

HOW GOD CHANGES US

Ephesians 4:11-32

- **What are some elements that God uses to change or transform us?**
- *“Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from Him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.”* (Ephesians 4:20-24)
- **What are some elements that God uses to change or transform us?**

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES COACHING

- *“Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do His work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.”* (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- **We grow faster and stronger with “coaches” - because “coaches” help us to learn how to maximize our strengths and minimize our weaknesses.**
- Paul to Timothy - *“You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.”* (2 Timothy 2:2)
- **Who could be a good spiritual mentor/coach to me in 2021?**

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES LEARNING THE TRUTH

- Jesus - *“Make them holy by Your truth; teach them Your word, which is truth.”* (John 17:17)
- **If we really want to change any area of our lives, we have to apply “truth” to that area.**
- *“Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ . . .”* (Ephesians 4:14-15)

- **When we don’t know the “truth” we will fall and fail, because every self-defeating behavior in our lives is based on a “lie” we’re believing.**
- *“Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from Him . . .”* (Ephesians 4:21)
- *“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip His people to do every good work.”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- **Transformation comes as we learn and apply God’s truth to our lives.**

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES NEW THINKING

- *“With the Lord’s authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against Him. They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.”* (Ephesians 4:17-19)
- *“Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.”* (Ephesians 4:23)
- **If we want to change anything in our lives, we have to change what we think about it, because the way we think determines the way that we feel, and the way we feel determines what we do.**
- **Oftentimes rather than trying to change the way that we think we try to change our actions, but that doesn’t bring us the strength or success we’re hoping for.**
- **We need to let God’s Spirit change our way of thinking.**
- *“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.”* (Romans 12:2)

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES CLEANING HOUSE

- *“Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.”* (Ephesians 4:22)
- **To live healthy lives we have to get rid of some unhealthy attitudes, ambitions and actions in our lives.**
- *“Confession of bad works is the beginning of good works.”* - Augustine
- *“Let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.”* (Hebrews 12:1)

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES HONEST COMMUNITY

- *“So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.”* (Ephesians 4:25)
- *“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”* (Ephesians 4:29)
- *“Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.”* (Ephesians 4:32)
- **Transformation happens faster when we are surrounded by a Connect Group supporting our Spiritual Growth.**
- **A year from now what’s going to make us different will be the books we’ve read and the people we’ve associated with.**

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES FAITH

- *“Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.”* (Ephesians 3:20)
- *“For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”* (Philippians 4:13)
- Jesus - *“Because of your faith, it will happen.”* (Matthew 9:29)
- *“For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.”* (1 John 5:4)

TAKEAWAYS FROM TODAY’S MESSAGE

- **God wants to enable me to “change” and become better in 2021.**
- **Transformation requires Coaching, Learning the Truth, New Thinking, Cleaning House, Honest Community (Connect Group involvement) and Faith.**
- **We need to ask the Lord to begin His transforming work in us as we begin 2021, and commit to utilizing the elements He has given us to experience His transforming work in and through our lives.**
- *“As God’s Spirit works within us, we are being transformed to become more like Christ. This change, from one degree of glory to another, comes from the Lord.”* (2 Corinthians 3:18)