

CHANGE

I'd like to share a few thoughts about change. More specifically how we become what God created us to be

Proverbs 23.7 says that

As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.

Our thinking about ourselves can have a major effect in the outcome of our lives. Our identity is absolutely critical to our walk with God. It can cause us to become hopelessly mired in sin and addiction or it can cause us to walk victoriously in the fullness of all that God has created for us.

It's imperative that we see ourselves as God sees us and not by the perception of our old nature inherited from Adam.

All natural efforts to change are done from the outside in. They are focused on changing our speech, changing our habits, and adjusting our lifestyle to fit the new desired image. These efforts are focused largely on attempting to create new habits of behavior.

Modern psychology has figured out that our brains work on pictures and statements about ourselves.

For example,

An Olympic athlete will picture himself jumping over a high jump bar, over and over in his mind, to program his body to perform the jump successfully in the competition.

A business person will continually make statements such as,

I am an award-winning salesman,

I have great influence with people, and my customers like me and respond to my offerings.

These efforts do work in our daily life to some extent. I've even used them in the past as an athlete and a business person.

BUT, they are totally ineffective at transforming our old nature that we inherited from Adam, because we're using the very nature that God is trying to deliver us from to create the change.

Motivational speakers are fond of saying, if you want a better life create a better picture. They encourage people to create their own mental movies of successful happy lives of their own making.

According to Genesis 1:26 Man was created in the image of God. His Spirit was pre-eminent and his soul and body were created to be willing servants to carry out his spirit's commands.

As the result of Adam and Eve submitting to Satan's lie, man's Spirit died, and his soul became the preeminent part of his being. Apart from God, all of the input of his life came through his five senses.

God's original design for man was that those pictures and statements about us were to come from the creative power of God's Word and by His holy spirit. Thus allowing us to walk in the life that God originally created for us. God's creative word is to enable us to walk in the life of His making, rather than one that was the result of Satan's lie.

The changing of our nature is a supernatural process. It happens from the inside out by God's creative word to our spirit and through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

God is the only one who can affect a complete re-creation of our original nature, from our fallen state. He's the only one who can cause us to be transformed into his image.

He's the only one who can do this. Let's look at John 1.12+13

But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

I've been a Christian since I was 12 years old. I've often heard people say that we are only sinners saved by grace. Another common statement is that Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven.

I know the intent of these statements is to make people aware of God's forgiveness and his grace.

It seems that the picture that often comes across is that we are despicable little worms before God. His mercy is the only thing that keeps him from squashing us like bugs and allowing us to barely slither into heaven.

Or

That we are incorrigible criminals, and God had pity on us and stopped our rightful execution, but we will be hopeless criminals until Christ comes again.

Think with me for just a minute and let me ask 3 questions.

#1. Why would God want a whole Kingdom full of despicable worms or hopeless sinners.

#2. If that really is our condition, why would he leave us here on Earth to represent Him and display his victory over Satan.

#3. Why would he give us the ministry of reconciliation to compel everyone on the planet to become part of a Kingdom like that.

I know that I have stated these pictures to the extreme but this sin consciousness is very prevalent in the body of Christ.

Let's look at Romans 6

When we focus on our old nature we become self-conscious. When we try to repair or improve our old man, we are actually focusing on something that God has already considered dead.

When a Christian tries to reform his old nature, it's like going to the cemetery and digging up a serial killer and trying to talk him into pastoring the church or taking over the youth group.

Good luck with that.

Satan doesn't even go to the cemetery to tempt people to sin. There aren't any customers there, they are all dead.

When we look at change through our natural senses, it becomes a lens that even colors the scriptures for us.

Let me give you an example.

1 Peter 1.16

You shall be holy, for I am Holy.

A person that has bought into this lowly worm or hopeless sinner identity sees this scripture as a command to be holy, or an unrealistic demand for better performance.

While the person who has received the revelation that their old nature has been crucified with Christ and they have been made one with him as a new creature, sees this as an awesome promise from God. He is Holy, and because we are one with him we can also be that way.

People who are very sin conscious and the awareness of the hopelessness of their old Adam nature, often have trouble believing that they'll ever be able to walk in the word of God. They often reduce the word of God to a level that they try to accomplish in their flesh.

For example, God's command to love them as I loved you,

Becomes be a nice guy and try to love them the best you can, because after all we're only human and nobody's perfect.

God created us so that the expression of our lives would come from the empowering word of God, rather than the best effort of the nature that he's already delivered us from.

JOHN 1.1-5 amp

Darkness has never overpowered light in the history of the world. God says in this verse, that His life is the light of men.

1 John 5.1- 13 says that,
This is the testimony, that he has given us eternal life.....

I write this to you who believe, that you may know that you have eternal life.

If we walk in His light, darkness has no place in us.

We need to maintain a strong focus on this reality. Because, If our eye is single our whole body will be full of light.

We need to focus on the new nature and the eternal life that God has given us.

Because as Ephesians 5.13 says, whatever is exposed to the light becomes light.

Romans 12:2

By offering ourselves completely to God we allow the Holy Spirit to renew our minds to think like he thinks.
This allows us to be transformed into the image of God, from glory to glory.

Let me close with a story to illustrate how the creative word of God can make these transformations happen.
There was a young boy about 17 or 18 that was very obstinate, and rebellious. He got into trouble quite often, then one night his activities earned him a ride home in a police car. His parents were embarrassed, so frustrated with him that they had finally given up on him. And they told him so in a very angry tirade.

His grandmother who lived with them, was a devout Christian and a praying woman.
He thought if my parents are this angry with me, please don't let Grandma get a hold of me. When she gets done with me there probably won't be anything left.

When Grandma said I'd like to speak with you, he feared the worst.
Grandma stared at him for a while as her loving eyes filled with tears. She began to tell the boy how God saw him and prophesied the boy's destiny in Christ that God had showed her in prayer. The boy broke down and wept deeply. It was such a revelation to his spirit that he repented and has been walking with and God ever since.

It's the goodness and the faithfulness of God that leads people to repentance.

One word from God can change everything.

God bless you all.
Jim Fuller

