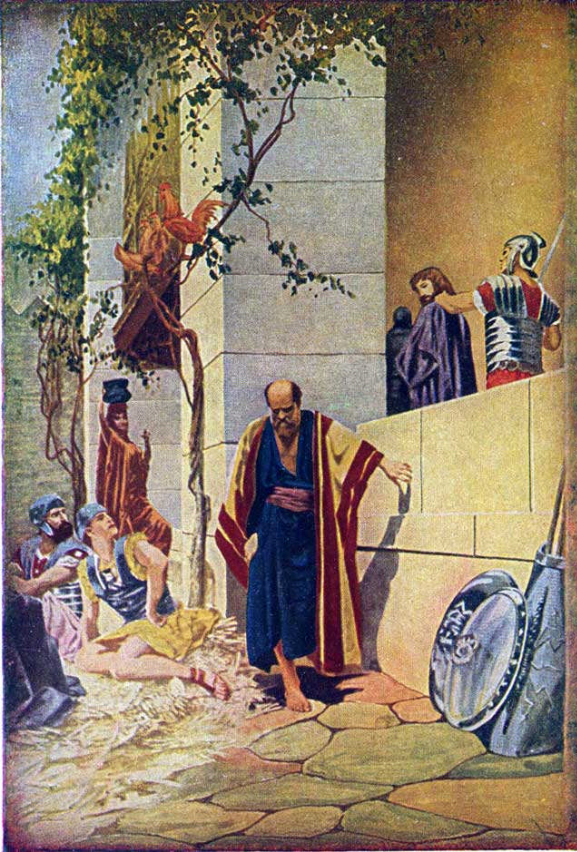


Power in the Holy Spirit

6. THE TRANSFORMING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Introduction to transformation



When the guards of the High Priest arrested Jesus, he was taken before the Caiaphas and questioned. Peter followed along; he waited outside while they questioned Jesus. Those who stood outside with Peter, questioned Peter, asking him if he was with Jesus. Three times Peter denied knowing Jesus, finally after hearing the rooster crow, he remembered the words of Jesus. Telling him he would deny him three times before the rooster crowed. Peter fled, weeping, feeling an utter spiritual failure. (Matthew 26:70-75)

Jesus restored Peter after the resurrection, but told him and the other disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they receive the Spirit, who would give them, power (Acts 1:8). The defeated Peter was present, when Jesus ascended into the clouds with angels by his sides.

In Acts chapter 2, the disciples received the Holy Spirit who appeared as tongues of fire divided, resting on their heads. The defeated Peter now stands with boldness and preaches to all those gathered in the upper room, explaining what just took place. Peter then exhorts the whole group to repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, so they could receive the Holy Spirit.

Then in Acts 5, this same Peter stands before the High Priest preaching Jesus along with the other disciples. Peter and the other are beaten, but rather than being afraid, they rejoice, because they suffered for the name of Jesus. Peter

was transformed, he was now operating under the "power" of the Holy Spirit.

This same *power* (dunamis), which transformed Peter from the ashamed fearful disciple into bold fearless disciple is available to all those who are in Christ. We see Peter from this point on lead the disciples as they proclaim the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire and beyond.

God's spirit dwelling in us, transforms us, making us into a new creation. This transformation

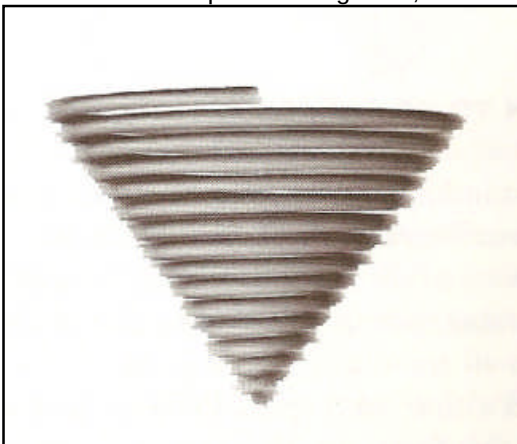
however varies, in some its amazing, in others hardly noticeable, why? Why can some people live a victorious life and others remain defeated.

What does it mean to transform?

When we are born in this world, we inherit our nature from parents, as they inherited from their parents. From our first parents, Adam and Eve we received a fallen sin nature. When we accept Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior, His death paying for our sins, we become "Born Again". God's Holy Spirit dwells in our earthly body, we now have a new nature, we are a new creation.

As a new creation, we are transformed through the power of the Holy Spirit. Now the extent of our transformation is not

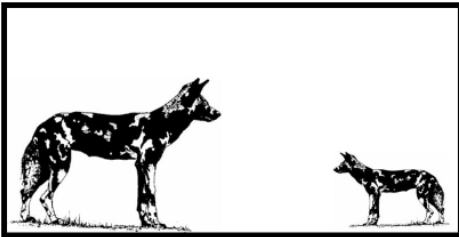
only the job of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God works or "fellowships" with our spirit, making intercession with our spirit (Romans 8:26).



Once the sinner, comes to Christ, the Holy Spirit gives that person power to change, to stop sinning, which they were powerless to stop before. This process of transformation is known as *sanctification*, where we become more like Christ. We begin our upward spiral to be Christ-like. The Holy Spirit is working in our lives transforming us, perfecting us.

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. 2 Corinthians 3:18

Paul in Second Corinthians refers to *we all*, meaning those who are saved, those who have the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, this verse applies to all believers, the process of transformation. In Ephesians Paul contrasts the two natures of the believer, the “Old Man” and the “New Man”, notice we must decide to put off our former conduct. We have a part to play. We have a choice to make.



22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:22-24

With the Holy Spirit dwelling in us we have power over our old nature, to subdue our it and make it subject to our new man. As the illustration used earlier, these two natures are in conflict with one another, both seek to master the body. We must choose to enable the God's Spirit to have power in our life, by starving our old nature and feeding our new nature.

Why are some “Christians” stuck?

Scripture is clear, being stuck at a level is not an option, either the Christian is moving closer to being like Christ or farther away, but not progressing means they are falling.

30 “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad. Matthew 12:30

Robertson McQuilkin, gives three reason why the Christian walk might be on a downward spiral, going backwards.¹

- They are ignorant of which direction they're headed or of the provision the Holy Spirit would make available to spiral up.
- They are not yielded fully to God's will, either because of gradual drift away from a tight relationship with God or through active rebellion, saying “no” to God about something.
- They are not trusting God to keep His promise to give them the victory, haven't grown in faith to the place of expecting and receiving the power-flow of the Spirit.

We have to make a willful choice to allow the power of God to work in our lives. We must make an effort, God did not make robots, he has given us the power to progress upward in our walk, but we need be willing to move forward. Listen to what 2nd Peter says, we are told “add to your faith” we must be active participants in our faith. There is success for those who choose to move forward and not wander in the wilderness of life, like Israel. Israel wandered because they did not think God was up to the challenge.

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5-8

¹ Life in the Spirit, Robertson McQuilkin, Pg. 103 Broadman & Holman Publishers, Nashville 2000

How can we tell if we are spiraling upward or downward in our walk?

Scripture lists clear signs of our spiritual state; Galatians lists two groups of fruits, *fruits of the Spirit* and *fruits of the flesh*. If our Old nature is in charge we will bear the fruits of the flesh, while God's spirit is in charge the fruits of the Spirit.

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-18

Fruits of Spirit	Fruits of the Flesh
love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control Galatians 5:22-23	Adultery, Fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries Galatians 5:19-21

If we examine both lists, which best describes our life? Are we becoming more like the one list then the other?

How can the downward spiral be reversed?

What kind of soil are you?

Jesus tells the parable about *word* being sowed on the earth, in this parable we can see the fruitfulness of the seed (word) depends on the soil and its environment. Satan is an enemy not wanting the word to take root; he opposes the kingdom of God. What keeps the seed from taking root? Notice the **word** responds to the conditions of its sowing.



14 "The sower sows the word.

15 "And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 "These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 "and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

18 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 "and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 20 "But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred." Mark 14:14-20

The stony soil has no depth, meaning lack of understanding. Confrontations because of the word quickly end its life. The seed among the thorns is crowded out by what the world may define as more important, all competing for attention, therefore the seed (word) is choked off, it cannot have an effect because it is competing for attention and

loosing. Notice the types of soil:

- The wayside (the road)
- Stony ground
- Thorny ground
- Good Ground

However, the seed sown on the good ground reaps a harvest. The question we need to ask ourselves is what kind of soil do we have? If we are rocky or thorny soil, then we cannot expect a great harvest. Therefore, we should strive to be good soil.

How can we be good soil? Well let us examine what is wrong with the other soils, and say to ourselves, we should not allow that to be our problem. Do we have things competing for our attention, crowding out time with the Word? Do we go deep with the Word, or do just have a surface knowledge? The stones in the soil prevent the soil from being fruitful; therefore, the stones need to be removed.

To be fruitful, we need to have good soil; we need to cultivate our soul to receive the word of God, like a farmer prepares his field to bear a good harvest. He prepares and cares for the ground where the seed is planted.

- Are you willing to prepare your soil?
- Do you have a desire to be fruitful soil?

How can we be good soil?

The good soil bears fruit, this is what we should all strive to be. When Israel was conquering the land of Canaan under Joshua, following the defeat of Jericho, Israel had a problem. Confident of victory, Israel was defeated by Ai a small city, Joshua was devastated. He fell before the Lord face down and pleaded. The Lord responded to Joshua saying,

10 So the Lord said to Joshua: "Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face?"

11 "Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. Joshua 7:10-11

Before Israel could defeat their enemies, the Lord required obedience. Israel first needed to remove the sin in their midst. In the same way, we need to remove "the things", which prevent a victorious life. What obstacles are in our way?

First, we need to make a decision, to be fruitful; we cannot take our salvation for granted. We have a limited amount of time; we need to make it count for eternity. Second we need to act on our decision, we need to give up the things in our life hinder our relationship with the Lord. We need to allow God's Spirit to reign in our body.

God has provided tools for us to accomplish this task.

Tools for the Spirit

When we are saved, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside us He moves us in prayer and life to complete sanctification process. Through the Spirit of God, we know what hinders us, and we can know what we need to do.

This means we must spend time with God, to allow the Lord to move in our life and direct us. This time is called *devotions* and can include, prayer, reading the Bible and praise. Devotions are time we set apart and dedicate to our relationship with God. We need to hear from the Lord, we need to make our requests known and we need to praise and thank the Lord for his goodness. This is part of developing "good soil", so we can be fruitful with the time we have been given to grow.

1. Prayer

Is the act of communication with our Creator, it involves listening to the Spirit dwelling in us, and our responding. God can direct our prayers through His word the Bible, we can pray about ourselves, or we can pray for others or events.

When we pray for others this is known as *intercessory prayer*, because we are interceding. We put ourselves between someone and God, interceding on someone's or some groups behalf. A great picture of intercessory prayer is Daniel 9:2-20, here Daniel prays, praying for himself and interceding for his people, praying for restoration. Daniel prayed according to scripture, he read from the book of Jeremiah, and understood the time was at hand. He was interceding for himself and his people.

2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

4 And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,

5 "we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Daniel 9:2-5

Daniel was serious about prayer, at this point Daniel was about 80-years old, and God had already used him in many ways. He had seen the angel Gabriel earlier, he was rescued from the den of lions (Daniel 6) and other amazing events, but he approached God with awe and majesty. Daniel had a method to his prayer; he fasted and wore sackcloth and ashes. He was serious about what he prayed, he hungered for the Lord to hear him, and that is why God used him.

Like Daniel, we need to be serious about prayer. To become the fruitful soil, we need to pray and know God's will in our life. The Spirit dwelling in us gives us the words and knowledge of what to pray about, even if we can't. So first, we need to just move forward in faith and pray.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

Practically speaking we should try to set aside a portion of time each day to pray, Daniel for example prayed 3-times each day. We can start out small and increase the time. By making it a habit we can establish a pattern for our life.

2. Scripture

The Lord works according to His Word, so to understand God's will in our life, we need depth. God will not go against his word. So prayers which counter His word are wasted prayers, for example do we ask God to help us steal the most dependable car? No, because we know stealing is a sin. In the same way, by learning God's word, we can increase the depth of our "soil". We can know the will of God.

By reading and understanding scripture we attend the most important school, which ever existed, the "University of God". We have the opportunity of letting God teach us, right where we are. Read what the Psalmist says about the Word.

97 Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.

98 You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; For they are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers, For Your testimonies are my meditation.

100 I understand more than the ancients, Because I keep Your precepts.

101 I have restrained my feet from every evil way, That I may keep Your word.

102 I have not departed from Your judgments, For You Yourself have taught me.

103 How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth! Psalm 119:97-103

The Bible has 1189 chapters, including both Old and New Testaments. If we read just 3.25 chapters per day, the Bible could be read in a year. In less than ½ hour per day, we could read the Bible in a year. Our goal should not be just to read the Bible, we should strive to understand it. God's Spirit gives us the ability and desire to understand what we read.

In addition to the Bible, a Bible Dictionary, concordance and commentary can help us understand the context and background about what we are reading. However reading these are no substitute for the Bible. The more we hunger to be used by God, the greater our desire will be to go in-depth with His word.

3. Scripture Memorization

After Jesus was baptized He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he fasted 40-days. At the end of his fast, Satan came to him to tempt him. Three times Satan tempted him, and in each case, Jesus quoted to him scripture.

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
 2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.
 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."
 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'
 5 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,
 6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.' "



7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' "
 8 Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.
 9 And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."
 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "
 11 Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. Matthew 4:1-11

What does that tell us? First Jesus modeled for us the power of scripture. Jesus quoted scripture to rebuke Satan. Second Jesus memorized scripture, to quote it you need to memorize it. So if Jesus used it to rebuke Satan and temptation, through memory, why shouldn't I?

If we struggle with an area, let's learn the scripture which deal with that area, when we are tempted we can rebuke Satan with the Word, just like Jesus.

Remember, the Word is the Sword of the Spirit, by having the word in our hearts, we have a weapon of the Spirit at our side anytime its

needed.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; Ephesians 6:17

4. Fasting

Why would anybody not want to eat food? To loose weight, of course that's why most people fast. Because how they look is important enough to them, they are willing to give up food. We also fast for health, we stop eating certain foods, chocolates, French fries, etc. Our health is more important then the food.

In the same way our looks and health are important, so is our spiritual health. Fasting indicates how serious we are about the issue at hand. Jesus fasted for 40-days, Moses fasted, Daniel fasted, so when we fast we are in good company. When someone wants to be successful in business, many times they look at what the successful people did, then they emulate their work.

When confronted with a demon-possessed boy, the disciples were unable to free him from demonic possession. Jesus after the demon was sent away made the following comments.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"

20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

21 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting." Matthew 17:19-21

The possession was so strong, prayer alone could not accomplish the task, fasting was also required. When we fast, we demonstrate just how serious we are about what we want. Do we have a problem which will not go away? How serious are we about this issue, are we willing to pray an fast? Fasting is one more tool used by the Spirit, to overcome our "Old Man".

5. Praise

I remember someone telling me, God must really be egotistical because He always wants praise. I thought for a while, why do I praise God? Then I realized, Praise is merely proclaiming the truth about who God is! God is awesome, He made the universe! He designed me!, He gave me breath, while I am really

nothing more then dirt and water.....Wow! What an amazing God. The more I thought the more I could not help Praise God.

His creation enough is worthy of Praise, but even more then this, this same Creator was willing to come into the world, to die for His creation. The creator of the Universe loved me enough to die for me. He could make a thousand copies of me, yet he choose to suffer me, so I could be with Him forever! Amazing!

God wants us to Praise Him because its truth! We are commanded to Praise God, not for His benefit but for ours. God knows who He is, He does not need our acknowledgment to exist. We need to acknowledge and praise Him so we are not misled and self-deceived.

- 1 Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights!
- 2 Praise Him, all His angels; Praise Him, all His hosts!
- 3 Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all you stars of light!
- 4 Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, And you waters above the heavens!
- 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created Psalm 148:1-5

Try the 30-day test

Use the chart below to help you grow in your Spiritual Journey, to cultivate your soil.

- Try to Read the Bible ½ hour a day
- Pray 15 minutes
- Fast once a week
- Memorize scripture

Let us know what happens?

ACTS

	Prayer List	Missionary	Memorize Scripture
Adoration		Safety, send your angels	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. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)
Praise the Lord	My relationship with God	Faithfulness to the Lord, family	
His Creation	- Lord help me to read your word. - Help me to understand and apply it in my life	People seeking the Lord find them	
His Salvation	- Convict me of sin - Fill me with your Holy Spirit - Let me be used by you - Fill me with your love - Let me hear the words "well done"		
His Wonder			
Confession		Our Country	5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,
Thoughts		President knows and serves the Lord	6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,
Actions		Congress	7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.
Words	Intercession prayer	Supreme Court	8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Temptations	Family - Salvation - Growth - Blessing		2 Peter 1:5-8
Thanksgiving		Our State and City	26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
Salvation			27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27
Family			
Children			
Health			
House			
Work	Church - Faithful to the Lord - Pastor and leaders remain faithful - People find Christ and grow	My Neighbors - Salvation - Blessing	
Supplication			
Needs			
Marriage			
Kids			
Health			
Work			
Trials	Friends - Salvation - Health - Safety - Marriage	My Business and Work - That I reflect you to coworkers and clients - Help my business to grow and prosper - Help me to be generous and loving - Bring clients and people to me seeking you - Give me the ability to discern	10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places Ephesians 6:10-12

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