

Sermon Notes – Sunday 15th October

‘Transforming Choices’

Read Romans 12:2

Recalling the ‘Tale of Two Frogs’ – the slow boiled frog and the kissed frog Prince, how can we find ourselves ‘slow boiled’ i.e incrementally, step by step gradually conforming to the pattern of this world; its values, desires?

Simon Ponsonby writes: *‘Do not be conformed to this world; do not accommodate to its values; do not be conned by its sales pitch; do not be ship wrecked by its alluring sirens’.*

Read Ephesians 5:15-20.

‘Be very careful then how you live..’ Paul sees ‘culture’ (whether in Rome or Ephesus) and prevailing cultural values as posing a threat to the distinct identity of Christians in the early church. Why might that be?

- Can you recall occasions in the Old Testament when the people of God allowed their distinctive calling and identity to become assimilated into the culture around them? What were the consequences?

Paul teaches that we can safeguard ourselves from being ‘slow boiled’ into conformity by the ‘renewal of our minds’. How do we keep our minds renewed and so be transformed (‘Frog kissed princes and princesses’)?

1. **Make wise choices.** Can you recall an occasion when you have made a wise (good) decision/ an unwise (bad) decision? What were the consequences in each case? What might help you choose wisely?
2. **Choose to be filled with God’s Holy Spirit.** Why does Paul urge Christians not to get drunk on alcohol? What can help us to be Spirit – filled?
3. **Choose thanksgiving over grumbling.** Can you recall occasions when the people of God grumbled against Him in the Old Testament. How did God view a complaining, grumbling spirit? How can we maintain a heart full of gratitude and thankfulness in spite of struggles and difficulties?

Are you a ‘Son kissed frog’ in the process of being transformed or a ‘slow boiled frog’ living by the values, desires and expectations of the society around us? Share together ways in which you are distinct/ different and set apart as a follower of Jesus?

If you have time read Moses challenge to the people of God in Deut 30:11-20

Pray for one another that we might all be those who are counter cultural, who march to a different tune, living by different standards and so be transformed into the likeness of Christ.