

The Transformed Life:

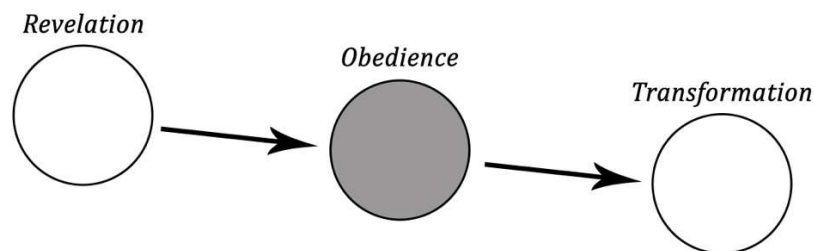
The Priority of Transformation

Dave Buehring June 12, 2022

Introduction

- 1) We are in a series over these summer months on bringing some definition to what it means to walk as a disciple of Jesus.
- 2) “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” – Matthew 4:19
 - a. A disciple is someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and on mission with Jesus.
- 3) We are in our second week of talking about being changed by Jesus. If you haven’t listened to the first five weeks of this series with Pastor Rob and Dylan and others, I’d encourage you to do so.
- 4) We talked about how we measure spiritual maturity and how it is not based on church attendance, knowledge of the Bible, the use of your gifts, the giving of a good testimony, because you prayed well publicly, or because you share your faith (all good things!). It really is about godly character, walking in obedience to Jesus and, as we’ll see next week, how you walk within your relationships.
- 5) Last Week: The Process of Transformation
 - a. We referenced **Matthew 7:24-27**

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them {obedience} will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them {disobedience} will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”
 - a. Revelation – Obedience – Transformation



- a. We zeroed in on how obedience is the engine of transformation.
 - b. We also looked at how the Bible stories we’ve learned are really quite different if the people in them hadn’t obeyed the Lord!
- 6) This week we want to build on that process by looking at the priority of transformation.

What is God’s Priority in Transformation

- 1) **God’s priority is forming us into the image of His Son**
 - a. Our Heavenly Father’s primary aim, next to reconciling you to Himself, showering you with His love and forgiveness, and welcoming you into His heavenly family, *is forming you to look more like Jesus!*

- b. “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son...**” - **Romans 8:29**
- c. “But we all, seeing the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, as in a mirror, **are being transformed into the same image** from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.” – **2 Corinthians 3:18**
- d. “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed** by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” - **Romans 12:1-2**
- This word, *transformation*, in the Greek language that the New Testament was written in, is the word, metamorphoo (*meta-mah-farr-o*), which is the root word for metamorphosis – which means to change into another form, transform, *transfigure*. Think of the caterpillar to the butterfly. A crawling critter that becomes something beautifully colorful that can fly!
 - This is an *inner transformation* that allows you to view everything you are, and do in life, from a different vantage point, including a new set of inner convictions.
 - This speaks to the difference of an outward conformity versus an inner integrating that transforms everything about a person!
 - **The idea here is that disciples of Jesus are being wholly transformed in their ongoing spiritual maturity – and are aligned with walking in God’s will and ways, from His Word.**
 - The last portion of verse 2, “discerning what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God” speaks to a two-step process: 1) learning to discern the will of the Lord, and 2) choosing to walk in it, or act upon it.
 - Daily aware of God’s presence and what He is doing in and thru you!
 - Seeing it, you cultivate the godly habit of choosing to walk in His will!
 - By the way, this is the same Greek word used in Matthew 17:1-8 when Jesus is “transfigured” on the mountain in the presence of Peter, James, and John, where He has a conversation with Moses and Elijah.
 - He was radically transformed – He was not the same!
- e. Your personality, looks, heritage, and gifts – expressing the character, ways, and mission of Jesus through you!
- f. “Discipleship is the process of becoming who Jesus would be if he were you.”¹**
- Dallas Willard
- g. He intends to reflect His character through you so that when people see how you live your life, and lead others, that they’ll have a genuine glimpse of Jesus!
- h. His intention is to see that you are discipled in His ways, so how you go about relating to people, doing your job, living your life – reveals the wisdom of God’s ways through your life!
- i. *It is not you AND Jesus! It is Jesus IN you!*
- j. Have you allowed His primary aim to have a primary place in your walk with Him?

Transforming Us from the Inside Out

¹ Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission* (Zondervan, June 13, 2006)

- 1) What the Scriptures say about the heart (*heart appears 857 time in the ESV*)
- a. The heart is not only a beating organ with our chest – it represents the core of who we really are – our deepest motivations, attitudes and thoughts, the central command of decision making and the home of our true affections and allegiances. It represents who you REALLY are!
 - b. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. - **Deuteronomy 4:4-6**
 - c. But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” - **1 Samuel 16:7**
 - d. Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, who shall stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, and who does not lift up his soul to an idol. - **Psalms 24:3-4**
 - e. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. - **Psalms 51:10**
 - f. If I cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. - **Psalms 66:18**
 - g. But my people did not listen to my voice; Israel would not submit to me. So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels. Oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways! - **Psalms 81:11-13**
 - h. I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. - **Psalms 119:11**
 - i. Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me and lead me in the way everlasting! - **Psalms 139:23-24**
 - j. My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. - **Proverbs 3:1-6**
 - k. As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects the man. - **Proverbs 27:19**
 - l. The heart is desperately sick and is very deceitful – who can know it? - **Jeremiah 17:9-10**
 - m. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. - **Matthew 5:8**
 - n. Where your treasure is there your heart will be also. - **Matthew 6:21**
 - o. But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. - **Matthew 15:18-20**
 - p. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. - **Luke 6:45**
 - q. **Proverbs 4:23**
 - Keep your heart with all vigilance for from it flow the springs of life (ESV)
 - Guard your heart above all else for it determines the course of your life (NLT)
 - Keep your heart with all diligence for out of it spring the issues of life (NKJV)
 - Above all else, guard your heart for everything you do flows from it (NIV)
 - Note: the author of this verse, Solomon – **1 Kings 11:4** “For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.”
 - r. ***What is in your heart is the real you!***

How God Changes Our Hearts

a. God Promises to Change Our Hearts

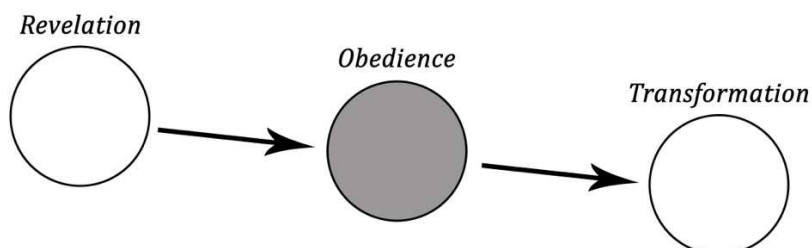
- So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “**If you abide in my word**, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” - **John 8:31-32**
- And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. - **Ezekiel 36:26, 27 (Hebrews 8:10)**
 - “I will give you a new heart”
 - “a new spirit I will put within you”
 - “I will remove the heart of stone”
 - “give you a spirit of flesh”
 - “I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules”

b. God’s Plumbline of Truth

- This is what he showed me: behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, “Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said, “Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” - **Amos 7:7-8**
- God’s plumbline is made up of His character and ways, His values and truth from His Word.
- You and I have had “false plumblines” dropped in our lives!
 - Parents, authority figures, peers, the world’s culture, the circumstances of our lives, etc.
- We have embraced the realities around these “false plumblines” and believe them to be true!
- The result of embracing false plumblines in our lives is that we have been deceived to believe something is true when it actually does not line up to God’s character, ways, values, and truth at all!
- God desires to work in our lives, and to mature us to the point that we are aligned to His plumbline as revealed in the Scriptures.

c. Three Ways God Puts Us in Touch with Our Hearts

- This is part of the revelation piece, our first circle:



- Through relational storms – issues within our relationships, families, work
- Through difficult situations (daily life): pay bills, late, dog poops, car issues
- Through challenging circumstances (life altering): our 2010 flood
- Our reactions are windows to our hearts!
 - Abraham – **Genesis 12:11-13**, when going into Egypt, I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.” FEAR!!!
 - Peter’s thrice denial of Jesus – again, FEAR!!!
 - Also: rejection, pride, control, selfishness, greed, position, etc.
- God uses these moments in our lives as direct answers to our prayers of wanting to be more like Jesus. However, because we often don’t understand what God is doing in these storms, difficulties, and circumstances, we miss out on receiving what He is trying to do, focusing more on getting out of the difficulty than allowing Him to align our hearts to His character and ways, values, and truth!

d. How Are We to Respond When God Puts Us in Touch with Our Hearts?

- “Lord, why did I react like that?
 - Revelation of the underlying issue of my heart
- “Lord, show me my heart and your plumbline of truth on this matter”
 - Seeing God’s heart and truth so you can move towards it
- “Lord, I invite you to align my heart with your character and ways, values, and truth, that I might walk in wholeness and reflect you more through my life.”
 - Growing to be more like Jesus. Walking in trust in obedience.
 - This is how we mature spiritually!
 - This is why we need to be in community! Surrounded by wiser people. Enveloped by those who can challenge us and cheer us on!

e. Responding Leads to Growth and Spiritual Maturity

- Seeing God for who He really is, based on the Scriptures
- Seeing God’s ways in His Word and walking in the Spirit in our lives
- Seeing yourself through God’s eyes
- Seeing people through God’s heart
- Seeing our gifts and calling through a greater lens than just “fulfilling my destiny”!
We see our role on God’s Kingdom team, moving forward as one!

Discussion Questions

1. What is God’s priority in Transformation?
2. Discuss: “Discipleship is the process of becoming who Jesus would be if he were you.”
~Dallas Willard. How does that make you think about yourself?
3. What are three ways God puts us in touch with our hearts? Discuss how God uses moments like these as direct answers to our prayers of wanting to be more like Jesus.
4. What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you today? (just one thing)
5. How are you going to obey this in your life? (practical, measurable)

NOTES