

TRANSFORMER PART 2



DON'T BE DECEIVED!

Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Romans 12:2

MONEY & MATERIALISM



The Holy Spirit is the best financial advisor you could ever have! The counsel He gives about money and material things in the word of God goes totally against the ways of the world. Let's talk about what to do and what NOT to do with money...

- **Don't worship it! (Matthew 6:24)** Never let money become your master! Yes, we have to work to earn money, but make sure you're also making your money work for you. Live within your means and don't let money lord over you!
- **Don't fall in love with it! (1 Timothy 6:6-10)** Money itself isn't a bad thing; it's the LOVE of money that leads to evil. They say love will make you do some crazy things, but selling your soul shouldn't be one of them! Don't compromise your values, principles, or morals for something that will eventually fade away or spoil. **Ecclesiastes 5:10** tells us that whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never **satisfied** with their income. **Hebrews 13:5** tell us to not only to keep ourselves from the love of money, but to be **content** with what we have. Don't let the love of money pull you away from the ones you love or from the God who loves you. Remember: you are priceless, and your soul isn't for sale. You are His prized possession!
- **Don't be greedy...be generous! (Luke 12:15)** Make sure you bless others when God blesses you. We hear a lot about what not to do with our money, but here's a powerful principle from the scriptures for what to do with your wealth: you're blessed when you're generous (**Proverbs 22:9 & 28:22**).
- **Make it honestly, not by any means necessary! (Proverbs 13:11)** Making an honest living means abiding by the rules even when you don't like them all (**Romans 13:1-7**), paying your taxes, and not hurting anyone to get this money. It means making sure what you do is legit and not illegal. Don't be a schemer or a scammer! (**Luke 3:14**) It's okay to start at the bottom and work your way up. Saving adds up when you're truly "saving UP" (**Matthew 6:19-21**).
- **Invest it! (Proverbs 3:9-10)** These two verses tell us how to wisely invest our wealth, starting by honoring the Lord with our firstfruits. Learn to give God the best, not just the rest! He promises to provide a tremendous return on your investment (**2 Corinthians 9:6-8**).

Always remember that there is such a thing as "good debt"—the debt of love. **(Roman 13:8)** We will always owe one another LOVE! This scripture is two-fold, because in order to owe someone something, first someone had to loan or give you something. Pay back what's been given to you. We are in debt to God for the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, and all He has asked in return is LOVE! **(John 13:34-35)**

And don't ever forget that **LESS is MORE!** **(Psalm 37:16-17)** The world has conditioned us to believe that the more you have the more blessed you are and that you're better than the person whom has less, but that's not necessarily true. If you have God you automatically have more! The power of the wicked will be **BROKEN!** It's not a sin to be rich, but it is a sin to be wicked with your wealth. **1 Timothy 6:17-19** tells us how to conduct ourselves if we have an abundance of earthly blessings. Yes, Christians can be rich, but our greatest wealth should always be the treasure we have in heaven.

RACE & ETHNICITY



The enemy wants to deceive us into destroying ourselves through division. Racism is defined as prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own is superior. This leads to hatred, fear, and inhumane treatment toward someone because of the nation they're from or the color of their skin.

Putting our differences aside (Romans 10:12)

Once we put our differences aside, we will see we're more similar (inside) than we thought. We all face *adversity*, and we all stand in need of God's *grace* and *mercy*! We all have *sinned* and we all fall short of the glory of God! We were all **created** in the image of the One who made us! The fact of the matter is you're no better than me, and I'm no better than you. We must stop fighting because of who our *forefathers* were and come together because of who our *Heavenly Father* is!

No room to judge, but a vacancy for love (Romans 2:1-4)

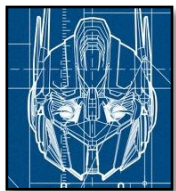
Be very cautious to not put people in categories, especially when you don't know their stories! Stereotypes are nothing more than assumptions, and assumptions have done a lot of damage to people's lives. Don't allow someone's zip code to define them in your eyes. Just because someone may come from a broken home doesn't mean that they're broken.

Just because someone was raised in a poor neighborhood doesn't make them poor. **Proverbs 14:31 & 17:5** tell us that when you oppress or mock others because of their economic status, you are, in fact, insulting God! We also must not assume just because someone is rich that they have no problems. They could have gotten everything they wanted in life, but never received what they truly needed. Instead of judging one another, let's listen to each other's stories, understand each other's struggles, and love each other continuously throughout this journey of life!

God doesn't show favoritism (Romans 2:11)

Galatians 3:26-29 reminds us that all who have been baptized into Christ are CHILDREN of God. This means that we are all BROTHERS and SISTERS who all share the same FATHER. As His children, we're all clothed in Christ and He doesn't love one race or gender (male or female) more than the other. The only thing we should see in our diversity and our differences is how powerful and creative our God is, and that should draw us closer together, not push us further apart. None of us chose our skin complexion; it was something we inherited. That's why it makes no sense to judge one another based on something we had no control over. When it comes to heaven, you're not getting in just because of the color of your skin. The only real question is, "*What have you been doing within the skin He's put you in?*" We are ONE in Christ, and nothing should be allowed to divide us!

SEXUALITY & GENDER



The rainbow has been given as a sign from God to never destroy the world by water again, but the world is using it to represent the diversity of the LGBTQ community and the spectrum of human sexuality and gender. In all actuality, every time we see a rainbow, it should remind us of the promises that God has made to His people, and the power that He has to keep those promises (**Genesis 9:13-17**).

Don't do what is detestable to God! (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13)

If you told someone not to do something because you hate it, and they did it anyway, how would that make you feel? Now magnify that feeling and imagine how God must feel when HE *tells* us not to do something, and we do it anyway. This is a command, not a suggestion!

**Don't exchange God's truth for the world's lies! (Romans 1:24-32,
1 Timothy 1:10)**

We have to be careful who we listen to. If God is our Creator and we are His creation, don't you think that He knows what's best for us and how we should be functioning??? So why do we look to the world for our instruction and validation? That's like buying a Tesla, but reading a Ford Explorer owner's manual to figure out how to control the features and functions of your new car!

**Don't be deceived—your lifestyle determines your outcome!
(1 Corinthians 6:9-11)**

God gives us the power of choice; He doesn't force us to do anything. How we chose to live our lives *now* determines where we spend eternity *later*! Yes, we have ALL sinned (and still do!) and, yes, God forgives us of our sins in Christ. But that should never make us feel like we can choose to keep on living in sin and doing whatever pleases us (Romans 6:1-4). We are born again in Christ so that we can live a NEW LIFE according to His will, a life that pleases and honors Him.