

# The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES  
with Pastor Greg Formey



## How Change Happens

Romans 12:1-2

May 24, 2026

**I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 •Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. ESV**

Most of us do not wake up and decide to change when life is easy. We usually change when the pain of staying the same becomes greater than the pain of the change itself. In the first verses of Romans 12, Paul reminds us that transformation is not always a gentle process. It is often triggered by challenges that nudge us to realize our current way of living or thinking is no longer working for us.

### THE PURPOSE OF PRESSURE

Change often begins when we "hurt enough that we have to change". This is not just about suffering; it's about the divine pressure that moves us toward God's best for us.

The tendency is try ignoring pain or suppressing bad thoughts, but your brain is not designed in this way. You cannot simply erase the discomfort.

Pain is like a guard at the gate, alerting us that a repeated, destructive thought pattern needs to be demolished.

The story of the Prodigal Son is a perfect example of change through pain. He did not decide to go home when he was spending his inheritance. He decided to change when he was in the pigpen, starving and humiliated. His difficult situation made him realize that his life was falling apart because of his own choices. The pain of the pigpen was the "divine power" that led him to "take his thoughts captive" and return to his father.

Think about how a diamond is made. A diamond starts as a simple piece of carbon, much like a common lump of coal. A diamond does not form in a relaxing environment. It is created deep under the earth where it is squeezed by massive weight and scorched by extreme heat. Without that crushing pressure, it would remain just a dark lump of carbon. But the very things that it seemed would destroy it (the heat and the weight) are the very things that transform it into the hardest and most beautiful gem in the world.

Often in our lives, we pray for God to take away the "heat" of our problems or the "weight" of our stress. But, God is often using that very pressure to turn our "coal-like" habits and thoughts into something beautiful and strong.

Adversity is not there to break you; it is there to make you, if you would allow it to.

### **Romans 12:1**

**I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.** ESV

## **PRACTICE OVER PERFECTION**

Transformation is a process of retraining the mind, much like "muscle training" or "learning a habit".

You do not need instant perfection. You need consistent direction.

Renewal begins with agreeing with God's truth even when it hurts. You are called to commit to moving toward agreement with God. Start small - one thought, one truth, and one repetition to build a new pathway.

### **Romans 12:2**

**Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.** ESV

Conclusion: The Goal of the Struggle

When we face adversity, we are being invited to "present ourselves" to God in a new way. Don't just try to stop the pain. Use the pain to identify the "weeds" in your garden and replace them with God's word.

Today, if you are hurting, ask God: "What are You trying to change in me?"  
Let us pray for the strength to grow through the pressure.

This is how change happens.