

# A New Attitude Towards People

by Francis Chan

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*We are called to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and to live differently as a group of people, bearing with one another and forgiving grievances.*

**Duration:** 31:22

**Scripture:** John 13:34, Romans 12:16, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:12, Hebrews 10:24, 1 Peter 4:9

**Topics:** "Church Unity", "Christian Living"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the transformation believers undergo when they accept Christ, becoming new creations and living differently from the world's patterns. It delves into the importance of unity and forgiveness within the church body, highlighting the need to bear with one another, forgive grievances, and let the peace of Christ rule in hearts. The message stresses the collective responsibility of believers to live in harmony, love, and unity as a reflection of God's love and to impact the world.

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## Transcript

We're continuing in our series that we're calling Transformed. It's a series in Colossians over these three weeks. And the reason why we chose this word is the Bible says when we become believers, a transformation, a total change is supposed to take place in our lives.

The Bible calls it we become these new creations. Okay, that the old us is gone and now we're a completely different person. And hopefully you see that in yourself.

Hopefully you can think back to, yeah, before I knew Jesus and now, and go, man, there's just no comparison. I hope you see that, that you really are a new creation, a completely different person, that you're not just a little tweaked version of the old you, but that you've truly been transformed. In Romans chapter 12, verse two, a verse that many of us are familiar with, I'll put it on the screen though.

It says, do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you'll be able to test and approve what God's will is, His good, pleasing, and perfect will. It says don't conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed.

And I was thinking about this verse because I realize how many things I do every day that are because everyone else does it. It's just the pattern of the world. Realizing there is a pattern that we'll just naturally fall into.

The world sets out a pattern for us. And the Bible says don't just conform. Don't conform.

Okay, now you're a new person. Now we want you to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, a different mindset. I mean, why do we dress the way we do? It's just the way everyone dresses.

Why do we drive where we drive? Why do we live where, you know, why do we talk the way we talk? We're listening to music, we talk. You know, all of the different things that we do in a given day, I started just going through my day and thinking what have I really prayed about? What have I really thought through in my mind? God, what is your perfect, pleasing will? How do you want me to live? Because He wants me to be different. He wants me transformed.

For me to look different than the rest of the world. And I used to read like different passages in the scriptures and go, well, you know, we can't really do that because we're in America. And it's, you know, 21st century.

Things are different now. And our culture doesn't allow for some of these things. And I used to excuse a lot of things.

And as I've been studying Colossians and thinking through their situation, I realized, you know, the world and culture has always had a pattern. It's always been different from God's pattern. For example, the people in Colossi, they had a ton of pressure from the Roman Empire.

You talk about an empire and a pattern that's set out for you. They lived in the Roman Empire and there was a way in which the Romans did things that everyone just followed suit, just like we live in America now. And there's a lot of pressure to just conform with the way Americans do things.

In the same way, they had a lot of religious practices and a lot of religious baggage, but it's the same for us today. We've got a bunch of baggage in this room from different traditions we grew up in, even in the evangelical church, things that we just assume, well, I'm supposed to do this, supposed to do this, supposed to do that. And we don't stop and really think to ourselves, okay, is this really God's perfect, pleasing will? Or am I just conforming to a pattern? Because it's easy to conform to a pattern, isn't it? It's the easiest thing to do.

And that's what Todd was talking about last week, is there's these old ways that we used to live in. And some of you may go, well, you know, that's the way my dad lived too. And that's the way my grandfather lived.

And so I'm kind of stuck in this sin. It just seems like this generational thing that's been passed on. You know how hard it is to break that? Yeah, absolutely.

But that's what we're called to do, is break these cycles. To say, no, now I want to be transformed. I don't want to conform to the way I grew up in church, or the way that my parents always did these things, or everything else.

I want to truly be transformed in my thinking, renewed, and say, God, how do you want me to live? And in mentioning that, you know, Todd talked about getting rid and putting to death that old us, and maybe that one precious sin that you've held on to. But have you done something with that? Because you're transformed. You don't live that way anymore.

Now, most of that stuff, you can go ahead and take that off the screen. Most of that stuff, I've always seen. Like, I know that I'm supposed to live differently.

Okay, I know that I'm not supposed to just blend in with the rest of the world. But something I'm seeing more of lately, and it really goes with the passage that I'm gonna talk about today, is that God, in his purposes, he doesn't just want me as an individual to live differently than all the other individuals in the world. God has a plan where he wants us, us, as a group of people, together, collectively, he wants us to live differently than the rest of the world.

There's a difference here, and it's this idea that Christianity is so much more than you individually having a right relationship with God. As it's described in the Bible, it's this picture of we, collectively, are supposed to think differently. And the way we interact with each other in this room as believers should be different than the rest of the world.

There's a pattern that God has set, not just for us as individuals, but us as a group. For us as a body in how we deal with one another, and we can't neglect that. For example, in verse 11 of Colossians 3, he says, here, there's no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, or free, but Christ is all and is in all.

I mean, I talked about that last week, about how in this room now, things ought to be different. He says, here, maybe when you walk out these doors, people will view you differently. Maybe your boss is in this room.

Maybe one of your employees is in this room. He says, yeah, but when you get in this room, when you're together with the believers, there's none of that. There's no distinction.

Okay, we lose our identity. We're all about Jesus now. We're all just Christians.

Shouldn't say just, but we're all Christians, and we take off that other identity. He goes, here, there's no Greek, Jew. It doesn't matter if you're slave, free.

We're just, Christ is everything to us. Christ is all and in all. You see, out in the world, I mean, we're judged, right? We're judged all the time.

But in this room, he says, the way you guys interact with each other should be different. And here, it shouldn't matter how attractive you are. There's no distinction there.

It shouldn't matter how rich you are, how poor you are, how intelligent you are, how athletic you are, how famous you are. Christ is all and in all. There's no Christian doctors in the room, no Christian attorneys, no Christian janitors, just Christians.

You know, it's this idea of, in this room, we live differently. We don't lift certain people up and put other people down. In here, you believe in Jesus Christ.

You follow Jesus, and there's this sense of equality of we're all brothers and sisters in Jesus. You know, as a dad, I'm a father of four, and I don't care if one kid is more gifted than another kid. In my home, I love them equally.

Yeah, while it's true, Rachel, my oldest, she is the most talented of the kids. Mercy is the most intelligent of the kids. Ellie is the most entertaining of my children.

And Ezekiel is the most male of my children. And it doesn't matter, right? I mean, if I'm to be a good father, you know, I just look at them, and man, I just love you all equally. And if any of my kids starts to think that they're more important because of some talent or some intelligence or whatever else it may be, that they're somehow more special than the rest of my kids, I'll make sure that kid knows that she ain't that great, right? In the same way, God says this is a family in this room.

Okay, now suddenly, we just have an awesome father. That's all we need to know. And we've been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ.

And so when we come together in this room, these other distinctions aren't made. It's different in here. That's the way God wants us to live.

And hopefully when you walk in this room, you really do look at the other people in this room as brothers and sisters of yours. This is family, and there are no other distinctions. And the verse I really love about this passage is verse 12, Colossians 3, 12.

I'm just gonna put this one on the screen. Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You guys, I was reading this in my office, studying this in my office.

And when it got to, therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, I'm thinking through every word, I'm thinking holy and dearly loved. Once I read that phrase, I couldn't study anymore. I said, I put my Bible down, and I just had to worship.

Just to be described, I mean, does that still blow your mind that when God looks at you, he thinks of you as holy and dearly loved? Those two descriptions just hit me, and I just sat there dwelling on it. I'm holy. God looks at me, and he says, all that junk you did, he doesn't see all the junk I've done in my past.

He looks at me now as holy. I mean, Colossians 2 explains that, that all that junk of my past, Jesus nailed to the cross. Jesus paid for that.

We switched places, so when he sees me, all he sees is the holiness of Jesus Christ, because he already took all that sin away from me. So now God, the creator, that almighty being, the all-powerful being, he looks at me, and he says, all I see is holy. Perfect.

He looks at me as perfect, sinless, clean, pure, holy. And then that phrase, dearly loved, think about that. Dearly loved by God.

It took me a long time to accept that. It took me so long to really believe that, that God wasn't still holding on to some things I've done in my past. That God's still not holding on to some of the thoughts that have gone through this head, some of the actions that this body has performed.

He says, you know what? I don't look at that anymore. Now I just look at you as holy, and oh, I dearly love you, Francis. As a father, I just look at you, I mean, this is God speaking.

And he says to me, you're holy and dearly loved. And I just sat there, and I said, God, what else matters? You look at me as pure, and you're crazy about me. You dearly love me.

Nothing else matters. And so, what we, when we gather together, that should be on the forefront of our minds. What is this room made up of? Just a bunch of people that are holy in God's eyes, and dearly loved

by him.

And that's where we find our identity, not in anything else, like the world does. In this room, Christ is all. Christ is all and in all, because of what he did on the cross.

Man, we should all be in hell right now. We should all be paying for the stuff we did, but Jesus paid for it on that cross. And now we're holy, and we're dearly loved by God, and that's what binds us together.

You see, and he talks about us as God's chosen people. People. God chose us as a people, a group, and this is what I'm talking about.

This is where I've messed up. I have messed up, and I confessed this a couple years ago, how I get so individualistic, because that's the way America is. You take care of yourself, you take care of your own family, you provide for your own family, your own self.

You don't need anyone else. You make sure you've got everything taken care of. And that's my mindset, and I kind of prided myself on that, even in my Christianity, of the fact that, you know what? If the goal of Christianity is to stay pure, to avoid the major sins, and keep a prayer time with God, you know what? I don't really need you.

And I would kind of pride myself on that. I don't really need any of you guys. I can stay pure on my own, okay? I can avoid the major sins.

When I get alone with God, see, I don't need accountability. Accountability didn't really make sense to me. It still doesn't, honestly, because accountability is assuming that you're not gonna lie, which is a silly assumption that you're not gonna lie to people.

It's this whole idea of, well, yeah, Francis might commit adultery, but I know he would never lie about it. Think about that. You know, so I'm gonna get together with a group, and it's this idea of, wait, wait a second, I don't need that, because my fear, my fear is not people.

My fear is not, oh, man, if I commit adultery, he's gonna ask me about it. My fear is, I'm gonna stand before this God, and I gotta face him tomorrow morning, I gotta face him tonight, I gotta face him every time I pray. It's this awesome, holy being.

And that's really what keeps me pure. It really does. You don't keep me pure.

It's this fear of God that keeps me focused. And as far as praying to him, I mean, I enjoy that. I don't need someone to ask me if I'm praying.

I just, I love it. I do it. Now, if that's the goal, if that's what the Bible says is the goal, then I really don't need you.

And I've thought that way, and I've taught that way, and I've kind of taught you, just have your individual relationship with God. Be accountable to him. And that part is, and I don't take anything back, that's true.

But that's not the goal of Christianity. The goal of Christianity, the goal of my life is to please God, right? And God says, in order to please me, you can't do that on your own, because my goal is not to raise a bunch of individualistic children who can just live life by themselves. My goal, God's desire, is he wants a people.

The Bible uses the word family. It's this idea of a body where you interact with each other, where you're interdependent on one another. In the old, it's always been this way, in the Old Testament, what did God want to do? A nation.

He wanted Israel to be his light to the world, right? Not Israel lights. He didn't say, I want a bunch of little individual lights. He goes, no, I want Israel as a nation to be a blessing to the other nations.

In the same way in the New Testament, it's taught that he wants the church. Now, are there ways in which we, as individuals, want to be lights for the Lord? Absolutely. But there's also a truth that there's this teaching that we collectively, as a body, the church, the way we interact with one another as a group of people, as one body is supposed to be a light to the world, just like Israel, as a nation, was supposed to interact and be different than the rest of the world, like the rest of the nations.

And so, God's call has always been, there's a pattern for my people. I want this group of people to live differently than the culture. I want them to stand out in the way they interact with one another.

See, the goal is to please God, and that's why in the next verse, in verse 13, he says, bear with each other, and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you, and over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. See, in Colossians 3, 13, that phrase, bear with each other, this is so important, you guys.

This is so huge in light of the world that we live in. Do you understand what the word bear with means? Bear with one another. Bear with means to put up with.

He says, I want you, okay? I don't care what people do in the world. What I want you guys to do, you as believers, I want you to put up with each other. Bear with one another.

Why? Because we still have sinful tendencies. I'm gonna get on your nerves, you're gonna get on my nerves. And he says, would you put up with each other? Because that's why I'm calling you as a people group to live.

You as my children, I want you to bear with one another. And that's so different from the world because we live in a society where we ditch people. Right? I mean, what do you do when your friends, you have a friend that just bugs you so much? You ditch him.

You got other friends to hang out with? Just ditch him, that's what you're taught. It's no different in the church. What do you do when the church starts bugging you? Yeah, find another one.

There's plenty of churches in Simi. Just ditch it. I mean, some of you ditched your church to come here, right? Yeah, you know you did.

You ditched your church to come here and one day you'll ditch us here, you'll ditch me, you'll find some younger pastor. I see the way you look at other churches. You've thought about it, haven't you? It's been in your mind.

They'll never love you like I do. But it's this whole idea of, man, I'll just ditch, I'll just go somewhere else. Man, we ditch our friends, we ditch our spouses.

That's what we're taught. You know, if it gets beyond that, you know, for people to be like, I'm better for worse, but you know, worse really, how much worse? Shouldn't there be a line where I can ditch? Kids

wanna ditch their families and they run away. Dads, moms run away from the family, they ditch it.

That's what we're taught. Kobe's gonna ditch the Lakers. We just, that's what's out there though, right? I mean, even the sports figures, no one sticks with a team.

It's just whoever is gonna give me the most money. And the church is no different. It's just, it's consumer driven.

Who's gonna offer me more? That's the church I'm gonna go to. And if too many people bug me in one church, I'll leave it. And you know, what does God say? He goes, man, would you guys bear with each other? Say, I want you to live differently than the rest of the world.

You guys don't just ditch each other, you guys bear with each other. We're gonna have issues, we're gonna fight, we're gonna get into each other's faces sometimes. He goes, just put up with it.

Forgive in the same way that Christ forgave you. Forgive as Christ forgave you. I mean, how many times has God put up with you? And now He says, I want you to forgive as Christ forgave you.

In fact, He says in Matthew 6, 15, if you do not forgive men their sins, your father will not forgive your sins. He goes, man, whatever grievances you have against one another, would you put those aside? I mean, we're holy and we're dearly loved people. We're a family that we've been forgiven for all the junk that we should be punished for that ought to bind us together.

That should cause us to be this group of people that just is clothed with compassion and kindness and patience. And when people walk in this room, is that what they see that we are clothed with? How we bear with one another, how we forgive whatever grievances you may have. You see this bear with each other.

Forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. You know how many one another's are in the Bible? Oh man, there's tons of them. What does that tell you? That means there's a sense in which we have to live with one another.

Some examples, I mean, all over the Bible says love one another. Like it does in John 13, Romans 12, 10. Be devoted to one another, honor one another.

Romans 12, 16, live in harmony with one another. Stop passing judgment on one another, Romans 14. Accept one another, Romans 15.

Instruct one another, greet one another, Romans 16. Agree with one another, 1 Corinthians 1, 10. Serve one another, Galatians 5, 13.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, Ephesians 4, 32. Speak to one another, Ephesians 5, 19. Submit to one another, Ephesians 5, 21.

Teach and admonish one another, Colossians 3, 16. Encourage one another, Hebrews 3, 13. Spur one another on to love and good deeds, Hebrews 10, 24.

Don't slander one another, James 4, 11. Live in harmony with one another, 1 Peter 3, 18. Offer hospitality to one another, 1 Peter 4, 9. And I've left out plenty.

It's this whole idea of when God sees his family, he wants to see the way that we interact with one another. Loving each other, encouraging one another, teaching one another. And this is supposed to be a light to the world.

In fact, when Jesus prayed for the church, this has always fascinated me. In John 17, 23, Jesus is telling his disciples that he's leaving, and then he prays this prayer for his disciples and for the church. He says, Father, I in them and you in me, may they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them as you have loved me.

Okay, I wanna point something out here. Look at that, think about this. God says, okay, I wanna be in them.

Christ in us, and God, you are in me. May they, may they, the church, be brought to complete unity. Why? Why did he want the church to be brought to complete unity? He says, to let the world know that you have sent me and have loved them.

Wait, so somehow Jesus, I mean, this prayer in a lot of our minds really doesn't make sense if we're to be honest with ourselves. Because we go, okay, God, why would the church being united prove that Jesus really was the son of God and sent by God the Father? How does our being united prove to anyone that Jesus is the son of God and that God loves them? So somehow if we live together in unity, then the world's gonna start believing that God loves them? Look, logically, it doesn't totally make sense in my head. Because logically, in my mind, I think, well, if someone, if I'm trying to prove to someone that Jesus is the son of God, I'll go to the Old Testament.

I'll throw out a bunch of prophecies and say, well, look at this. You know, here's something written, you know, 500 years before the time of Christ, and look how it happened to the date and everything else. I'll start throwing out some different apologetic facts that I've learned over the years about archeology and history and just throw all that.

That'll prove to them that Jesus really is the son of God, but Jesus says, no, that's not how you do it. It's when you guys are united, people are gonna start believing in me. And that's what he prays to the Father.

Father, may they live in complete unity to let the world know that you've sent me and have loved them. That somehow the way we interact, you see, when we think about evangelism, we think about us as individuals talking to other individuals in the world. And Jesus, when he thought about evangelism, he says it has more to do than just that.

It's about you somehow living in unity, and that's what's gonna push someone over the edge. That's what's gonna get them to believe that I really am the son of God is when you interact with each other. See, it's the way the church collectively is a light.

And that's why the Bible says you gotta do this thing together. You gotta work together on this, and that's why I gotta put aside, even for me, this individualistic attitude of I don't need anyone. And realize, no, to accomplish the mission of God, I need you.

We need to work together on this and do the one another's and live in community with one another. That's the way we're gonna impact the world. We need to live in unity with Christians all around the world.

And that's the way we're gonna impact the world. See, verse 15 just makes it even stronger. He says, let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts since as members of one body, you were called to peace and be thankful.

See, in this room, it's not a bunch of tension and a bunch of fights and little petty arguments. In this room, we're the peace, the peace of Christ should rule in our hearts. And he says, since we're as members of one body, to really see yourself as a member of one body.

He uses that now, he uses plenty of analogies to show that we're a bunch of stones making one temple. We're a bunch of parts of a body making one body. That somehow, collectively, we form something.

You see, it's like this thing. You guys are looking and you're going, what is that? It doesn't really make a whole lot of sense when I'm just twirling around this little pink thing. But then, when I get, this is Mrs. Potato Head because my girls are not allowed to play with male parts.

This, this is Mrs. Potato Head and suddenly you go, oh, okay, now it looks cool. It's this idea of, the Bible says, this is a picture of the church. I mean, not this, but you know what I mean.

This, a body, a complete body. And here's what a lot of us do. We just go, you know what? I'm totally fine by myself.

I'm totally fine out there. Look, I don't really need the body. I'm okay over here.

I don't need church to have a relationship with God. You know why haven't you heard that? Some of you guys are watching on television and you're watching on television because you don't need church to have a relationship with God and I'm telling you, you're so wrong. This has never been the way that God intended his body to live.

He says, this will make no sense to the world. This is not a picture to the world. You're not accomplishing my purposes.

You're not bringing glory to me because this is never what I asked for. I asked for you collectively, collectively together as a body. Now suddenly I can walk around and be a light to the world.

And so often we try to do this thing by ourselves and we just get so focused on our gift and what we can do. And yet you guys, the gift, it says that they are all given for the common good. That we're not supposed to just exercise it by ourselves.

That somehow we're supposed to work together collectively as a body and so that's why we bear with one another and that's why he says, you know what, the hand can't say to the foot, I don't need you. You can't do that. You're a part of a body now.

That I can't say, you know what, I don't need you. That I can do this on my own and I'll be honest, there have been times when I've thought about that. Just as you've thought about ditching this body, I've thought about ditching the body.

Man, I don't need you guys. I don't need the problems you guys bring into my life. I don't.

And it's like, man, I can do this without you. I'll just go do something else and those thoughts have gone through my head. They've gone through yours.

It's human nature. Yet the Bible says you can't do that. Bear with one another.

Put up with each other. Forgive whatever grievances you have with one another. Man, let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts because you are just members of one body.

And be thankful. You see, man, I understand some of you, okay, let's just be honest here. Some of you come in this room and you just want some spiritual nourishment for yourself, right? You want your own relationship.

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