The First Step of Transformation

2Cor. 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away behold, all things have become new.

I would like to continue the conversation on the difference between transformation and change. One focuses on the internal the other on the external. One is permanent, the other temporary. One is something we do, the other something God does. One is something we surrender to, the other is something we try on.

Transformation's not about little tweaks here and there; it's about a radical do-over of who you are, and it's all tied up in giving yourself over and God stepping in. It's called surrendering to the will of God.

Most people get change and transformation confused. We certainly use the words interchangeably. Nevertheless, they are not the same thing. They are different concepts entirely. Change is something you can easily and willingly go back to doing. You might decide to switch up how you do things, adjust your thinking, or adjust your surroundings. Still, these kinds of alterations don't go deep into who you are.

Often change comes because of external circumstances, we adapt, and make adjustments. But deep down inside, we're pretty much who we've always been.

The difference between change and transformation isn't just about words; transformation is the core of spiritual renewal. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul states**, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away behold, all things have become new."** This doesn't describe a minor adjustment but a total re-creation of who we are. It is redefining our spiritual relationship with God. Transformation isn't about small steps or surface changes; it's a total remake of the self. This giving up of self is based on giving up control and letting God step in. This is no small feat. True transformation begins when we give up the illusion of control over our lives. When we begin to allow God to reshape our lives according to His divine purpose, transformation happens. Until that first step is taken, you are marching to the tune of your own drummer.

We like to believe that we control our destiny. We have been told, and it is ingrained in us that if we work hard enough things will happen the way we want them to happen. The Bible teaches us differently. **Proverbs 16:9 says, "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps." James 4:13-15 "You who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go into**

such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit, yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring." Every transformation begins with the emptying of our ego. Why? Because the ego wants to control. The ego wants to maintain its identity; an identity rooted in pride, personal ambition, and self-sufficiency. The ego only wants to do what it chooses. The ego only wants what it wants. Egos do not compromise. **Galatians 2:20 gives the roadmap to transformation. "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."**

This is the elephant in the room. Letting go means allowing Christ to lead our lives. It means relinquishing control, it means trusting in Him, in His ways, even when they do not align with our own. And we know when that is. We know when we are operating in our own ego, our own will, our own desires. We know when we are doing these things. The Holy Spirit lets us know. We get that "I'm going to do it my way, feeling, that 'I'm going to push forward anyway.'" We know when we do it. It is in those moments that we have to let go and let God. This is all done by God with our permission. God will not force His way or will on you. You must choose it.

What am I finally saying? Transformation is not about small incremental changes. God wants all of you. He wanted all of Saul. That's why He transformed him from Saul to Paul. God doesn't want small improvements. He wants something new. Something different, something you have never seen before.

I realize and understand letting go is scary, but it is the only thing that allows God to bring lasting transformation into our lives. Will we get it right all the time? Certainly not. But if we travel the road, our guide, the Holy Spirit, will help us along the way. Our Comforter, the Holy Spirit will give us the peace to continue forward despite the mistake. Because in the final analysis, Transformation is not about our effort, it is about our surrender. Next week's message is "You're Right, You Can't Do It Alone"

Blessings,

Pastor Gool