

**Series: TRANSFORMATION**  
**Sermon: Alive With Christ**  
**Text: Ephesians 2:1-10**

### **Discussion Questions:**

When I use the phrase ***“The ways of this world”*** – what do you think of? In a very general sense, what does *“the ways of this world”* mean?

Now break this down in more specific categories.

- When thinking about money, and finances, what are the ways of this world?
- When thinking about success, how does “this world” (more specifically, American culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century) define success?
- What do “the ways of this world” have to say about character and integrity?
- Who makes the rules for what constitutes “the ways of this world”?
- What role does media play in determining “the ways of this world”?
- What role does education play with regards to “the ways of this world”?
- How much influence do parents and families have in determining “the ways of this world” for our current generation of teenagers in America?

In **Romans 12:2**, we’re told that we must not ***“conform to the pattern of this world.”***

- Are the “patterns” of this world and the “ways” of this world the same thing?
- How much pressure is there to conform to the pattern of this world?
- Why shouldn’t we conform to the pattern of this world...what’s so wrong with it?
- How do we NOT conform to the pattern of this world?

### **Examination:**

- Read **Ephesians 2:1-3** – *“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.”*
  - When Paul says that “you followed the ways of this world”, who is he talking about?
  - What is the result when we follow the ways of the world?
  - Are “transgressions and sins” an indispensable aspect of the ways of this world? Are there “ways of this world” that don’t involve sin - or if you have the one, do you absolutely have the other?
  - Who is “the ruler of the kingdom of the air”? What do you think this means?
  - Is the ruler of the kingdom of the air the same thing as the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient? Disobedient to what or whom?
  - Who is the “them” referring to in v. 3?
  - What are the cravings, desires and thoughts of our flesh - and how does this relate to the ways of this world?
  - What does it mean that we are “by nature deserving of wrath”?

- **Read Ephesians 2:4-6** – *“But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...”*
  - What kind of love and mercy does God have for us (v. 4)?
  - Do most people in the world think of God as great in love, and rich in mercy? Why or why not? What role does the ruler of the air have in this?
  - How are we made alive...even when we were dead? What role do we play in this coming to life?
  - Verse 5 introduces the concept of grace. What is grace?
  - When did God raise us up with Christ, and seat us in the heavenly realms with Jesus? What do you think this even means?
  
- **Read Ephesians 2:7-10** – *“...In order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*
  - Why does God raise us up with Christ and seat us in the heavenly realms in Jesus (v. 7)?
  - What are the incomparable riches of God’s grace?
  - What role do works play in our salvation? Is this what many people in the world think is the case?
  - How are we God’s handiwork? Why are we created? What’s the difference between the good works we are created to do - and the good works that don’t save us?
  - How is it that God prepares in advance the good works that we’re created to do? Does this mean that God has a plan for our lives? Is it possible to NOT do the good works we were created to do?

### **Application:**

Thinking back to what we read in Romans 12:1-2, we read that we DON’T conform to the pattern of this world by being “transformed by the renewing of our mind.” Take a 3x5 card, and on one side write the word “Stop!” On the other side, write out **Philippians 4:8** (*“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.”*). Whenever you are tempted to give in to temptation, take the card out; say “Stop”; and quote the verse!