



The Hollywood hype last month revolved around the July 4 release of “Transformers — the Movie.” It is a throw-back, of sorts, to the 80’s toy and cartoon craze that featured cars that transformed into super-heroes.

The movie is about two races of robotic aliens — the Autobots and the Decepticons—that have for centuries waged a war, with the fate of the universe at stake. When the battle comes to Earth, all that stands between the evil Decepticon and ultimate power is a clue held by young Sam Witwicky. An average teenager, Sam is consumed with everyday worries about school, friends, cars and girls. Unaware that he alone is mankind’s last chance for survival, Sam and his friend, Mikaela, find themselves in a tug of war between the Autobots and Decepticons. With the world hanging in the balance, Sam comes to realize the true meaning behind the Witwicky family motto — “No sacrifice, no victory!”

Sam Witwicky is a fictitious character and the movie is science fiction. But the battle in which Christians are engaged is very real. And the Witwicky family motto applies to our campaign of holiness — “No sacrifice, no victory.”

Jesus taught us to be salt and light (Matt. 5:13-16) so that God will be glorified as people see our transformed lives. Our preservation or salvation, and that of others, depends upon the transformation of our lives that occurs only as we present our bodies as living sacrifices.

As dramatic as the end of the world may be, what is more important is what happens after that, and where our friends, families, and associates will be. Do we Christians understand that it depends largely upon us? We may be their last chance for survival — eternal survival.

Christians will never transform the world until Christians are themselves transformed and leading transformed lives. The apostle Paul delivers God’s instructions relating to this in his letter to the Christians living at Rome. “Do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as

those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God”

(6:13). The process this transformation requires is provided later. “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (12:2).

Becoming a transformer involves two conscious actions.

REFUSE TO CONFORM

The idea is to stop being influenced by “this present evil age” (Gal. 1:4), allowing yourself to be pressed into its mold or pattern. Reject the world view and values of this age. Instead,

RESOLVE TO BE TRANSFORMED

Although this is passive language (be transformed), we must remove ourselves from the context of conforming and present our bodies on the altar as living and holy sacrifices where God exerts His power to transform us.

This instruction is also an imperative. We must *desire* transformation by God’s power and *decide* to allow God to do His work. Being transformed involves the renewing of your mind. This begins at baptism when the Holy Spirit makes you a new creation with a new, regenerated heart. The transformation continues as we daily lay down our lives, constantly making the conscious decision to devote ourselves to serving God as opposed to the defilements of the flesh.

Bombarded daily by all kinds of selfish stimuli and carnal clutter, we must lay ourselves upon the altar before God every morning as we recall His mercies that are new every morning (Lam. 3:22, 23). Faithfulness in this worship will produce within us what one writer calls a “holy instinct” — a moral instinct that enables us to distinguish clearly what is good and true from that which is bad and false. Making choices that correspond and conform to God’s will is much easier for the mind that is being transformed by the infusion of Bible knowledge.

I urge you, therefore, brothers, to present your bodies to God as living and holy sacrifices.