

Harmonizing the Believer's Will with God's Will

God permits the believer to make choices, even life's most critical decisions. One's occupation, one's training/education, one's mate for life, where one will serve the Lord, etc.

At issue: how does one enter into God's specific plan for his/her life? Romans 12:1-2 is vital to this process.

Romans 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what [thing] is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Observations:

1. The "thing" (what thing) that is the will of God must be proven*; that is, tested* in view of approval.

prove* = Present Tense, Active Voice, Infinitive of purpose, which reads literally, "that you [pl.] may prove **what thing [is] the will of God, the good [thing] and well-pleasing [thing] and perfect [thing]."

2. Under real life decision making, the thing willed by God will prove itself to be

- Good (ultimately beneficial)
- Acceptable (well pleasing, both to you & God)
- Perfect (complete in itself for the situation)

3. Preliminary & critical steps in this proving process

- ❖ PRESENT* your bodies a living sacrifice (in contrast with O.T. sacrifices)

*Aorist Tense, Active Voice, Infinitive/Imperative: a Constative Aorist as in Rom. 6:13, 16, 19.

- ❖ BE NOT CONFORMED* to this age.

*Present Tense, Passive Voice, Imperative Mode, fr. *suschematizo/συσχηματιζω*

- ❖ BE TRANSFIGURED*

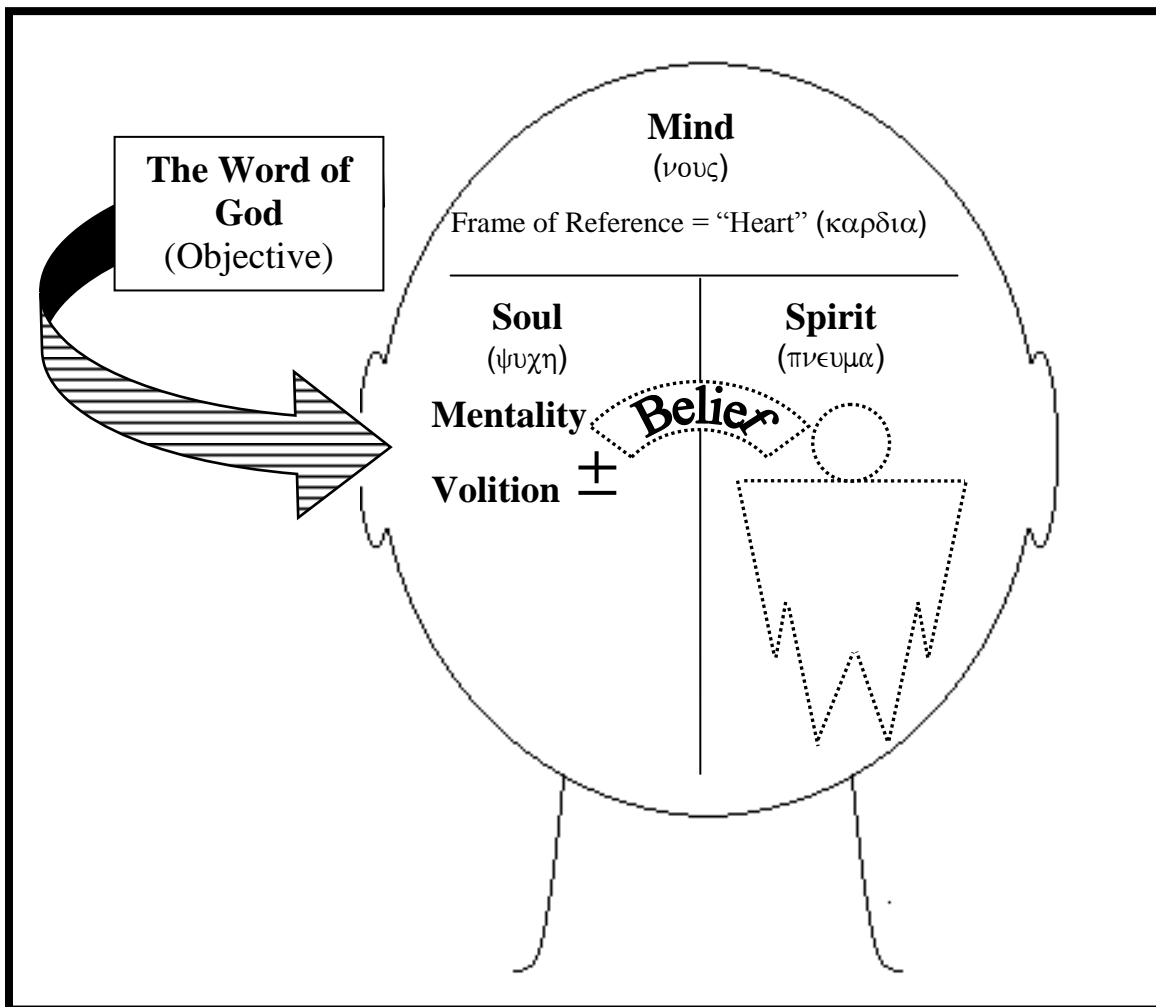
*Present Tense, Passive Voice, Imperative Mode from *metamorphao/μεταμορφάω* (as in Mt. 17:2)

How? By "RENEWING your mind."

4. The purpose and net result of following the 3 imperatives of Rom. 12:1-2 is that the thing that is the will of God is realized in our lives.

THE KEY TO DECISION MAKING RELATIVE TO GOD'S WILL IN REAL LIFE SITUATIONS IS THE RENEWING OF THE MIND.

Renewing the mind here is the application of residual, biblical, truth to any real life situation to determine God's will.



Explanation of the diagram: When a person is born-again, his spirit is made alive unto God, thus the new man or the new creation in Christ has its genesis. The Holy Spirit takes up residence there and the Christian life begins. Basic to the growth of this inner man is the Word of God, the protein of the Spirit. The believer under the filling control of the Spirit of God is to incorporate the Word of God into the inner man by responding positively to its teachings. Through God's leadership, discipline, testing (educational experiences), the Word, its values, its benefits, etc., become part of the believer's frame of reference so that he/she is equipped to face the issues and experiences of life from divine viewpoint. The growth of the new man, the new creation in Christ, should be a priority of every believer.

Application of Romans 12:1-2

1. One's enjoyment of the will of God is directly proportional to the strength of his inner man. Romans 7:22
2. It is God's will that we be free to exercise intelligent choice as long as we do not choose contrary to those things commanded or forbidden in scripture. Walk by faith.
3. Romans 12:1-2 states 3 principles directed to proving God's will in real-life situations (very applicable to inner man realities).

❖ **12:1 Principle #1** "Present your body a living sacrifice..."

- "Present" is a Constantive Aorist Tense, which means you must do this again and again
- This presenting means that you are consciously aware of being alive to the Lord and to His pleasure (6:13)

❖ **12:2a Principle #2** "Non-conformation to the zeitgeist..."

- The verb is Present Passive Imperative from συσχηματιζο / suschematizo, which means "to masquerade," "to disguise"
- *Stop being outwardly what you are not inwardly.*
- Meaning: we are not to be beaten into the world's mold. The whims and moods of the age are not to be molders of our opinions.
- You make the decision.

❖ **12:2b Principle #3** "Transfiguration by the renewing of the mind"

- The verb is Present (Def.) Middle Imperative from μεταμορφομαι / metamorphomai (from which metamorphosis)
- Meaning: the inner man metamorphosizes into mental choices that are pleasing to God and are the best for the believer! The will of God is accomplished.

4. What does "renewing the mind" mean?

- It is the inner man expressing himself outwardly (in real life situations).
- It is the application of biblical truth, a spirit-mind driven process.
- It is applying what you already have in order to discern God's will (not acquiring something you do not have).

- Stated another say: application of bible doctrine from within one's spirit renews or invigorates the mind toward the proving of God's will!
5. Maximal happiness results from knowing and fulfilling God's will in this life.

Conclusion

Christianity is the life of the Spirit. That life is internalized in what the Apostle Paul calls "the inner man," "the new creation in Christ Jesus." All true worship, genuine prayer, proper giving and serving proceed from the inner man; i.e., from the inside out. It is in this process that the believer is being transformed into the image of Christ. Charlie Brown, just as we, had to learn this.