

Time for Transformation

Romans 12:1-2 (ESV)

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. 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.

The world is constantly teaching, threatening, and tempting us to “get with the plan”.

Behold Better

Daily habits to combat the world’s teaching.

Weekly routines to confront the world’s threats.

Special occasions to combat the world’s temptations.

Satan’s most effective temptations always involve God’s good gifts.

Satan is constantly tempting us to pursue the gifts rather than the giver.

Resist temptation by looking ahead to the feast!

1 Corinthians 10:13-16 (ESV)

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

Jesus looked to the joy of the feast to endure the cross.

Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)

... looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Two essential ingredients to a feast: giving and enjoying.

Tithes, offerings and faith commitments

The tithe is the top 10%, an amount established in Abraham.

Offerings are gifts over and above the regular tithe. In the Old Testament offerings were commanded specifically in relation to the 7 feasts of Israel.

Faith Commitments are the pledged amount that we are asking God to provide in our lives in order that we can contribute to the work of global missions.

God commands us to give because in order to give we must work hard.

Acts 20:32-35 (ESV)

And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

God commands us to give so that we can receive a bountiful harvest.

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (ESV)

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound in every good work. As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be

enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

God commands us to give because when we give we are like Him.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (ESV)

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

Enjoying

Be so focused on enjoying the feasts of God that you are not tempted to settle for the folly of sin.

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 (ESV)

Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil – this is the gift of God. For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

Enjoying with the angels

Hebrews 12:22 (ESV)

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering.

Enjoy righteousness

Psalms 89:15-16 (ESV)

Blessed are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face, who exult in your name all the day and in your righteousness are exalted.