

CHRISTIAN WORKER

“We are workers together with Him...” (2 Corinthians 6:1)

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FROM CORRUPTIBLE TO INCORRUPTIBLE

Robert Jefferies

Have you ever heard someone say, “outside of a new car, most people do not like change?” Did you know there is a day coming when some big changes will take place? When the Apostle Paul penned his first inspired letter to Corinth he wrote about the idea of change. “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed” (1 Cor. 15:51). Strong’s Bible Dictionary defines the word change as “to make different.”¹ When will we experience this change? “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor. 15:52). Paul informs us that we will experience this change when Jesus returns. For this article, let’s consider three changes that we will experience when the Lord returns.

There will be a change in body. In fact, we do not have a choice in the matter. Notice the wording the Apostle Paul uses to illustrate this point. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53). Why? Bob Winton makes the following observation, “Because a fleshly body cannot inhabit heaven, it must be changed into an incorruptible and immortal body. In heaven, we will have bodies similar to the body our Savior has: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phil. 3:20-21). The wicked will be given immortal bodies which cannot be consumed by fires of hell, but which can

feel the full torment of eternal punishment.”

There will be a change in location. When the Lord returns, the earth and all its elements will be destroyed. The Apostle Peter writes, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10). John also gives a couple

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APRIL 2026

“Changes”

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FROM THE EDITOR:

FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY

Ross Haffner

An ordinary young woman who was soon to be married had her world turned upside down. It was from the moment that the angel of the Lord appeared to Mary that she knew her life was going to change. From that time strange things began to happen. She found that she was with child though she had not yet married Joseph nor “known” any man. She visited Elisabeth her cousin and upon her greeting Elisabeth’s child leaped in her womb. When Mary’s child was born, many visitors came to worship Him. First, some shepherds followed a star to the manger in Bethlehem. Then, a few months later, some wise men brought gifts for the child.

Around her boy people would prophesy, worship, and joyfully announce His coming. In Luke 2:19 the physician records that Mary, “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.” She realized that she had an extraordinary child.

Jesus has from the beginning taken the ordinary and made it special. As an adult Jesus took ordinary men and made them apostles. Several of these men were merely fishermen. While fishing today is seen as mostly recreational, for these men it was a difficult and dirty job. Matthew was a tax collector, part of a group of people seen by the Jews as traitors, but became a great apostle and preacher. These men became extraordinary because of Jesus’ influence.

In the Christian age, Jesus has taken the sinner and made him a saint. Jesus’ primary purpose in coming was to “seek and save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). The sinner was without hope to ever reach a holy God (Isa. 59:1-2) but Jesus’ sacrifice took away the sins of the world for all who would believe and obey Him.

Jesus has taken the ordinary need to call out for help and given us prayer. Everyone, at one time or another, needs help. It might be as simple as car trouble stranding you on the highway or as difficult as recurrent money

problems. Because of His mediation we have a God who not only hears our prayers, but stops to listen and acts upon our supplications (Jas. 5:16). Jesus has taken our need for help and given us an avenue to the Father.

Another need that we have in common is acceptance. All of us need to be loved, appreciated, and to feel a common bond of brotherhood. Jesus has taken this need and given us fellowship. Because we enjoy fellowship so much, sometimes we forget that it is a commandment. Hebrews 10:24-25 instructs us to spend time together. Christ gives us fellowship in Him to fulfill our need for acceptance.

Jesus also took ordinary food items such as grape juice and unleavened bread and gave us communion with Him and one another in His death. These common items become so special when they remind us of His sacrifice each Lord’s day.

In His ministry Jesus took simple stories and made them great life lessons for generations to come. His tales were not long and complicated like Homer’s *Iliad* or *The Odyssey*. Instead he spoke to the crowd, “A sower went out to sow” (Matt. 13:3). His simple stories are so extraordinary in the scope of their application to us.

What has Jesus done for you? Have you allowed Him to take you as an ordinary man or woman and create something special? You might be surprised at the results of His work.

CW



FROM POOR TO RICH

Andy Baker

It is undoubtedly the most amazing “Rags to Riches” story of all time. We follow the descent of Jesus from heaven to earth to humility to humiliation to death and now, exalted to the highest place (Phil. 2:5-11). What’s more remarkable is that He shares the riches of His glory with us who at one time were the ones who put Him to death (Rom. 5:5-8; 2 Cor. 8:9). We are heirs together with Him. So many people are working for what perishes and what will pass away (1 Tim. 6:6-10). What Jesus counsels, however, is that we let our focus always be on “laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven” (Matt. 6:19-21). How do we do that?

Know that what Jesus purchased for you is worth far more than anything here on this earth. Jesus paid the price for an insurmountable debt that we owed to God (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus took the punishment we should have faced upon Himself (Rom. 3:25). Jesus delivers us from the wrath to come (Rom. 5:9). Jesus ransomed us from sin unto Himself (1 Tim. 2:6). These amazing thoughts alone ought to give us pause when we begin to think that this world and its riches are passing us by. What heavenly value is there in our sins being “remembered no more” (Heb. 8:12)? How should that change the values with which we live our lives?

Use our time, our talents, and our all to bear fruit to God. The Lord uses the metaphor of the vine and branches to talk about the relationship between Himself and His disciples (John 15:1-8). As we keep connected to the True Vine, the Lord promises that we will live the “abundant life” (John 10:10). The abundant life is that we have access to God’s storehouse of spiritual blessings and riches which He provides richly through Jesus (Eph. 1:3). As we follow the Spirit, we bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Our lives will be abundantly blessed now and in heaven as we are ones who look like the Lord to Whom we are connected!

Keep your eyes on the glorious future waiting for you. Most people can do anything if they know there is a reward waiting at the end. To suffering Christians, the apostle Peter writes about their “fiery trial” and persecution to give them hope. Right out of the gate in 1 Peter 1, Peter reminds them they’ve got an “inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that doesn’t fade away, reserved in heaven” waiting for them

(1 Pet. 1:3-4). The importance of singing songs about God, praying prayers to God, and reading promises from God about our heavenly home will ensure we always look beyond this life to our treasure in the life to come (2 Tim. 4:8).

Serve the risen Jesus joyfully and enjoy a rich relationship with Him and His people. Our Savior was poor in this life and was laid in a borrowed tomb. Yet now He sits as the King of glory haven given assurance of His resurrection and the certainty of His return (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 1:8-ff). What “setting our minds above” and “laying up riches in heaven” show us is that our Lord is alive and everything we have rests with Him. We enjoy rich fellowship with Him and with the Father. Also, we also enjoy a rich fellowship with His family, the church (1 John 1:1-4). Consider that the riches we enjoy in heaven will be directly tied with the Lord who IS there and His people who WILL BE there (Rev. 19:6-9; 20:11-15).

CW

FROM PERSECUTOR TO APOSTLE

Anthony Scherffius

The account of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, whom we know now as Paul the Apostle, is one of the greatest conversion stories and testimonies known to man. We first see this individual as a young zealous man, eager to destroy a fast-growing religious group called “The Christians” or “Jesus Followers.” Young Saul was no idiot. He was well-versed in the Law, studied at the feet of Gamaliel, was a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as to the Law, was a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5). He went from one who held the coats of those who stoned the believers to dining in the households of those he made widows and widowers. What caused Saul of Tarsus to change his life, motives, desires and goals in such a drastic way?

We really could give a short answer and simply quote Philippians 3:8 which says, “*More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ.*” I like how the King James version translates it: “...and do

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Fourth Quarter Class Schedule/April 2026-June 2026

Southwest School of Bible Studies



Chapel @ 8:30 AM / Lunch @ 11:50-1:00

Time	First Year	Time	Second Year
Monday			
9:00-9:50	Greek 1 - Steven Lloyd	9:00-9:50	1, 2 Peter, Jude - Matt Gibson
10:00-10:50	1, 2 Kings - Matt Gibson	10:00-10:50	1, 2, 3 John - Trent Kennedy
11:00-11:50	Prov., Eccl, SoS - Trent Kennedy	11:00-11:50	Hebrew - Steven Lloyd
1:00-2:20	Acts - Clay Bond	1:00-2:20	Hebrews - Steven Lloyd
2:30-3:50	Christian Evidences - Matt Gibson	2:30-3:50	Minor Prophets - Clay Bond
Tuesday			
9:00-11:50	Gal. & Eph - Ross Haffner	9:00-11:50	Preaching Practicum-Trent Kennedy
1:00-3:50	GSP	1:00-3:50	Per. Evangel 2 - Matt Gibson
Wednesday			
9:00-9:50	Greek 1 - Steven Lloyd	9:00-9:50	1, 2 Peter, Jude - Matt Gibson
10:00-10:50	1, 2 Kings - Matt Gibson	10:00-10:50	1, 2, 3 John - Trent Kennedy
11:00-11:50	Prov., Eccl, SoS - Trent Kennedy	11:00-11:50	Hebrew - Steven Lloyd
1:00-2:20	Acts - Clay Bond	1:00-2:20	Hebrews - Steven Lloyd
2:30-3:50	Christian Evidences - Matt Gibson	2:30-3:50	Minor Prophets - Clay Bond
Thursday			
9:00-11:50	Messiah - Wade Webster	9:00-11:50	Revelation - Steven Lloyd
1:00-3:50	Topical Preaching - Wade Webster	1:00-3:50	Restor. Hist. - Mel Hutler
Friday			
9:00-9:50	Greek 1 - Steven Lloyd	9:00-9:50	1, 2 Peter, Jude - Matt Gibson
10:00-10:50	1, 2 Kings - Matt Gibson	10:00-10:50	1, 2, 3 John - Trent Kennedy
11:00-11:50	Prov., Eccl, SoS - Trent Kennedy	11:00-11:50	Hebrew - Steven Lloyd
1:00-3:50	Job - Justin Guess	1:00-3:50	GSP

See Academic Calendar for Special Events

count them but **dung**, that I may **win** Christ.” Let us consider Paul’s conversion by first examining the change that took place within Saul and secondly look at what exactly it was that Saul gave up.

1.) The Changes—The changes that take place with Saul of Tarsus are very interesting. Almost immediately we see these changes after his interaction with Jesus the Christ on the road to Damascus. From his conversation to Jesus on the road, to his final letters, he demonstrated changes throughout his life:

- His Spiritual State Changed, from Lost to Saved (Acts 9:10-19; 22:12-16; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Tim. 1:15).
- His Goals and Focus Changed, from Destroying to Building Up the Church (Acts 8:1, 3; 9:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:9; Eph. 1:15-23; Phil. 1:3-5; 1 Thes. 1:2-3).
- His Speech Changed, from Blasphemer to Proclaimer of the Gospel (Acts 7:58; 1 Tim. 1:12-16).
- His Loyalty Changed from the Flesh to Christ (1 Cor. 13:11; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 14:5-9).
- His Name Changed, from Saul to Paul (Acts 13:9).

2.) The Sacrifices—The changes that took place in Paul were just as extreme as the sacrifices he made for Christ. He records these for us throughout his epistles and they are even examples for those who have a desire to follow Christ Jesus:

- He Gave Up Station and Status (Gal. 1:13-14; Phil. 3:4-8).
- He Gave Up Possession and Power (Acts 20:33-35; 1 Cor. 9:1-18; 2 Cor. 11:7-9).
- He Gave Up Physical Comforts and Rights (Acts 20:22-24; 1 Cor. 7:8; 9:19-27; 2 Cor. 11:23-27; Phil. 4:11-12).
- He Gave Up His Own Will and Agenda (Acts 9:1-19; 20:24; Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:7-14).
- He Gave Up Friends and Relationships (2 Cor. 7:5-6; 2 Tim. 4:9-16; Phil. 2:19-30)

What would make a man do all of these things? How could one go from persecuting with such zeal to being persecuted with such zeal? Paul would say to the church at Corinth, “*Imitate me as I also imitate Christ*” (1 Cor. 11:1). What did Christ do? What was it that Paul “knew” about Christ that had such value? Philippians 2:5-8 says, “*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the*

form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” What types of things will you have to change and sacrifice? Is your view of knowing Christ just as valuable to you as it was with Paul? Will you count all things as dung that you may win Christ?

CW



FROM SHEEP TO WOLVES

Spencer Strickland

The reader might have noticed the titles of this issue tend to reflect a change from the negative to the positive. The exception to that rule is the subject of my assignment. As Christians, we *want* things to move from bad to good (and not the other way around), but the reality is the devil is hard at work (1 Pet. 5:8). Sadly, some who were faithful in the past have departed from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1). What are some reasons the Bible reveals about faithful brothers changing “from sheep to wolves?”

The Love of Money. “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. **It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith . . .**”¹¹ (1 Tim. 6:10 bold mine, SS).

One of the primary sources of teaching in the early church was the eldership (Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:2). In some cases, elders who were known to engage in preaching and teaching (1 Tim. 5:17), were financially compensated by the

¹¹ All scripture taken from the ESV.

church (1 Tim. 5:18). Could it be some of those responsible for shepherding the sheep did so out of “shameful gain”? (1 Pet. 5:3). In Ezekiel’s day, God rebuked the shepherds of Israel for “feeding themselves” and not “feeding the sheep” (Ezek. 34:2, 8, 10).

These days, we don’t often hear of elders being financially supported by the church. Nevertheless, money could be the “god” that once faithful *preachers* and *servants* of the Lord have decided to worship. Perhaps a little compromise *here* means a preacher finds a larger congregation (equaling more pay). Maybe a little compromise *there* allows a preacher and gifted writer to sell more books. Truly, the love of money can lead brethren to change from “sheep” to “wolves.”

Friends and family. When a close friend or family member is involved in sin, there may be a temptation to compromise truth. This situation occurred during the high priesthood of Eli (1 Sam. 1-4).

The Bible makes the depravity of Eli’s sons plain, “Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the Lord” (1 Sam. 2:12). In turn, God revealed to young Samuel the future punishment of Eli (1 Sam. 3:10-14). Eli’s punishment came “because his sons were blaspheming God and he did not restrain them” (1 Sam. 3:13). Eli’s sons were supposed to be God’s priests, but they made a mockery of the priesthood (1 Sam. 2:13-17, 22). Why didn’t Eli restrain his sons?

Occasionally, brethren refer anecdotally to preachers who once held to the Bible’s teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage until a family member violated Matthew 5:32 and 19:9. Like Eli, who failed to urge his sons to repent, some may decide to compromise out of “love” for this family member. Jesus said loving family more than him makes one unworthy of being his disciple (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:27). Compromising conviction because of family and friends may be another way brethren change from “sheep” to “wolves.”

Immaturity and Ignorance. These two items tend to go hand in hand. Regarding immaturity, it may be that a brother has taken on responsibility without thinking through the obligations. Jesus warned about putting the “hand to the plow” and then looking back (Luke 9:62). Such would certainly be a sign of immaturity.

One cannot help but wonder if immaturity was the issue with John Mark (Acts 13:13; 15:37-38), as well as Demas who deserted Paul due to his love of the world (2 Tim. 4:9). At least with John Mark, we are thankful that he became useful again to Paul for ministry (2 Tim. 4:11).

Regarding ignorance, perhaps a lack of study along with

unfamiliarity of the devil’s devices (2 Cor. 2:11) leads a brother astray. If a man of God fails to equip himself with the word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17), he can be led to believe in false theories (e.g., theistic evolution, day-age theory, etc.) and false teachings from those who have impressive academic credentials.

Indeed, it is sad to see otherwise promising brothers move from being “sheep” to “wolves.”

CW

FROM SLAVES TO FREE

Eric Tipton

“I think slavery is the next thing to hell.” – Harriet Tubman, 1856

Harriet Tubman was a conductor for the Underground Railroad. She knew the difficulties of escaping slavery; thus, she was likened to Moses. Egypt had enslaved Israel, and during their Exodus, Moses and the Israelites overcame many difficulties. The struggles they faced while escaping Egyptian slavery are notably similar to the struggles Christians face while escaping slavery to sin (John 8:34).

Though Pharaoh never stood a chance at retaining the Israelites, he clung to them tenaciously. Moses recalled the Exodus this way: “Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go” (Exod. 13:15). Similarly, sin tries to cling to you, even after you come to Christ (Prov. 5:22; Heb. 12:1). We underestimate sin if we think of it as a disheartened opponent who sees the writing on the wall. Christ died, was raised, and conquered sin; so, is sin defeated? Yes. Does it hang its head in defeat and ease off us? No. It is not discouraged because you converted, nor is it deterred because you are repenting—*it keeps coming*. The verse referenced earlier, which speaks of sin “clinging closely,” was addressed to baptized, born-again, devoted Christians, yet sin had not abandoned their souls. If you want to break free from sin, put up a good fight, because, like Pharaoh, sin is reluctant to let go.

Oddly, one of the greatest struggles the Israelites faced in their liberation was simply remembering that God freed them. The Israelites were not expected to part the Red Sea by their own power, defeat the Egyptian army by their own strength, or navigate their own way to Canaan. They were simply expected to remember that God did those things. Moses commanded the people: “Remember this day in

which you went out of Egypt” (Exod. 13:3). However, time and again, they forgot. “This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!” they proclaimed as they worshipped something that had most definitely not liberated them (Exod. 32:8). Lest they ever thought they liberated themselves, God introduced Himself twenty-seven times as “the Lord who brought them up out of the land of Egypt.” People are notoriously bad at remembering and praising God for the freedom He bestows. Never boast in your own goodness, but always humbly praise His mercy (Tit. 3:4-5). Never mistake your preacher for your Savior (1 Cor. 1:13). Sin enslaves, but God liberates. Remember to praise Him for freedom (Ps. 103:2).

Recognize the difference between “free from sin” and “free to do as you please.” Culturally, we understand freedom to mean something like “I can do whatever I want.” Therefore, a biblical explanation of the phrase “from slaves to free” might be necessary. God freed the Israelites from slavery *so they could serve Him*. The first part of Moses’s demand is well known: “Let my people go...” However, the second part explains what their freedom looked like: “... that they may serve me” (Exod. 9:1). God freed them, not for greater personal liberty, but for service. Similarly, God frees us from sin, not so we can follow any impulse, but so we can become slaves to Him. Romans 6:6-7 proclaims freedom from sin, but if you keep reading, you see that we have gone from slaves to... slaves: “But now having been set free from sin, and having become *slaves of God*...” (Rom. 6:22). No man can serve two masters. Thus, God freed us from sin that we might become slaves to Him. The hymn *Pierce My Ear* expresses love for service toward God this way: “I will serve you eternally. A free man I’ll never be.”

Escaping slavery has never been easy, nor has liberation ever been cheap. Praise God who has paid the price and freed us from sin. Sin may attempt to cling to you, the world may attempt to distract you, and culture may attempt to misconstrue biblical freedom, but in Him you can break free from sin’s grasp. It is written, “...you should not be their slaves; I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright” (Lev. 26:13).

CW

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of insights into this as well. In 1 John he writes, “And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:17). Then, in writing the book of Revelation, he pens these words, “And I

saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven (the realm where the birds fly—RJ) fled away; and there was found no place for them” (Rev. 20:11).

So where will we be? Where the Godhead is. Jesus spoke about this change in location when He was calming His Apostles. “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:1-3). “There” indicates a change in location that it is not here.

There will be a change in experiences. Perhaps, it is this change that this writer is looking forward to the most. In life, we experience several peaks and valleys. What if we never had to experience a valley ever again? Imagine a place where there was no death, sorrow, heartache or pain. What if there was a place on this earth where we could experience just one of them. We would probably sell everything we have to try to move to this wonderful place. When John began to pen his final inspired words, he shares with us a place that contains all those things. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21:4). Are you looking forward to these changes?

CW



HTH is inviting every church of Christ in the country to mail *House to House/Heart to Heart* this July. This theme will be “Do We Have to Join a Denomination? —Why the First Century Church is Better.” Reach homes in your community with a customized magazine for just 50 cents (which pays for customizing, printing, and mailing it for you). You pray and plan the follow up, and we take care of everything else. People are looking for truth. Let’s help them find it. Please respond by May 25. Call Matt Wallin toll-free at 1-877-338-3397 or email matt@housetohouse.com.



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“To Know Jesus and...make Him known”

From the Director's Desk



Trent Kennedy
Director
SWSBS

Have you ever been through events in your life that have changed you? Think about boot camp. A soldier who enters basic training for a military branch will graduate as a different person. The experience with its training, focus, emphasis, discipline, feedback, and arrangement transforms someone from a citizen to a soldier (sailor/airman/marine/guardsman). There are other transformative experiences in life. Some last days or weeks while others last months or years. After such experiences, one may look back and see the great changes that have taken place in one's thinking, actions, and life.

In many ways, preaching school is such an experience. It is transformative. When you spend six or seven hours a day in class studying Scripture, a few hours each night on homework, your conversations are about eternal things, your colleagues are brethren, and your extracurriculars are lectureships, gospel meetings, and workshops, how could you not be affected? God's Word has a way of changing the makeup of the mind, the constitution of the will, the direction of life, and the course of eternity. At SWSBS, we get to see these types of transformations year after year. Christians become more spiritual, more focused, more disciplined, and more active. Preachers, teachers, missionaries, elders, deacons, and servants are enlightened about God and His will, equipped to handle the Bible more effectively, encouraged to go beyond their comfort zone, and exhorted to do the work of evangelists.

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