



Conformed to His Image

We as Christ-followers, as those who profess belief in Jesus Christ and desire to walk with Him in greater intimacy, are called to conform to the image of Christ. In the Protestant/Reformed tradition we view this transformation as sanctification which is a progressive work. Hebrews. 10:14 states, “*for by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*”

The idea communicated is that the work of Christ while complete in our justification (made righteous in the sight of God) results in an on-going work in the life and ultimately a manifesting and out-working of Christ in the Christ-follower. John reminds us that the future hope of conformity to Christ’s character even now gives increasing moral purity to our lives.

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure (1 John 3:2-3).

As we grow in holiness we grow in conformity to the image of Christ, and more and more of the beauty of His character is seen in our own lives.¹ Oswald Chambers (*Utmost for His Highest*) writes “sanctification, the impartation of the qualities of Christ, but it is a work in progress, I am through the Spirit led to a continuous perfection that will not be complete until the glorification. I pray that the Spirit will have more of me and that I will have less, I pray for the real desire to die to the flesh.”

Peter makes clear that Believers are to pursue holiness and his language leaves little room for doubt about the need for Believers to be dead to who they were and live in their new righteousness: 1 Peter 1:14–16, states “*as obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*” Here Peter is citing Leviticus where the word holy is used by God 150 times to require holiness from His people both personally and in community with others. We clearly are called to be holy as the Lord is holy, we need to choose to make God honoring choices and allow the Holy Spirit to conform us to the image of Christ.

“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” (Romans 12:2).

¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004), 758.