

Transforming the Nation – Transformation Series #5

Jason Eliason

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Text: Matthew 28:18-20

NOTES:

A. Introduction:

1. In this series, we're addressing transformation at every level—personal, neighbourhood, nation, and world.
2. We don't do this on our initiative but join God in what He is already doing. We become part of transformation by cooperating with God's transformation of our own lives and the lives of our neighbours; as neighbourhoods change, the world is changed.

B. Joining God in transforming Canada.

1. We love Canada for many reasons. We ask, does God have a plan for Canada?
2. Canada has become a post-Christian culture: a society that attempts to move past Christianity while living on Christianity's fruit. **Jason E:** *"Canada yearns for the justice and shalom of God's kingdom while defending the reign of the individual will."*
3. Keeping this in mind, we ask: How can our nation be transformed? How can we live in a fruitful, faithful way within a society where we're being pushed to the margins?

C. Transformation through politics?

1. Some believe that if we could just elect the right people and the right party, things would change and go back to the way they were.
2. The truth is, different people in power & different policies won't work because our nation's issues run deeper than policy. Those issues (like greed, systemic racism, the opioid crisis, homelessness) are heart issues.
3. But as citizens of a democracy, we don't disengage from the political system but remain involved through prayer, honouring and submitting to authorities, voting, entering the political arena and seeking influence and position as God directs.

D. How did Jesus bring transformation?

1. Jesus too lived in a politically charged time and nation. When confronted with political issues, He ducked them, changed the subject. He didn't align Himself with any of the political movements of His day: a) Pharisees: fundamentalists—the cultural police. b) Sadducees: concerned with gaining power & influence with Rome & ended up selling out. c) Essenes: moved out of the culture into isolation. d) Zealots: had a vision to seize power back from Rome by any means.
2. **What did Jesus do?**
 - a. **He taught the message of the Kingdom**
 - b. **He demonstrated the reality of the kingdom—healed the sick, raised the dead, multiplied food, etc.**
 - c. **He made disciples of His 12 followers.**

E. The Discipleship method of transformation:

1. Transformation happens when fully devoted followers (disciples) of Jesus make disciples of Jesus who make more disciples of Jesus.
2. **What discipleship looks like:**
 - a. **A fully human life with discipleship affecting all of life, not just compartments of it.**
 - b. **Holy Spirit generated. Holy Spirit makes us like Jesus from the inside out. The Spirit is at work changing you and me.**
 - c. **Community. Discipleship happens in community with others, not in isolation or online.**
 - d. **We invite others to join us, to follow us and do the same.**
3. Discipleship and the local church:
 - a. At the heart of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) is the call to plant churches.
 - i. **Tim Keller:** *"The Great Commission is to not only make disciples but baptize and incorporate them in community."*
 - ii. **Jason E.** *"The local church is a disciple-making community."*
 - b. It's becoming part of a group that intentionally spends time with each other to spur one another on to live like Jesus.
 - c. Jason & Kelsey Eliason are planning to plant Citizens Church in Surrey not because they're bored, it's cool to plant churches, they want to be in charge etc., but because of obedience to the Great Commission. **Jason E:** *"Disciples get their hands into the messes of people's lives. When our Christianity moves beyond Sunday attendance, something happens, something changes when we say 'yes' to God."*
 - d. To learn more about Citizen's Church: **Church Planting Vision Night | Sunday, November 19 | 7pm**
Join Jason and Kelsey Eliason as they share the vision of their church plant as well ways people can participate.

DISCUSSION:

1. What do you love about Canada? What does "post-Christian" mean? Where do you see signs that Canada has become a post-Christian nation? What are some ways Christians are trying to change this? Why is political involvement not the final answer? How should we as Christians relate to government and the political system?
2. How did Jesus relate to the political climate and government of His day? How did He bring transformation?
3. Discuss "discipleship." What modern words could we use to describe it? What does it look like? Why should making disciples be part of every Christian's life purpose? Who does the real work of discipleship? How is the local church part of the process? In what way can participating in a life group be part of the discipleship process? Discuss your life group and the role it plays in the discipleship of its members.

PRAYER: Dear Father, thank You for the nation of Canada and for putting us here at this time in history. You have invited us to be part of Your plan to transform and establish Your kingdom on this spot on earth. Please move in our land. Bring hope and healing. Ignite the church to engage with culture and make disciples as we say yes to following You. Amen.