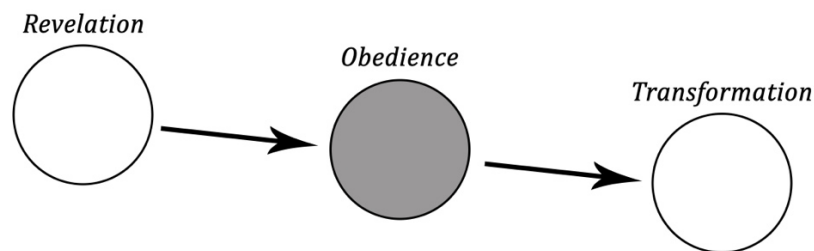


The Transformed Life: The Purpose of Transformation

Dave Buehring June 26, 2022

Review

- 1) We are in a series 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 fourth and final week of talking about *being changed by Jesus*. Three weeks ago, we talked about The Process of Transformation.



- 4) Two weeks ago, we looked at The Priority of Transformation.
 - a. We talked about how *what is in our heart is the “real you”!*
 - b. We also looked at God’s *plumbline of truth* and how *our reactions are windows to our hearts!* Relational storms, difficult situations, challenging circumstances. How we are to respond: “Lord, why did I react like that?”
 - c. **“Discipleship is the process of becoming who Jesus would be if he were you.”¹**
- Dallas Willard
- 5) Last week, we talked about The Proof of Transformation.
 - a. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” - **John 13:34-35**
 - b. We considered how the way we relate to others is proof of God’s transformational work within us.
 - c. We spent time in 1 Corinthians 13 looking at what love looks like.
 - Vs. 1-3 – how it is not first about our gifts, our destiny – and if so, how we are then a noisy gong and a clanging cymbal. We gain nothing!
 - Vs. 4-8 – we considered 14 expressions of love and what they can look like through our lives in relationship with others.
- 6) Today we want to consider **The Purpose of Transformation**. Obviously, it is for enjoying Jesus, what He is building in us, the people He has placed in our lives, taking in creation...but beyond our common understanding of this, then what? Today we’ll look at two purposes *through* which our being transformed can make an impact: **Advancing God’s Kingdom** and **Glorifying God**.

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

Advancing God's Kingdom

1) Jesus and The Kingdom

- a. It is the core message of Jesus' ministry.
- b. It can be said that it really is the underlying theme of the whole of Scripture.
- c. It is referred to in the New Testament 259 times/224 times in the gospels/130 times in Matthew.
- d. Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) loaded with Kingdom truths and principles; parables.
- e. Spoke about the Kingdom w/disciples after the resurrection for 40 days (Acts 1:3).
- f. It is spoken of 35 times in other letters/8 times in Acts/7 in Revelation.

2) Kingdom Basics

- a. What is the Kingdom of God?
 - “Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” - **Matthew 6:10**
 - In heaven, God's character (who He is) and ways (how He does things) are on full display! His presence is powerfully experienced.
 - He desires to express those things through our lives!
 - The Kingdom is the realm where Jesus reigns and His will is being done – both in heaven and on earth! As in Heaven...so on Earth!
 - “Carriers of His Kingdom” everywhere we go, in everything we do, and whomever we are with!
- b. The Relationship between the Kingdom and the Church
 - The Kingdom of God is the big picture, the primary purpose, it is why we are still here on the planet!
 - “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God *from every tribe and language and people and nation...*’” - **Revelation 5:9**
 - “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, *from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages*, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” - **Revelation 7:9-10**
 - The Church is made up of the people of God – ekklesia – “called-out ones.”
 - Advancing the Kingdom is the mission of the Church!
 - The Church are the *Carriers* of the Kingdom – UMBRELLA
- c. Seek First the Kingdom
 - “But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness*, and all these things will be added to you.” - **Matthew 6:30-33**
 - Do you seek first the Kingdom? Reference it in all you do and decide?
- d. Pray “Thy Kingdom Come” / Live “Seeking First the Kingdom”!

- 1) **“Carriers of His Kingdom”** everywhere we go, in everything we do, and whomever we are with!
(Referencing *The Book of Acts*)
 - a. Praying Much
 - “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and *the prayers*.” - **Acts 1:14**
 - “So Peter was kept in prison, but *earnest prayer* for him was made to God by the church.” - **Acts 12:5** (Prayer transforms spiritual atmosphere!)
 - Prayer is aligning with God’s heart and will in what He desires to do!
 - “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.”
- **1 John 5:14-15**
 - b. Relating Well
 - “Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.” – **Acts 4:32**
 - “And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” – **Acts 2:46-47**
 - c. Obeying God
 - “And *the Spirit said* to Philip, ‘Go over and join this chariot.’ So Philip ran to him...” - **Acts 8:29-20** (*Ethiopian and the nation of Ethiopia transformed!*)
 - “And while Peter was pondering the vision, *the Spirit said* to him, ‘Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them.’” - **Acts 10:19-20** (*Gentiles!*)
 - Reminder: Obedience is the engine of transformation!
 - d. Sharing Jesus
 - “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, ‘Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.’ And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ And they said, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’ And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.” - **Acts 16:25-34** (Ready to share their faith – are you?)
 - e. Doing Good
 - “...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” – **Acts 10:31**
 - 4,000 and 5,000 hungry people fed

- At a wedding – their special day – they ran out of wine...
 - After fishing all night, Jesus told them to cast their net on the other side, and they caught 153 fish to feed their families, pay their bills...
 - Passing through Jericho, he sees the town’s “short tax man” up in a tree – identifies publicly with him; freedom from the guilt of robbing people...
 - In Gethsemane, when Peter lopped off the ear of the servant of the high priest, Jesus heals him. *On and on we could go...*
- f. Making Disciples
- “...and the number of the *disciples multiplied* greatly in Jerusalem...” - **Acts 6:7**
 - “So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul...he brought him to Antioch. *For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people.* And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.” - **Acts 11:25-26**

Glorifying God

- 1) When I was 12 years of age, I went through a catechism class in our church, and is where I first heard the question asked, “What is the chief end of man?” “To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”
 - a. **Jesus carried within Him a deep concern about the reputation for the Name that He represented.**
 - b. “I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.” - **John 17:4**
 - c. **Glorifying God is the aim of disciples of Jesus, it’s the heartbeat of the Kingdom!**
- 2) Catching the weight of what it means to glorify God.
 - a. In Jesus’ time, people’s reputations and the authority they carried were directly connected to their names. Their characters, actions, words, people skills, business dealings, and other attributes either significantly enhanced, or severely damaged, their reputations in the eyes of others. A person’s name and reputation were inseparable.
 - b. The Scriptures teach *how* His Name is handled is of enormous importance to God.
 - The fourth of the Ten Commandments says, “You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his Name in vain” - **Exodus 20:7**. Somehow this command is often reduced to only mean we should not use God’s name as a swear word. There is eternally more meaning to it than that. In Hebrew, *vain* is the word *shav*, meaning “emptiness, vanity, falsehood.” When we live in a way that distorts – makes empty or false – who God really is and what He’s really like, it results in giving God’s Name a bad reputation!
 - “You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God...” - **Leviticus 19:12**. In Hebrew, the word for profane is *chalaland*, which means “to defile, pollute, desecrate, to make common, to violate the honor of.” The people of God need to be careful not to profane, pollute, or dishonor God’s Name and reputation – not only because it maligns and misrepresents Him, but also because it hinders His Name from being spread throughout the Earth!
 - c. Jesus understood the ramifications of keeping God’s Name and reputation always “in His heart and on His radar.” He realized that misappropriating God’s Name would be catastrophic. When people of different ethnicities or faiths have been killed over the centuries “in the name of Jesus,” or it is bound up in political “gobbledy-goop” God’s reputation is wounded, and His Name profaned. When followers of Jesus say one thing but

live the exact opposite, it wounds the reputation of God, hindering the momentum of the kingdom. When trusted godly leaders betray the Name they carry through how they live and lead, the fallout often results in irreparable damage. I've watched it firsthand over the years. People turn from Jesus! Weighty stuff, huh?

- 3) How can we elevate God's Name and reputation through our lives in our world today?
 - a. "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." – **1 Corinthians 10:31**
 - b. "Living to the glory of God means living in such a way that we enhance the reputation of God in the eyes of others."² - Leith Anderson
 - c. Imagine if we approached our words, decisions, relationships, and vocations through the grid of, "Am I enhancing God's reputation in the eyes of others?"
- 4) How does living life through the grid to glorify God impact us?
 - a. Our Purpose in Life: The Westminster Shorter Catechism reminds us: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."³
 - b. Our Value: We are living temples through which God desires to reveal His glory (Colossians 1:27), thus making each one of us incredibly valuable.
 - c. Our Vision: That the whole earth will be covered with the glory of the Lord (Psalm 72:19)
 - d. Our Prayer Life: If we pray in the name of Jesus, He gets all the glory when our prayers are answered (John 16:23–24)
 - e. Our Obedience and Service: We are willing to do whatever He asks so His name is glorified (John 12:23–26)
 - f. Our Relationships: God's glory is at stake in the righteous display of our relationships, which is why we encourage, serve, and correct each other
 - g. God's Call on Our Lives: We must finish the work God gives us to do for His glory (John 17:4)
 - h. Evangelism: The primary purpose of evangelism is to reconcile people to God that they may bring God glory by knowing Him and fulfilling His purposes through their lives
 - i. Unity: A shared passion for giving God glory will produce unity in the Church (John 17:20–23)
 - j. Our Reference Point: In everything we do, we do it to bring glory to the Name of Jesus (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Discussion Questions

1. What are the two purposes through which our being transformed can make an impact?
2. How do you think your life would change if you began every day by asking God how you could advance His Kingdom?
3. What are ways you can envision yourself purposefully glorifying God daily?
4. Are there ways that you might take God's name in vain... *not using it as a swear word...* resulting in giving His name a bad reputation?
5. What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you today?
6. How are you going to obey this in your life? (practical, measurable)

² Leith Anderson. *Becoming Friends with God* (Bethany House, 2001) p. 107

³ The Westminster Shorter Catechism. *Westminster Assembly* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1991)

NOTES