

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 recognise 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.

Romans 12:1-2
The Message

Here's an amazing thought: God really does want you. All of you, every bit of your life – your work, family, studies, leisure time, food and exercise. Every last bit matters to him. Though, that is a bit unsettling as well. I am not sure that every corner of my life is really where I want God to be. Some if it is a bit ugly and shameful. Some of it I want to control myself. It is a struggle sometimes to trust and rely on God for everything.

The ESV translates verse two as 'Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.' I think this goes well with the Message version [left]. We struggle to hand things over to God because our way of thinking is shaped by the world around us. We are taught to be independent and free thinking, while in reality culture tells us what to think and how to react.

How do we stop being too well adjusted to our culture? How do we let our minds be renewed? It starts simply by taking the time, at least once a day, to stop and focus on our Lord. Prayer, Scripture reading, worship and fellowship – all help renew our minds, change our thinking, challenge our values, and open up those hidden corners of our lives to God's love and grace.

It's a journey though – one that carries on from the first faltering steps of faith to the end of our lives. God is graciously opening up our lives, our hearts and minds to his grace one step at a time. And occasionally, we look back at those uncertain steps we have taken and find that he has taken us on a much longer journey that we realised. 🌱