

The Transformation Series: The Living Water of the Spirit in Us

Selected Text, Preached at Harambee Church by Pastor Mike Gunn on December 30th, 2007

*"There is probably never a day when we do not fail at doing what Christ, on the cross, has enabled us to do. Yes, God's grace has changed us. It gives us power over what once enslaved us. It has opened our blind eyes, softened our hard hearts and given wisdom to our foolish minds. Yet, with all of these wonderful gifts flowing from our union with Christ, sin still remains in us. That's the reason you need to know that the cross has broken the **power** of sin, because the **presence** of sin still remains! We should not be shocked that the war still goes on inside us. We have been changed, we have been empowered, **but we have not yet been perfected.**"*

Tripp/Lane

Intro

We have been looking at how God's grace transforms our lives for the past 12 weeks. It is imperative to note that change doesn't come as a result of "resolutions." Change comes as a result of the grace of God working in our lives as we appropriate the truth of Christ's work on the cross! When God's grace rules our heart and our decisions, then we will begin to see a lasting change in our lives. We cannot change for our own sake, or the sake of someone else's approval; we must be changed by God's transforming love.

We are able to do this because every follower of Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit within empowering them to become what God intended them to become. These goals are not impossible, but are made possible by God!

In light of this study, I want to look at David as an example of one trusting in His God during HEAT in his life, and then three Truths that direct the lives of a follower of Christ:

5 Gospel perspectives

1. Our sin is worse than we can imagine, but God's grace is greater than our sin!
2. God is concerned about transformation at the heart level, not the behavior level.
3. We should benefit from our relationship with Christ here and now, and in eternity.
4. God calls us to grow and change.
5. Our Christian life is a lifestyle of Repentance and Faith

From the Head...

David; An Example Spiritual Growth and Struggle (Psalm 4; 2 Samuel 11-18)

David was a powerful man that had money, power, fame, and integrity. His story is not a mythical, heroic story. It is a story that is a lot like most people's story. We see David (a man after God's own heart) have moments of sublimity and moments of peril and sin. In Psalm 4 we see a resolute man in the face of some of the toughest stress any man could have. Not only was David's son in rebellion, his son was leading a coup to oust him and kill him if necessary. On top of that, his son was killed in battle. I can't imagine the heartache David felt as he himself was hiding in a cave as he wrote Psalm 4, which along with Psalm 3, are morning and evening meditations of worship. In this Psalm we see a calm David praising his God and caring about his men. He turns toward God in his pain, not away from Him. David is not perfect, and actually sinned greatly in a time of blessing and prosperity. But what we see here in this Psalm is the reality of a God who continues to work in sinful people's hearts in spite of their sin. This gives us great hope!

Paul: A Blueprint for Spiritual Transformation (Galatians 5:13-6:10)

We are not transformed by our work, but our work is a sign of our transformation. Ephesians 2:8-10 brilliantly displays this reality about our relationship with our God. Religion gains acceptance through rules and law, while grace teaches that we are accepted because of Christ; we are then motivated by love to obey God, knowing that we are God's children and we are secure because of our relationship to Christ. It is because of this that we can live in integrity, let grace shape our relationships, and live a life of purpose and direction.

1. A Life Lived in Integrity

When God's grace transforms our hearts, we can face ourselves in a different light. We can see ourselves as a work in progress not afraid to face the reality of our own sin. We can live a life that doesn't need to blame others for our own faults. A life of integrity is committed to spiritual growth and committed to godly help from the body of Christ because we are no longer trying to impress someone with a false spirituality.

¹ Workbook, pg. 12.14

2. A Life of Relationships Shaped by Grace

When we realize the grace that has been extended to us, we are able to extend that grace to others (see **Matthew 18:21-35**). We become people that are much more willing to ask forgiveness and grant forgiveness. We are able to respond to other people's sin with grace and love, and minister to people out of compassion.

3. A Life Filled with Purpose and Direction in Words and Actions

God's grace calls us and shapes us toward action in becoming, "grace filled" people. The work that Christ wants us to do is love God and love others (**John 15:10, 17**). God has given us purpose to carry out His love in a world that so badly needs real love and compassion. This is outlined by Tripp and Lane (Workbook 12.2).

- Grace enables all of God's children to make peace (**James 3:13-18**)
- Grace enables each of God's children to speak truth (**Ephesians 4:25**)
- Grace enables all of God's children to serve others (**Galatians 5:14, 15**)
- Grace enables all of God's children to say no (**John 11:21; 17:4**)
- Grace enables all of God's children to use their gifts (**Romans 12:1-8**)

...to the Heart

In Christ, you have been made a fruit tree and enabled to bear fruit even in the midst of trial and pain. You are a child of God and no longer need to try and win anyone's love and approval. You are free in Christ to enjoy the things that He has given you, and free to break the chains of sin in your life because you no longer need other things to bring you joy and significance. You are united in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ! Because of this there is great hope that we are able to do anything God calls us to do in His power and by His grace! Let's turn to this New Year with this reality fresh in our minds!

Books for further study: Most of this material is taken from "How People Change" and "Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands" by Paul Tripp and Tim Lane, as well as their accompanying workbooks

Next Weeks Verses: We begin our series on the Life of Abraham in Genesis Chapter 12

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