

RCCG INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CENTRE - LIGHTHOUSE LESSON OUTLINE
A Christ-Centred Church with a Heart of Compassion

Message Date: 7/06/2026 Lighthouse Meeting Date: 9/06/2026	Message Title: DO NOT BE CONFORMED: Cultivating a Supernatural Life of Love in a Self-Centred World Minister: Pastor Chuka Nwafor
Key Texts: Romans 12:2 (AMPC), Romans 12:1 (AMPC), Romans 14:17 (AMPC), Romans 5:5 (AMPC), Romans 8:38–39 (AMPC), 2 Timothy 3:1–5 (AMPC),	

Please read the entire document and Bible texts before you begin to discuss and answer the related questions. This will help you grasp the overall context of the message, however, remember the Bible is not a discussion book but a decision book. God honours and empowers your decisions not your discussions.

PLEASE ALWAYS GO TO THE ICCRCCG.ORG WEBSITE AND READ THE WORD DECLARATION AT THE START OF YOUR SESSION (CLICK ON: MESSAGES-DECLARATION)

INTRODUCTION: THE WORLD WANTS TO SHAPE YOU, BUT GOD WANTS TO TRANSFORM YOU

Romans 12:1-2 AMPC

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. [2] Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

Walk into almost any public house in this country, and you will find a notice advertising a psychic evening, people paying money to sit in a dark room and ask a stranger what the future holds for their lives. Flip through almost any magazine, and you will find a column dedicated to Zodiac signs and horoscopes. Open social media, and you will discover an entire industry built around telling people who they are, what they are worth, and what the future holds for them.

Why? Because every human being carries within them a deep, God-given hunger to know their purpose, understand their future, and be assured that their life has meaning. The tragedy is not that people are searching for answers; the tragedy is that they are searching in places that can never satisfy the deepest longings of the human soul.

God is not opposed to you knowing His will for your life, in fact He actually wants us to know His will for our lives and what the future holds for you and I- Eph.5:14-18. He is not against your desire for clarity, direction, and purpose. What He warns us against firmly, lovingly, and urgently, is the notion that we can discover His will by aligning ourselves with the world's system. A world that is confused, self-absorbed, and morally adrift cannot reveal your God-given identity. A culture that has

lost its own moral compass cannot direct you toward your divine purpose.

This is why the Apostle Paul, writing to the church in Rome, issued one of the most countercultural commands in all of Scripture:

"Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." **Romans 12:2 (AMPC)**

This message is a call to non-conformity, not the rebellious kind, but the transformed kind. It is a call to step out of the mould that the world is constantly pressing you into and allow yourself to be reshaped by the supernatural love of God in your thinking, your relationships, your conduct, and your devotion.

HISTORICAL AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The Epistle to the Romans was written by the Apostle Paul around AD 57 and addressed to believers living in the heart of the Roman Empire, the most powerful, sophisticated, and culturally influential civilisation of its day. Rome shaped the known world through its laws, architecture, philosophy, entertainment, and values. To be Roman was to be relevant. To think Roman was to be progressive.

Yet into that environment, Paul boldly declared: **"Do not be conformed."**

Paul further describes the pattern of this fallen world in 2 Timothy 3:1–5:

"But understand this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear]. For people will be lovers of self and [utterly] self-centred, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters... [without natural human affection], callous and inhuman... lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God. For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it." **2 Timothy 3:1–5 (AMPC)**

This is not merely a description of the world outside the church. Paul's warning concerning those who maintain a form of godliness while denying its power reveals that this spiritual coldness can creep into the church itself. The danger is not only worldliness; it is religious worldliness maintaining the outward appearance of Christianity while embracing the inward values of a self-centred age.

This message calls us back to God's supernatural alternative: a life empowered by the Holy Spirit and characterised above all by the love of God. It challenges us to allow that life to begin in our homes, flourish within the church, and overflow into the world around us.

KEY 1: THE WORLD'S PATTERN IS SELFISHNESS, GOD'S PATTERN IS LOVE

The defining characteristic of the world's pattern, as Paul describes in 2 Timothy 3, is a profound and pervasive self-centredness. People are described as being "lovers of self and utterly self-centred." This is not merely a moral failing; it is a spiritual posture. It is a life organised entirely around self, a life governed by the questions: *What do I want? What benefits me? What serves my*

interests?

In a world shaped by this pattern, people are often viewed as resources rather than individuals created in the image of God. Relationships are increasingly evaluated through the lens of personal benefit rather than covenantal commitment: *What can I gain from this relationship? What value does this person add to my life?* The moment someone is no longer perceived as useful, the relationship is often abandoned. Friendships become conditional, marriages become contractual, and even our relationship with God can subtly shift from worship to consumption. Jesus becomes a means to an end rather than the Lord and Master of our lives.

Paul presents a striking contrast in his description of the Kingdom of God:

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of getting the food and drink one likes, but instead it is righteousness (that state which makes a person acceptable to God) and [heart] peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." **Romans 14:17 (AMPC)**

The Kingdom of God is not sustained by self-interest, personal ambition, or the pursuit of individual gain. Rather, it is characterised by righteousness, peace, and joy produced by the Holy Spirit. While the world's pattern encourages people to live for themselves, God's pattern calls believers to live in love, service, and devotion to Him and to others.

Scripture Focus: *"Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind..."* **Romans 12:2 (AMPC)**

Digging Deep / Life Application: Take time to examine the motivations behind your relationships. Ask yourself honestly: *Am I genuinely invested in this person, or am I primarily interested in what this person can do for me?* The world's pattern asks, *"What is in it for me?"* The Kingdom's pattern asks, *"How can I serve, encourage, give, and demonstrate the love of Christ?"*

This principle applies to marriages, friendships, church relationships, and community life. When a marriage is built upon the transactional logic of the world, where each person constantly measures what they are receiving against what they are giving, it will struggle to survive the inevitable seasons when one spouse gives more than the other. However, when a marriage is built upon the selfless love of God, it can endure life's challenges because its foundation is not mutual benefit but covenant commitment.

Likewise, healthy churches are not built on consumerism but on sacrificial love. Believers who embrace the Kingdom pattern seek opportunities to serve rather than be served, to bless rather than be blessed, and to give rather than merely receive.

(2) KEY 2: THE SUPERNATURAL LIFE, THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT AS THE ALTERNATIVE TO THE WORLD'S PATTERN

2 Timothy 3 gives us the pattern of the world, while Galatians 5:22–23 reveals the pattern of the Kingdom. The contrast is striking:

- Where the world produces lovers of self, the Spirit produces love.
- Where the world produces pride and arrogance, the Spirit produces gentleness and humility.
- Where the world produces a lack of natural affection, the Spirit produces kindness and

goodness.

- Where the world produces a loss of self-control and moral looseness, the Spirit produces self-restraint and continence.

Notice that Paul calls these qualities fruit, not works, disciplines, or achievements. Fruit grows naturally from a tree that is alive and properly rooted. You do not produce fruit by straining; you produce fruit by abiding.

“Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me.” John 15:4 (AMPC)

This is a profound truth: the life of the Spirit is not something we manufacture; it is something we receive by remaining connected to Christ. When we drift from that connection through prayerlessness, worldliness, unrepented sin, or simple neglect, the fruit begins to wither. We do not usually produce the world’s pattern by consciously choosing it; we often drift into it when we stop deliberately abiding in Him.

There is also a common misconception about what it means to “live in the Spirit.” Many people associate the Spirit-filled life solely with dramatic manifestations such as speaking in tongues, falling under the power, signs, and wonders. While these experiences have their place, Paul makes it clear that the first and primary evidence of a Spirit-filled life is not a dramatic moment, but a transformed daily character marked by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The fruit of the Spirit is not reserved for church settings alone. It is the standard for how you speak to your spouse at 10 p.m. when you are tired. It is the patience you show your child when they have asked the same question for the fifth time. It is the gentleness with which you handle conflict at work, and the kindness you extend to someone who has offended you.

“Walk and live [habitually] in the [Holy] Spirit [responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit]; then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16 (AMPC)

The call is to walk habitually in the Spirit, not merely to visit the Spirit on Sunday mornings, but to live every moment under His influence.

Scripture Focus: “But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22–23 (AMPC)

(3) Key 3: LOVE IS SUPERNATURAL, YOU CANNOT PRODUCE IT WITHOUT GOD

One of the most liberating and sobering truths in all of Scripture is this: true love is not natural; it is supernatural. Lust is natural. Infatuation is natural. Self-interest disguised as affection is natural. But the love described in 1 Corinthians 13 **Agape** love is not a human product. It is a divine gift, and without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, it is beyond our reach.

Paul makes this explicit in Romans 5:5:

“Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for God’s love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.”

Romans 5:5 (AMPC)

And then in 1 John 4:19:

“We love Him, because He first loved us.”

1 John 4:19 (AMPC)

Love flows from God to us and then through us to others. The direction is always inward before it is outward. You cannot give what you don’t have. A heart that is not continually filled with the love of God will eventually run dry in its love for others.

This is why, when marriages fail, friendships collapse, and churches become divided, the root cause is often the same: the love of God has not remained the foundation. People rely on their natural capacity to love, love that is conditional, self-interested, and performance-based, and when circumstances change, that love runs out. The only love that truly endures is the love that originates from God, whose supply is inexhaustible.

Agape love cannot be produced through human effort alone; it is the fruit of a life surrendered to and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love springs from God; and he who loves [his fellowmen] is begotten (born) of God and is coming progressively to know and understand God.”

1 John 4:7 (AMPC)

Love is not merely something God commands, it is something God gives. Ask Him for it, and He will not withhold it.

Scripture Focus: *“Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for God’s love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.”*

Romans 5:5 (AMPC)

Digging Deep / Life Application:

Love is the clearest evidence of a transformed life. The world loves when it is convenient; God loves when it is costly. The world loves conditionally; God loves covenantally. As we abide in Christ and yield daily to the Holy Spirit, His supernatural love becomes the defining mark of our character, our families, our churches, and our witness to the world.

(KEY 4: THE NATURE OF GOD’S LOVE, WHAT 1 CORINTHIANS 13 DEMANDS OF US)

First Corinthians 13 is perhaps the most celebrated passage on love in all of literature. It is read at weddings, printed on greeting cards, and embroidered on decorative cushions. Yet it is worth pausing to consider just how demanding and countercultural this description of love truly is.

- **“Love endures long.”** The word *endures* implies that love will be tested. It will encounter difficulty, disappointment, and provocation, yet it remains steadfast. This is not the disposable, convenience-driven love of the modern age that says, *“We fell out of love”* or *“We had irreconcilable differences.”* Rather, it is a love that has already decided, in advance, to remain faithful.

- **“Love is patient.”** Patience, as Paul presents it, is rooted in hope. We endure what is difficult because we believe there is a reward. A worker does not abandon a job before payday because they trust that the reward is coming. Likewise, patience in love trusts that God Himself is the Rewarder and understands that much of love's reward may not be fully realised in this life, but in eternity before Him.
- **“Love does not insist on its own rights or its own way.”** This may be one of the most radical statements in the entire passage. In a world consumed with *my rights, my feelings, my needs, and my way*, love willingly says, *“Not my way.”* Whenever two people constantly insist on their own preferences, the relationship is inevitably pulled in opposing directions until it begins to fracture. Love makes room for others. Love yields. Love regards others as more important than itself (Philippians 2:3).
- **“It takes no account of the evil done to it.”** At the heart of biblical love is forgiveness—not pretending the hurt never happened but deliberately choosing not to keep a record of wrongs. Where forgiveness is absent, love will always struggle to flourish, because every human relationship will eventually require it.
- **Love is not proud or vainglorious:** proud people cannot understand what or why it is to apologise because they think that apologising will make them less than the other person. They cannot own up or accept responsibility for an issue because it is seen as a sign of weakness. This is so contrary to the nature of Christ as seen in Phil.2:5-12

True biblical love is not measured by feelings alone; it is revealed through sacrifice, humility, patience, and forgiveness. The more we surrender to the Holy Spirit, the more the love of Christ is formed within us, enabling us to love others not merely as they deserve, but as God has loved us.

(5) KEY 5: THE VISION OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN, WHAT A LOVE-FILLED HOME AND COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE

Isaiah 11 presents a breathtaking prophetic vision, one that is often viewed solely as an eschatological picture of the coming Kingdom age. While it certainly points to that future reality, it also serves as a present-day picture of what happens wherever the knowledge and love of God truly reign.

Consider the imagery: the wolf dwelling with the lamb, the leopard lying down with the young goat, and the lion eating straw beside the ox. These are natural enemies, creatures whose instincts toward one another are predatory. Left to their own nature, they would destroy one another. Is this not also a picture of human relationships? Left to our own nature, to the self-centred, competitive, and suspicious patterns of the world, we will use one another, wound one another, and ultimately devour one another.

Most marriages consist of two people who are, in many significant ways, very different. Most families contain clashing temperaments and competing needs. Most church communities bring together people from vastly different backgrounds, cultures, and personalities. Yet Isaiah declares, *“They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain.”*

What makes this possible? The answer is found in verse 9: *“For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”* It is the knowledge of God, not merely information about God, but a deep, experiential, and transformative knowledge of who He is and how He loves, that changes everything. When people are genuinely filled with the love and knowledge of God, even natural enemies can live together in peace.

This is God's vision for your home. This is His vision for your marriage. This is His vision for your church. Not merely a place of superficial niceness, but a community where radically different people are united by a love that transcends human nature, the love of God working through the power of the Holy Spirit.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatted domestic animal together; and a little child shall lead them... They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:6, 9 (AMPC)

DIGGING DEEP / LIFE APPLICATION:

- What would your home look like if Isaiah 11:6–9 were fully realised within it? What gap exists between that vision and your current reality? What role can you personally play in closing that gap?
- Are there relationships in your life, whether in your family, church, or workplace, where you have accepted conflict as permanent and beyond resolution? What would it look like to pray for those relationships with the faith and boldness reflected in Isaiah 11?
- Are you a peacemaker or merely a peacekeeper? Peacekeeping often avoids conflict; peacemaking enters conflict and works toward genuine reconciliation. Which one best describes you?

(6) CONCLUSION: BE TRANSFORMED, LET THE LOVE OF GOD REWRITE EVERYTHING

The world is pressing hard against us. It has a mould shaped by selfishness, suspicion, pride, and self-preservation, and it is working on you and everyone around you every single day. The pressures are not always dramatic; they are often subtle: the habit of investing only in relationships that benefit you, the instinct to choose self-protection over self-giving, the gradual cooling of love into indifference, and the drift from intimacy with God into mere religious routine.

Paul's answer to all of this is not more effort, greater discipline, or stronger willpower. His answer is transformation, a deep, inward renewal that changes not only what you do, but also who you are and how you see the world. The agent of that transformation is the Holy Spirit, who produces the character of Christ within us, beginning with love.

(6) PRAYERS: PRAYER POINTS OF GOD FROM THE MESSAGE

1. Prayer for Transformation and a Renewed Mind

Father, I confess that the patterns of this world have left their mark on how I think, how I relate, and how I love. I ask You today to renew my mind. Do not merely adjust my behaviour; transform my nature. Let me no longer be shaped by selfishness, pride, or self-interest, but be remoulded by Your Word and Your Spirit into the image of Christ Jesus. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

2. Prayer to Be Filled with the Supernatural Love of God

Lord, I acknowledge that true love is beyond my natural capacity. I ask You to pour out Your love afresh into my heart through the Holy Spirit. Let that love overflow into my marriage, my children, my friendships, my church, and my community. Let it not be a love that depends on conditions and

performance, but a love that endures long, forgives freely, and never fails. In Jesus' name, Amen.

3. Prayer for Homes to Become the Holy Mountain of Isaiah 11

Father, I declare Your Word over my home. I declare that the wolf and the lamb shall dwell together, that those who are different shall live in peace, and that my household shall neither hurt nor destroy. Let the knowledge of You fill my home as the waters cover the sea. Let my children grow up in an environment saturated with Your love, Your peace, and Your presence. In Jesus' name, Amen.

4. Prayer to Become a Circuit Breaker of the World's Pattern

Lord, the patterns of this age—anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, and selfishness—have run long enough in my family line, my relationships, and even within my church. Today, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I declare that I will be a circuit breaker. I will forgive when it is difficult. I will serve when it costs me something. I will love even when it makes me appear foolish. Let every destructive cycle end with me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

5. Prayer for the Fruit of the Spirit to Be Evident in Daily Life

Holy Spirit, I invite You to produce Your fruit in me—not only on Sundays, but on Monday mornings, in traffic, during difficult conversations, and in the quiet moments of my home when no one is watching. Let love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control be the consistent evidence of Your presence in my life. Let those closest to me be the first to benefit from the life of God at work within me. In Jesus' wonderful name, Amen.

“And above all these [put on] love and enfold yourselves with the bond of perfectness [which binds everything together completely in ideal harmony].” — Colossians 3:14 (AMPC)

Closing Prayer

Lord, teach me to live from the endless supply of Your love and grace. Let my worship be vibrant, my service joyful, my heart pure, and my relationships healthy and Christlike. May my life reflect the transforming power of Your Spirit and bring glory to Your name. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.