

Transformation

God's Program For The Church (05/02/2017)

In order for God to make into the kind of people He intends us to become, there must be a process of transformation. When God first redeems us, we are only beginning the journey **towards** all that we ought to be **and** that God intends us to be.

The process of transformation.

To understand how the process of transformation works, we have to take a look at the call of Jesus to His first disciples in Matthew 4:18-20.

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon Called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him.(NKJV)

This simple scene does not contain a lot of complicated psychology, but just the essence of what has to happen. There are two main components to Jesus saying "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

First, Jesus requires total commitment. What He is actually saying is this "Leave it all, follow Me. I am not telling you where we are going; you just have to follow me in faith. Put your life in My hands and let Me take care of the consequences."

That is essential. God cannot really work His purposes until His people are fully committed.

Then, Jesus says "I am not telling you where we are going, **but** I am telling you what I will make of you. I will make you fishers of men." The important thing with every one of God's redeemed people is **not** what we are right now, **but** what God wants to make of us. If we yield to the Lord, He guarantees the finished product.

But first, we must commit ourselves to God's purpose, and then He begins to work in us to make us into what He wants us to be.

The same principle is inherent in the teaching of Paul. He says in Roman 12:1-2

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be TRANSFORMED by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."(NKJV)

As we saw in Matthew 4:18-20, the first step to God's transforming-process within us is **total commitment** to God. Apostle Paul expressed this truth in the words "Present your bodies a living sacrifice". Naturally, he was thinking in terms of the Old Testament sacrifices of animals, such as sheep and bulls, which were killed and **then** placed as an offering on God's Alter. Once they were placed on the God's Alter, they no longer belonged to the person who offered them; they belonged to **God alone**.

Paul is telling us Christians that we have to offer our own bodies to God in exactly the same way. Once you & me have placed our body on the Alter-it no longer belongs to us, it belongs entirely to God. But there is one major difference: Our body won't be killed first; it will be placed-live on the alter! Now this is really a total commitment.

Transformation from Within.

Commitment to God leads us to think in a higher way. When our minds become renewed, our values change and our priorities are adjusted, modified, reshaped and altered. Things take on a different meaning. This is something God does **only** for the committed.

When we are **transformed** by the renewing of our minds, we are able to discern (meaning see, notice, observe, perceive, make out, distinguish and determine) and approve (meaning accept, consent to, permit, allow and authorize) God's Will. We can find out what He really wants. He has a wonderful plan for each and every one of us individually and for His people collectively (Church).

In the book of Jeremiah 28:11-13 we read: *"For I know the thoughts that I think towards you says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."* This passage unveil and uncovers the secret to us that God reveals His plans ONLY to those who are committed.

Remember, God's word is a mirror that shows us what we are inwardly. This mirror is an essential instrument in the process of transformation. In 2-Corinthians 3:17-18 we read "Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." Notice that the above Scripture is written in the Plural. It is not just for individuals; it is for us all. It shows us what God intends for all His believing, committed people collectively. Without this view of God's people as a single whole, we tend to get lost in our own needs, problems and blessings AND we miss the larger, overall plan and purposes of God.

Transformed from Glory to Glory.

As we think/consider/contemplate/ponder and reflect on God's Word, we behold/look at//notice/observe and gaze the glory that God is going to work in us. As we behold this glory (God's exaltation, honor, adoration, reverence) by faith and continue looking into the mirror of God's Word, the Spirit of God transforms us into the likeness of what we see. If we do not look in the mirror, the Spirit of God cannot work on us. This is not just one single transformation, but "from glory to glory"!

Each time we arrive at a certain level, God shows us a higher level and urges us to move upwards This transformation depends on two things:

First, it depends on our looking by faith into the mirror of God's Word. Second, it rests on the work of the Holy Spirit, when we look into the mirror. Each one of us must look regularly into the mirror of God's Word to check on our own personal spiritual condition and relationship to God.

So here is the order of transformation: (1) Commitment (2) then transformation from within, which leads to the revelation of God's Purpose for the redeemed.

May the Triune God, give us the desire and hunger for the transformation and help us in our commitment that begins the process, so that we can fit into His Program for the Church of the End-times.....Amen.