

# Living Differently

*You Were Never Meant to Blend In*

## [QR] WATCH BEFORE YOU BEGIN

*Scan to watch the Lesson 11 teaching video, a 12-minute companion to this lesson.*

### BIG IDEA

**The world is always trying to press you into its shape. God is forming a different one in you, from the inside out.**

### CORE SCRIPTURES

*“Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.”*

**Romans 12:1-2 (CSB)**

*“You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden ... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”*

**Matthew 5:14-16 (CSB)**

### KEY CONCEPTS

*Fill in the blanks as you read or as your group works through the lesson.*

1. The hardest pressures to resist are the ones you’ve stopped \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Paul urges us to live differently “in view of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.” You respond to grace; you don’t earn it.
3. “Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ to this age.” Left alone, you take the shape of whatever surrounds you.
4. Change doesn’t start with your behavior. You are transformed by the renewing of your \_\_\_\_\_.

5. A transformed life is like a city on a hill. It cannot be \_\_\_\_\_, so you live it in plain sight.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Work through these as a group. There are no wrong answers here, only honest ones.*

### ► OPENING · LOW STAKES

1. Think of a “normal” you grew up assuming, about money, success, or what a good life looks like. Where did you first pick it up?

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2. Since you started following Jesus, what’s one everyday thing that has begun to feel a little off that never used to?

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### ► CORE · HEART OF THE LESSON

3. Paul says to live differently “in view of the mercies of God.” Does living differently tend to feel like earning God’s approval or responding to it? What changes when mercy comes first?

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4. Where do you feel the world’s squeeze most right now: money, image, busyness, the way you talk about people, something else? What does conforming there look like in a normal week?

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5. Paul says the change starts in the mind, not the behavior. What’s one input shaping how you see the world more than Scripture does right now?

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### ► DEEPER · FOR COURAGEOUS GROUPS

6. Willpower alone wears people out. Where have you been gripping the wheel against your own desires, and what would it look like to let God change what you want instead?
7. Jesus said greatness means serving, not climbing (Mark 10:43-45). Where are you still playing by the world's rules for getting ahead, and what would serving look like there instead?

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## LOOKING TO JESUS

Everything in this lesson comes down to a moment when Jesus' disciples were jockeying for position. Two of them had just asked for the best seats in the kingdom, and the other ten were furious, probably because they wanted those seats too. Jesus named the water they were all swimming in: "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them" (Mark 10:42). Then came four words that cut clean against it: "But it is not so among you" (Mark 10:43). Not a tweak to the system, a different system entirely. "Whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant" (Mark 10:43). And Jesus didn't only teach it; he was it: the Son of Man "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The world says climb. Jesus says stoop. That is the mold you are being pulled out of.

**REFLECTION:** *"It is not so among you." Where are you still playing by the world's rules for getting ahead, and what would serving look like there instead?*

## JOURNALING

*Set aside 15 to 20 minutes with these prompts. Write honestly. No one grades these.*

1. Write honestly about one place the world has quietly pressed you into its shape. How did it happen, and when did you first start to notice?
  2. Paul says transformation starts in the mind. Name one input, a feed, a show, a voice, that has been shaping how you see more than Scripture is. What is one thing you could put in its place this week?
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3. “The world says climb; Jesus says stoop.” Where is God inviting you to serve instead of compete? Write down one specific step.
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*Core Scriptures: Romans 12:1-2 • Matthew 5:13-16*

#### **THIS WEEK**

Name one mold you have stopped noticing and take a single visible step out of it. Pick one area, your calendar, your spending, or the way you talk about someone, and make one choice this week that looks more like Jesus than like the crowd.

**Memory verse: Romans 12:2**

#### **[ QR ] WANT TO GO DEEPER?**

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#### **ANSWERS**

*Key Concepts fill-in-the-blank answers.*

1. **noticing**
2. **mercies**
3. **conformed**
4. **mind**
5. **hidden**