

Transformation of Lives 2 – Transformation Series #2

Jason Ballard

October 15, 2017

Text: Colossians 3:1-17 (NIV)

NOTES:

A. Introduction:

1. Transformation is big business. Bookstores have an entire section on it.
2. **Jason B.:** “*Jesus and His people are in the business of transformation that contrasts with other transformation messages.*” E.g.: gang members set free, broken marriages restored, anger issues healed etc.
3. God is in the business of transformation.
 - a. Jesus to the woman caught in adultery: “Go and sin no more.” We wonder, what was it like for her the next day, the next week, when she had to take up her life that was built on promiscuity.
 - b. Jason’s friend was instantly set free from alcohol addiction but now, ten years later and as a new father, realizes he has deep-rooted and generational anger issues from which he hasn’t been instantly set free.
4. Transformation: God does something radical but we still need to deal with the daily grind.
 - a. **Dallas Willard:** “*Grace isn’t opposed to effort, it’s opposed to earning.*”
 - b. **Apostle Paul:** “*... be filled with the Spirit*” i.e. keep on being filled with the Spirit. Continually live with open palms toward God.

B. God’s transformation is total – Colossians 3:1-17.

1. Vs. 1 “... raised with Christ”; vs. 3 “... you died”; vs. 5 “Put to death...”; vs. 9&10 “... you have taken off your old self... and put on the new self...”
2. **Jason B.:** “*Jesus replants us into God’s kingdom. We’re not living a slightly better life; we were dead and are now alive.*”

C. Transformation involves tension and action – Colossians 3:1-17

1. This transformation life is dynamic partnering with God. He is committed to us and our growth. It involves our effort but not earning.
 - a. It’s a life of commitment but not anxiety that He’ll abandon us. **Jason B.:** “*He will never be surprised by your falls. He knew what He was getting into with you.*”
 - b. This is not about earning God’s love.
2. What do we do?
 - a. “Put to death (mortify) what belongs to our earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, greed, anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, lying” – Colossians 3:5-9.
 - i. **Jason B.:** “*Don’t belittle things like these or distill them to something trite, petty, unimportant. These are not small things.*”
 - ii. The message of God is not, ‘Behave well and you won’t feel guilty,’ but ‘God is on the move, renewing all things and wants to start in your heart.’ The things listed above are toxic and corrosive. They destroy communities, families, individuals.
 - iii. Consider attending the Transformation Weekend where we’re invited & shown how to start transformation’s hard work—which it is.
 - b. “Clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience; bear with each other and forgive ... put on love ... let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts ... be thankful” – Colossians 3:12-17.
 - i. To become successful at something we get a vision and practice what works, applying effort and intention. **Jason B.:** “*Resolve as a people to envision these things as the banner of your calling in life.*”
 - ii. Being content with how things are leads to boredom vs. breaking the bad cycles and seeing something better. Your imagination will be captured as you put the work into that dream.

D. Five Spiritual Disciplines (Colossians 3:1-17):

1. Think about what you’re thinking about. Set your eyes and heart on things above. Devote your mind to the things of God.
2. Be thankful. Practice gratitude. The revelation of God’s grace will fuel your day.
3. Meditate on Scripture. Don’t read the Bible so God will love you more but to unlock the realities of its truths: We are raised with Christ; are God’s holy people; are loved by Him. Set your mind on these things in the day-to-day grind.
4. Sing. Pay attention to the lyrics. The songs we sing form our theology more than any person. Think about what you’re listening to. What we take in, forms us.
5. Nurture community. Get together with friends; confront each other. What needs to be put to death?

DISCUSSION:

1. How does Christ’s transformation of our lives differ from transforming ourselves on the advice of how-to books and teachers? Discuss aspects of God’s grace and our effort in transformation. Share examples from your lives of instant transformation and long-term transformation.
2. What language does the Bible use to show that God’s transformation is radical? What tensions are involved? What actions are involved? Why are the “little sins” like lust, greed, lying, anger etc. not little at all?
3. Discuss the five spiritual disciplines Jason focused on. Share your experiences and challenges with submitting to them. How has practicing them changed your life and outlook? Which are the most difficult? How does transformation involve both grace and grit?

PRAYER:

Dear Father, thank You for the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. Peel us like onions to experience successive levels of heart transformation. Help us to persevere, holding in our imaginations the fact that You are on the move, renewing all things, and part of that renewal is the transformation of our hearts. Amen.