usually include in your prayers?
3. What are one or two take-aways for you this week?



## Practicing PRAYER as a rhythm of life

Block out 30-45 minutes this week. (Yes, right now!)

### Exercise 1

Personalize The Prayer of Transformation from page 3. The first time through substitute your name for each pronoun — you, we, us.

The second time substitute the name of someone or others you would like to see transformed. Repeat as desired.

### Exercise 2

Use David's prayer in 2 Samuel 7:18-29 in a similar way. It may take a little more creativity, but use the themes he prays and substitute meaningful personal thoughts or needs. To illustrate: vs 8. "I took you from tending sheep in the pasture and selected you to be the leader of my people Israel." God is speaking, "I took you from being a smart aleck kid to ... or from a messed up addict ... or from a judgmental knucklehead and I (God) have selected or called you to be a caring father, an encouraging co-worker, ..."

From where has the Lord taken you and what have you become through faith in Jesus? Repeat throughout the prayer.

What words of the Holy Spirit do you hear, emotions do you feel, thoughts do you have? Jot them down. God may be saying something to you ...

What did you learn about prayer you can share at your next group time?

**Again this week, please fill out the [WEEK FOUR SURVEY](#) on the WRCC app or website.**

These surveys will provide valuable information for future group studies.

Printed copies are available.

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