

FAST Lesson 1A: Real Men Don't Just Go Along With the World – A New Mindset

John Kain, 2009

- I. As Christians, we are called to be different. The difference Jesus wants is a difference of how we think about things, of how we use our minds to consider ideas and make judgments. This difference or transformation must come from inside of us, where we fight a battle of good vs. evil, of right vs. wrong.
- II. Jesus tells us that the evil in our world comes from the heart of a man – a problem that can only be solved by a change of heart. Men may not naturally be drawn to do the right things, but as Christians we are certainly capable of making good decisions because God is at work within us.
- III. This starts by our willingness to question our natural responses, to prayerfully consider whether our choices are right or wrong, and to refrain from going along with the things that can harm ourselves and others (if we sense anything wrong with the activity or the people involved).
- IV. Unfortunately many men are fools. They go along with what is easy or fun, and just “go with the flow.” This foolish behavior can also be labeled as “conformity with the world.”
- V. Authentic men cautiously evaluate who they follow and what they do from the vantage point of “what is right?” instead of “what’s in it for me?” Men who seek God learn to think on a higher level than the world around them, to recognize right from wrong, and to become changed by God instead of going along with the world. This way of thinking and behaving is the result of a spiritual transformation.
- VI. Transformation does not just happen. It involves our decision to draw close and listen to God, while turning down the volume generated by the things in this world that distract us from spiritual growth. It includes the strength of character to say “no” to wrong activities and bad people, and to say “yes” to God. This ultimately results in a life

marked by peace, joy and love that lasts. It also yields a measure of wisdom – a healthy understanding of God’s intentions for our personal role in this world.

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)

"Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' **For out of the heart come evil thoughts,** murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. **These are what make a man 'unclean';** but eating with unwashed hands does not make him 'unclean.' " (Matthew 15:17-20)

“Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to **abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” (1 Peter 2:11-12)

“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. **Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.**” (1 Samuel 16:7)

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. **The world and its desires pass away,** but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” (1 John 2:15-17)