

# YOU CAN CHANGE: LIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD

## STUDY TWO –SEEING OURSELVES AS GOD SEES US

### A. INTRODUCTION –

- *The Story of the Porters*
- *Lessons from Last Week/This Week*
  1. God has \_\_\_\_\_ us.
  2. We should bear a \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. Our \_\_\_\_\_ for change is our \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. \_\_\_\_\_. (This Week)
  5. \_\_\_\_\_. (This week)

See the quotes below from Adrian Rogers and J.I. Packer.

“People will say that being saved by grace alone leads to people sinning all they want to. But being a true Christian means that I **DO** sin all that I want to. In fact, I sin **MORE** than I want to, because now that God has given me a new heart that beats for him, I don’t want to sin at all. Now I love Jesus and I want to obey and please him.” *Adrian Rogers*

“The secular world never understands Christian motivation. Faced with the question of what makes Christianity tick, unbelievers maintain that Christianity is practiced only out of self-serving purposes. They see Christians as fearing the consequences of not being Christians (religion as fire insurance), or feeling the need of help and support to achieve their goals (religion as crutch), or wishing to sustain a social identity (religion as badge of respectability). No doubt all of these motivations can be found among the membership of churches: it would be futile to dispute that. But just as a horse brought into a house is not therefore human, so a self-seeking motivation brought into a church is not thereby Christian, nor will holiness ever be the right name for religious routines thus motivated.

From the plan of salvation I learn that the true driving force in authentic Christian living is, and ever must be, not the hope of gain but the heart of gratitude.” *J.I. Packer, Rediscovering Holiness, p. 75*

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## **B. LEARNING FROM JOEL OSTEEN.**

### **1. *Where does Joel Osteen have it right?***

- a. You are a “child of the Most High God.” We are \_\_\_\_\_ by God.
- b. Our adoption is the \_\_\_\_\_ for change.
- c. There is \_\_\_\_\_ to change.
- d. In order to change, we need to \_\_\_\_\_.

### **2. *Where does Joel Osteen have it wrong?***

- a. Joel Osteen’s expectations of a child of God \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Christianity does not offer anything different than \_\_\_\_\_.

- c. Is there \_\_\_\_\_?

In Chapter 3 of Genesis, we read about: \_\_\_\_\_.

See also Romans 5, where we read: \_\_\_\_\_.

- d. Is there any need for \_\_\_\_\_? We are \_\_\_\_\_.

- e. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are collapsed together?

Justification is \_\_\_\_\_.

Sanctification is \_\_\_\_\_.

Justification and Sanctification are \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_.

Two differences:

i. Justification is \_\_\_\_\_ while sanctification is \_\_\_\_\_.

ii. Justification is \_\_\_\_\_ while sanctification is \_\_\_\_\_.

- f. The tension of the “\_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_” is ignored.

### ***3. Where are we headed? What should we change to be?***

<sup>48</sup> “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Matthew 5

The attributes of God include:

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Some of these attributes are “\_\_\_\_\_” (granted in lesser degree to us); and  
Some of these attributes are “\_\_\_\_\_” (reserved for God).

- The **best** people have the \_\_\_\_\_ attributes and do not strive for God’s \_\_\_\_\_.
- The **worst** people strive for \_\_\_\_\_ attributes and do not care about the \_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?...<sup>33</sup> But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Matthew 6

### ***4. We Need to Know the Truth About God and Ourselves - See Ourselves as God Sees Us!***

(“Get a vision for it.” “It all starts right here.” “You need to know who you are.”)

#### ***a. Secular Commentary on Change, Self-Reflection and Change.***

- Strange Physics – Getting the Right Answers While Rejecting Newton!
- Patricia Cranton on “Emancipatory Knowledge” and “Transformative Learning.”

***To change, we have a need for deep reflection!***

***b. Biblical Wisdom on Truth, Knowledge and Change.***

<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8.

“<sup>25</sup> They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.” Romans 1

“<sup>17</sup> So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.”

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2

“Behind every sin is a lie. The root of all our behavior and emotions is the heart – what it trusts and what it treasures. People are given over to sinful desires because ‘they exchanged the truth about God for a lie.’ (Romans 1)... Not many people think of themselves as someone who believes lies. But every time we don’t trust God’s word we are believing something else, and that is always a lie.” Tim Chester, *You Can Change* page 73-74.

## **Teacher Notes**

### **Justification and Sanctification**

What is justification? \_\_\_\_\_

What is sanctification? \_\_\_\_\_

Put two Scriptures on the board and ask the class the questions which follow.

“For it is by grace you have been saved through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God has prepared in advance for us to do.” Eph. 2:8-10

- Q: Is this verse talking about Justification or Sanctification?

A: Justification

- Q: How is justification accomplished?

A: It is the gift of God – he does the work of justification. Justification is something that happens once and is complete – “you have been saved.” But it also has future effects – God has prepared works for us to do.

Note that God uses faith as the means of salvation. We are saved through faith. It is His instrument for our salvation.

“Continue to work out your salvation in fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.” Phil 2:12-13

- Q: What aspect of the ordo salutis is being discussed here?

A: Sanctification

- Q: How is sanctification accomplished?

A: Sanctification is a process, shown by “Continue to work out...”. Also note that both God and we participate in the process – we work and God works. Note that this is a struggle. Fear and trembling connote effort and reverence.

## Teacher Notes

### The Attributes of God

Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine (chart 20), H. Wayne House, Zondervan Publishing House, provides a list of 25 attributes of God, with definitions and Scripture references. These attributes include unity, eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, justice, love, benevolence, grace, goodness, holiness, righteousness, truth, faithfulness, and others.

The following is a way to discuss God's character and our character. The point is that everyone wants to have attributes of God, but godly people humbly seek the right attributes, while ungodly people pridefully seek after attributes God has reserved for himself.

Ask the class to name some of the attributes of God. As the class names off these attributes write them up on a board, BUT as they are named off, arrange them so all the "communicable" attributes are grouped together, and all the "incommunicable" attributes are grouped together, but initially without telling the class about your grouping. Recall that the communicable attributes are those we see in people around us, although imperfectly expressed. The communicable attributes include, for example, love, justice, grace, benevolence, faithfulness and truth. The incommunicable attributes are those reserved to God, such as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence. After the class names off the attributes and you have grouped them as named, draw a line between the two groups, and now discuss the difference between communicable and incommunicable attributes.

Next ask the class to name the **best** people they can think of. Class members might name Mother Theresa, Abraham Lincoln, Billy Graham and their own mothers. Write these names in the vicinity of the communicable attributes listed.

Now ask the class to name the **worst** people they can think of. The class may name Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Idi Amin and Saddam Hussein. Write these names in the vicinity of the incommunicable attributes.

Then ask the class what character attributes the good people have – what makes them good? The good people have the communicable attributes; and they avoid the incommunicable attributes. Mother Theresa shows love, grace and benevolence. Abraham Lincoln demonstrates justice and truth. Ask the class what the relationship is between these people and the incommunicable attributes. Good people avoid any claim of omnipotence or eternity or that they know everything.

Contrast with the worst people. Adolph Hitler claimed a thousand-year reign, Stalin placed pictures of himself everywhere so he would be everywhere present. They believe they know everything, they want to control everything. These people fail to practice the communicable attributes, love, grace or justice.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Godly character consists of humbly aspiring to the communicable attributes of God, and making no claim to the incommunicable attributes God has properly reserved to himself. Ungodly character consists of claiming the prerogatives of God, the incommunicable attributes, while failing to claim the communicable attributes of God properly to be sought by us. Humility is the key quality, the starting point, of godly character.

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## Teacher Notes

### Transformative Learning

*What the Best College Teachers Do* provides us with a cautionary tale about learning (page 22). Two physicists at Arizona State University wanted to know whether a typical introductory physics course, with its emphasis on Newton's laws of motion changed the way students thought about motion. Students of four different and well-regarded physics teachers were given a test at the beginning of the semester. The students entered the class with an elementary intuitive approach to motion, described as "a cross between Aristotelian and 14<sup>th</sup> century impetus ideas." They did not think about motion the way Isaac Newton did, much less like 20<sup>th</sup> Century physicists. But that was before the students took introductory physics.

Did the course change student thinking? Not really. After the course, the two physicists gave the examination once more, and found that the course had made relatively little change in the way students thought. Even many "A" students continued to think more like Aristotle than like Newton. They memorized the formulas and put the right numbers into equations, but they did not change their basic conceptions.

After the second examination, the two physicists met with students to discuss the rejection of Newton's principles. During the interviews, they asked students questions about some motion problems and asked the students to predict the outcomes. The students made their projections and then the researchers performed the experiment in front of the students. At that point the physicists were astonished to hear the students "held firm to mistaken beliefs even when confronted with phenomena that contradicted those beliefs...they tended to argue that the observed instance was governed by some other law or principle and the principle they were using applied to a slightly different case." Some of these students had received high grades in the class. The question raised is whether students learn as much as we have traditionally thought they did.

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Patricia Cranton is an educator who studies adult education, and particularly adult education that transforms. In *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning* she says that there are three levels of knowledge.

- *Technical Knowledge* is that which allows us to manipulate and control the environment, predict observable and social events and take appropriate actions. Technical knowledge is the type necessary for production and is established by external reality using the senses.
- *Practical Knowledge* is based on our need to understand each other through language. It is social and communicative.
- *Emancipatory Knowledge* is knowledge which enables people to grow and develop as individuals. It is dependent on being aware and critical of ourselves and our social and cultural context.

Cranton says there is such a thing as “transformative learning,” a kind of learning that deals with emancipatory knowledge. Transformative learning takes place when a person sees his place in the cosmos differently. She says transformative learning is “a process by which previously uncritically assimilated assumptions, beliefs, values, and perspectives become more open, permeable and better validated.” (page 2) Transformative learning requires that the learner review “habits of mind” which are “the broad predispositions that we use to interpret experience.” (page 22) “Learning occurs when an individual encounters an alternative perspective and prior habits of mind are called into question.” (page 23)

How do you think about your place in the cosmos? Do you see yourself as God sees you? Does your standing before God change the way you view yourself, your family, your place in the community or the larger world? Or do you see yourself pretty much through the eyes that most others do?

I would like to challenge you to see yourself as radically different because of your relationship to Christ, as a person who:

- Is forgiven and cleansed before God
- Who is set aside for holy living
- Is called to live life in full enjoyment of the creation
- Has access to resources to change your life
- Is called to a secure and glorious future.

This is what Paul means when he says, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Romans 12:2



## YOU CAN CHANGE: LIVING AS CHILDREN OF GOD WHO I AM IN CHRIST

**Directions:** The purpose of this exercise is two-fold. First, we should understand the blessings God provides to His children. The blessings claimed to be available to us in Scripture are simply amazing, more than we can understand and more than we believe. We should reflect periodically on God's promised blessings and their application to us.

Second, some believers claim that all of these blessings are available in full immediately. However, we should recognize that some of God's blessings are not fully realized presently, but have a future component. Some are fulfilled over a lifetime; some will be fulfilled in the age to come. We should seek not to doubt the reliability of the promises of blessing when we do not see full realization immediately.

Take **two passes** through the following. In the **first pass**, look at the blessing stated and the Scripture which supports it, and reflect on its application to you by filling in the two lines with checks or "X's."

First, **do you understand it?** Is it clear to you what the blessing means? This is a cognitive idea, your head understanding.

Second, do you **believe it is real and applicable to you?** Many times we can understand the meaning of the statement without having it sink into our bones and marrow and having it change our day-to-day functioning and conduct.

In the **second pass**, **identify** the blessings which have a **future component** still to be fully realized by marking in the right side.

Understand Believe  
It It

Future  
Component

\_\_\_\_\_ *I am God's child.* \_\_\_\_\_  
<sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 1 Peter 1:23

\_\_\_\_\_ *I am forgiven all my sins and washed in the blood.* \_\_\_\_\_  
<sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. Ephesians 1:7

\_\_\_\_\_ *I am a new creature.* \_\_\_\_\_  
<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:<sup>[a]</sup> The old has gone, the new is here!" II Corinthians 5:17

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am the temple of the Holy Spirit.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own. I Corinthians 6:19

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am redeemed from the curse of the law.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole."<sup>[a]</sup> Galatians 3:13

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am holy and without blame before Him.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. Ephesians 1:4

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am qualified to share in his inheritance.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>12</sup> ...and giv[e] joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you<sup>[a]</sup> to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. Colossians 1:12

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am dead to sin.*** \_\_\_\_\_

We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?...<sup>11</sup> ... count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Romans 6:2, 11

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am chosen by God.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Colossians 3:12

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am established to the end.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>8</sup> He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 1:8

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am free.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am crucified with Christ.*** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ***Christ lives in me.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. Galatians 2:20

_____	_____	<b><i>I am brought near by the blood of Christ.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13

_____	_____	<b><i>I am more than a conqueror.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. Romans 8:37

_____	_____	<b><i>I am beloved of God.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers and sisters<sup>[a]</sup> beloved by God, that he has chosen you. Thessalonians 1:4

_____	_____	<b><i>I am healed by the wounds of Jesus.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>24</sup> “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” I Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5

_____	_____	<b><i>I am free from condemnation.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>1</sup> Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:1

_____	_____	<b><i>I am God’s workmanship, created in Christ for good works.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

_____	_____	<b><i>I am being changed into His image.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>6</sup> ...be... confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6

_____	_____	<b><i>I have all my needs met by God according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>19</sup> And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

_____	_____	<b><i>I have the mind of Christ.</i></b>	_____
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<sup>16</sup> for,  
 “Who has known the mind of the Lord  
 so as to instruct him?”<sup>[a]</sup>  
 But we have the mind of Christ.  
 I Corinthians 2:16

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I have everlasting life.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>47</sup> Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life. John 6:47

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I have a guaranteed inheritance.*** \_\_\_\_\_

When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13-14

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I have abundant life.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I have overcome the world.*** \_\_\_\_\_

I his commands are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup> for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. John 5:3-5

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I have the peace of God which passes understanding.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I have access to the Father by the Spirit.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ... <sup>18</sup> For through him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access to the Father by one Spirit. Ephesians 2:13, 18

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I can do all things through Jesus Christ.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I live by the law of the Holy Spirit.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>2</sup> ... through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you <sup>[a]</sup> free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:2

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am a royal priest.*** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I am a citizen of a holy nation.*** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ***I show forth His praise.*** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. I Peter 2:9