

VALUES 101

Introduction:

“For most of my life¹ (says Charlotte Ree) I have been told I am too much, too loud, too sensitive, too inappropriate, too ambitious, too intense, too opinionated, too emotional, too vulnerable, too hungry, too fat.

“Over the years, I did everything to make myself more digestible. I confused being loved with being palatable. I thought if I could just quieten my voice, shrink my desires, smooth my rough edges, tame my traumas, I would finally arrive at some version of acceptable.”

Then Charlotte’s marriage failed. She said, *“I was convinced I knew who I was, convinced I had done the work.”* Charlotte wrote a book about her journey.

With the process came insight: **Narration is not the same as**

awareness. She shares, *“I was still looking for love in all the wrong places. I kept asking: Who am I now? What do I want? What do I like?*

“The questions I had not asked were the ones that now mattered most: What do I value? What do I stand for? What are my core principles that will remain when my circumstances inevitably change?

“I had made decisions based on chemistry, on opportunity, on anxiety, on fear of being alone, or feeling I had something to prove. I did not ask: Does this actually align with what matters most to me?”

- quote: *“narration is not the same as awareness”*
- being able to talk about Jesus is not that same as being aware of how to live as a Christian.

Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your*

¹ Charlotte Ree: “Australian Weekend” Magazine (16.05.2026)

mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

1. Surrender

Romans 12:1 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.*

- Did you notice the word “urge”? It means it does not come automatically.
- Surrender is described here as “living sacrifice”
- Surrender means one side has won the battle of minds or wills.
- The motivation is God's mercy
- What does God's mercy mean to you?
 - Forgiveness
 - Love
 - Rescued
 - Saved
 - Other?
- Because of what He has done, I die to self every day.
- This is an act of worship.

2. Resist conformity

Romans 12:2a *Do not conform to the pattern of this world...*

- All Societies have norms or patterns of behaviour.
- Some patterns develop over time:
 - Family upbringing
 - Social media
 - School friendships
 - workplace

- Patterns of behaviour or thinking become our default position over time.
- Some patterns are not consistent with a follower of Jesus
- Conformity is shaped by values, social pressures, or cultural pressures that exclude God.
- Conformity is passive and external

3. Be Transformed

Romans 12:2b ..., *but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

- Transformed is in contrast with conformity.
- Transformation is active and Spirit driven, beginning internally and produces visible changes in thought, behaviour and character.
- Starts with being born again.
- Spiritual birth opens our heart to God.

Titus 3:5 *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

- Renewal starts with our spirit and moves through our soul [mind emotions]
- Because we are complex, we need to be led by the Spirit and guided by the Word.
- The old patterns of thinking and behaviour need to change.

QUOTE: “Romans 12:2 means interpreting life through the lens of God’s Word and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, rather than through the lens of your experience, woundedness, preferences or opinions of others.”

4. Fine Tuning

Romans 12:2c ... *Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

- God's will is based on His Character.
- If you think God is mean, then your reading of this scripture will be coloured.
- If God is good, He is good ALL THE TIME.
- God invites us to test and prove His will for us is
 - good,
 - pleasing
 - perfect.

Activities from Romans 12:1-2

Day 1	Put time aside for prayer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for openness to change.
Day 2.	Scripture saturation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Matthew 5:1-12 • Memorise ONE verse • Repeat it throughout the day.
Day 3	Filter your inputs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify one media to limit. • Replace with 20 mins scripture reading and meditation.
Day 4.	Practice obedience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose one small concrete act • Blessing instead of cursing • Kindness instead of irritability. • Honest fruitful conversation.
Day 5	Community Check <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a struggle or insight with a trusted friend or small group for support.
Day 6	Prayerful Discernment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend 15-20 mins asking God to show what “good, pleasing perfect choice” looks like for a current decision. • Journal impressions
Day 7	REVIEW and Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review journal • Note shifts in thinking or feeling • Set TWO habits to continue.