

The Two Elements of Transformation

Summary: God doesn't leave us where we are. He loves us too much for that. He changed Simon to Peter. He changed the woman at the well from a prostitute to an evangelist. He even changed an iron axe head from a sinker to a swimmer. Our God specializes in Transformation. Imagine what He wants to do in your life...

Matthew 16: 13-18 – NKJV - ¹³ When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

¹⁴ So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ He said to them, "***But who do you say that I am?***"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, "***You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.***"

¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, ***Simon Bar-Jonah***, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Now watch, He changes his name in Vs 18....

¹⁸ And I also say to you that ***you are Peter***, and on this rock, I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (***Or Hell***) shall not prevail against it.

I want to speak to you this morning for just a moment on "**The Two Elements of Transformation!**"

I'll give you **both elements** right up front!

The two greatest elements in your family, your weak areas, in your life... They are contained in this verse.

The two greatest elements for transformation are **The Church & The Cross!**

The Church & The Cross – I think we need to take a new look at the church, especially in this generation.

- I'm not saying this to get a crowd - I'm saying this because I believe it's **the Truth!!!**

I'm afraid something is happening in people's minds with all of the access of the internet and everything else...

- That Church is ***NOT*** as important as it was a generation ago!!!
- Church is just **something you do** when you feel like it and if it is convenient.

I don't think that **God ever intended** the Church that **He wanted to build...**

- **To be something that** you sit at home in your Pajamas and eat corn flakes while you watch and or listen to me on the internet...
- That's Ok on occasion, or when **you can't** do it.

He never meant for us and as a matter of fact ***the scripture forbids us*** and says:

Hebrews 10:25 NKJV -

Not forsaking *the assembling of ourselves together*, as is the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

CEV - ²⁵ Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting for worship, but we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord's coming is getting closer.

Do NOT forsake the assembling of yourselves together!!!

- As you see the coming of the Lord and the signs of the times as we do now.
- Even more we need to **run to the house of the Lord!**
- AND its' **NOT** just about you...
- **It's about your family** being raised in a *climate or atmosphere* that says **CHURCH IS IMPORTANT!!!**
- We need to celebrate the church again.
- We need to celebrate and love ***God's church!***

Let me say it this way – A good Doctor will keep you out of the hospital, A good lawyer will keep you out of jail, **A good Church will keep you out of HELL....**

- Is that **clear enough** for you?
- That is how ***important*** it is for you!
- That's how ***critical*** it is.

You can be in some area where there is ***no good Church, No good Music, No good preaching, No good ministry for your Children...***

- But **YOUR blessed today, I'm Blessed today.... Hallelujah!!!**

Jesus shows us **the POWER of transformation in the church** when He made the connection to the church and a transformation in Simon Peter's life...

In Vs. ¹⁷ He calls him - ***Simon Bar-Jonah***, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

- But when he gets a revelation of ***who Christ is...***
- He then reveals something to him
- Then he says suddenly, ***I'm Changing your name*** from Simon to Peter...

Vs.¹⁸ And I also say to you that ***you are Peter***, and on this rock, I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (***Or Hell***) shall not prevail against it.

- **Simon means** weak like Sand... And **Peter means** Strong like a rock!!!

The Church has the Power through Jesus Christ and through the Gospel to Transform Lives!

- **The weak** become strong
- **The sand** becomes Rock Solid in your life when –
- You ***get in a church*** and ***continue to faithfully*** attend...
- It will become ***a Transformation Power in your family*** and in your life!!!

2 Corinthians 5:17 - NKJV

¹⁷ Therefore, ***if anyone is in Christ***, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, ***all things have become new.***

If any man be in Christ – **He IS a new creation**

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6 – And he list's this ***long catalogue of sin*** from drunkenness to fornication then he says these words...

1 Corinthians 6:11 - NKJV

¹¹ ***And such were some of you.*** But you were ***washed***, but you were ***sanctified***, but you were ***justified*** in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

But you got into church, -

- You got washed, you got cleansed, you got baptized, and Saved!!!
- And ***NOW*** you are ***NOT*** who you used to be!!!

A Church is Not - A Building with a steeple and a cross on it... **Or the pews**, or chairs, Or a Praise Team, Platform or music!!!

That **DOES NOT** mean it's a church -

If it is not changing lives, if you don't see Transformation: It is **NOT** A Church!

- A True Church Is Transforming lives
- Weak people are becoming **strong**
- People who are **defeated** and **bound** are ***becoming victorious***.
- Families - From Divorce to Love, and forgiveness to restoration!!!

If that is **NOT** happening in your church, then ***IT IS NOT A CHURCH!!!***

People come in with **all kind of ugly messes** in their lives...

- They come in one way but they leave another ...
- They come in all messed up by life but they leave a beautiful bride of Christ.
- **That's what church does.**
- It takes the **weak** and makes them strong
- The **defeated** becomes Victorious

When you're in an **Atmosphere of Transformation** – There is **HOPE!!!**

- There is hope for your marriage
 - There is hope for your addiction
 - There is hope for your weakest place
 - ***IF you'll get in church***, get around God, hear the Word of God
 - ***HE can Transform your life to a place of Victory!***
 - LET'S Praise the Lord ***for TRANSFORMATION!!!!***
 - Tell someone around you **WELCOME TO THE CHURCH...**
-

Here's what I found at church –

- I found a **PARDON** for my past
- I found **POWER** for my Present
- AND I found **PROMISES** for my future!!!

That's why I **believe** in it, that's why I **attend** it, and if I was not a preacher –

- And I don't care how much ***God blesses me...***
- I would be sure that ***my family was in church...***
- Because all that comes **ONLY** through the Church!!!

It is the Priority, It's NOT second to nothing.

- **Everything you have comes out of your connection to God's house.**
- **I firmly believe that – Everything that is Lasting.**

Genesis 2:18 KJV

- ¹⁸ And the LORD God said, **It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.**

Notice the word A Help MEET...

- Do you know what the word **Help MEET means** in the original language?
- You're not going to believe it....
- **God said to Adam** – I'm going to introduce you to your **help meet**.
- Original language means, ***I'm going to introduce you to your other self!***
- I'm going to introduce you to **your completed self**.
- **Eve** is a type of the church.

THE CHURCH is your Help Meet.

- **The church** will help **you meet** every ***challenge in your life***.
- The Church will help you **Meet** the ***sin challenge***
- The Church will help you **Meet** the ***family challenge!***
- Of raising children – even teen agers.
- The Church will help you **Meet** the ***financial challenges*** of life.
- The church will help you **Meet** the ***Physical challenges*** of Life.
- **It's at the church** that you will **Meet** every challenge of life.

It's at **THE CHURCH** you get introduced to **your Other self!**

- I was here, I was that, **But I found a better me, I found my other self!!!**
- **The world and the devil said I was this, BUT I was introduced in a church service To the Real Me, The Better Me, The Other Me...**
- **Not the addicted me, not the defeated me, not the weak me, Not the fearful and depressed me...**
- **BUT - - THE ME that I was created to be!!!**
- And I get ***introduced to my Other self*** through the church!

It's in the church I found out that I am somebody, I'm going somewhere, and I'm going to do something big with my life for God –

Help me preach that!!! - Shout it!!!!

- I am **somebody**
 - I'm going **somewhere** and...
 - I'm doing **something** (BIG) for Jesus Christ with my life!
 - **You Learn that in the Church!** CHILDREN WILL TO....
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Mark 4:35 – NKJV - Wind and Wave Obey Jesus

³⁵ On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, ***“Let us cross over to the other side.”***

Transformation Comes

1. Through the Church
2. Through the preaching and the Power of the Cross

When he said to his disciples, “Let us cross over to the other side, He gave a revelation.”

There're some things you'll never get over without the cross!

- The only way to get over **the abuse** you've been through – is **To Cross over.**
- The **ONLY** way you get over **the divorce**, the **bad deal**, someone **ripped you off** ect...
- The **ONLY** way to get over is to **Cross Over!!!!**
- **THE ONLY** thing that will **get you over is the CROSS!!!**
- The only way to **get free from your sin and shame** is to cross over.

That is the Power of The Cross to Transform your life.

In 2 Kings 6 – There's a story of a building program for the Son's of the Prophet. They needed to enlarge their training center. So the Bible says they were enlarging the place.

- A man had **borrowed an AXE** and he was chopping down trees.
- The **Axe head got loose** and flew off and landed in the Jordan river.
- **It sank down to the bottom** & was **lost in the muck and mire** of the Jordan

There is a real truth I want to give you.

- **Before the Axe head ever got lost, It first got Loose.**

BEFORE ANYTHING EVER GETS LOST, IT FIRST GETS LOOSE...

- Every once in a while **you need to ask yourself –**
- ***Am I getting loose*** in my convictions?
- Am I getting loose in my church attendance?
- Am I getting loose in my tithing supporting the work of the Lord?
- When things start getting loose with your walk with God, with the WORD of God..
- Every now and then you need to get a **brand-new firm grip** on ***Jesus!!!***
- Tighten your grip on Jesus.

I've been around a long time and when you start seeing ***folks getting loose in their convictions***, in their personal standards, **loose with the things they used to thank God for**....

- **When you get loose**, it's just a matter of time before **you start losing!**
- ***Something is going to be lost*** when **you get loose**.

Watch this, the man said Master it was borrowed. The Prophet said, where did it fall?

The Bible said the Prophet **cut off a branch** from the tree.

Watch this – **this tree represents where Jesus shed His blood**, the cross, Calvary.

- And he throws it **in the proximity** of where **the loss took place**.
- And suddenly – **When you get in an atmosphere where the Cross is being preached** in church.
- **That's what I'm doing** – I'm throwing tree limbs.
- You watch – **No matter what you have lost**, I'm throwing you a piece of the cross...
- **If it can just get in the proximity**, just get close to the vicinity to where you are.

Something happened down there on the bottom of that river.....

I can see the nature of **that old Axe head** who wanted to sink to the darkest lowest place with the lowest people.

- But if that stick can ***just get in the proximity*** of a drug addict
- Of an Alcoholic
- Or somebody who's family is falling to pieces.....
- And they are **stuck in the muck** and the mire of **bitterness, hatred, and unforgiveness.**
- Suddenly **that old Ax head** said, **I'm coming up**
- You can **see it shaking off** the muck and mire

One of the ***most miraculous verses in the Bible*** –

2 Kings 6:6 NKJV - ⁶ So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" And he showed him the place. So he cut off a stick, and threw *it* in there; **and he made the iron float.** – **AND THE IRON DID FLOAT!!!!**

- You **don't get** what I'm saying, ***I believe in the Bible.***
- What was **once a sinker** – Now has become a **swimmer...**
- It was **swimming up** – **Catfish probably freaking out.**
- **Your nature** is to plunge to the depths
- **Your nature** is to sink to the lowest of the lowest

But now you have gone from being a sinker to being a swimmer.

- **It's that tree!!! It's that tree!!!!**
- **That tree** is pulling me up out of my addiction
- Pulling me up out of my sin
- Pulling me up out of my condemnation

The turtle says what is going on...

- **I'm going higher**, I'm going to **restoration.**
- **I feel the power of the Cross** and it is **Transforming me** from a sinker to a swimmer.

How many of you remember when you were on the bottom???

- **Oh, you forgot???** Do I need to remind you of our stories???
- How many of you **remember** when you were in the muck and mire?

I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore, very **deeply stained from within**, sinking to rise no more!

- But **the Master** of the sea heard my desperate cry – from the waters **He lifted me!**
- I don't know about you, **But Love lifted me!!!** When nothing else could help. Praise God!!!
- **When I couldn't get the muck and mire off of my life, Love lifted me.**
- AND **it will lift you** to a place of Victory – **It comes through the Cross!!!**
- The Mercy, the Grace, The Blood, **the name of Jesus Christ** -
- **It can lift you!**
- He's made me the **head and NOT the tail.**
- **My Nature** is no longer to plunge to the lowest people and lowest places.

I've **been transformed** by the **renewing** of my mind in the word of God!

- And I am somebody – Going Somewhere – Doing Something BIG for God -
- **With my life & you are too.**
- No matter **how stained you are with Sin.**
- I don't care how low you feel today – how far from God you have sunk
- **Covered with the guilt of muck, mire, shame, and condemnation** - - -
- **You're in the presence** of Calvary, the Cross, the Church can lift you!!!
- **Don't take your life**, I don't care how dark it is.....

I'm throwing the cross **in your proximity!!!!**

- It doesn't matter what you're in today
- I'm throwing **a stick from Calvary.**
- **Your coming out** of it today, you are swimming!!! Out of Addiction, Sin, Condemnation...

THE PRESENCE OF CALVARY IS IN YOUR VICINITY....

- This can be the Sunday that **we point back at hell** and say **we were sinkers, but now we are swimmers...**
- This is the Sunday that **every thing changed in my Nature** and in our family.
- We were sinkers but Now we are swimmers – **our destiny is up; our direction is up.**

- You may be down, but **down is NOT your destiny!**
- ***You are of the one*** who rose on the third day and He said, ***I give you my resurrection Power today...***
- **It cannot hold you**, The tomb, the grave, the muck the mire, the bondage –
- **IT CAN NOT HOLD YOU!!!!**
- The mistake, the bad choice, it cannot cover you.

REACH UP and grab that stick – It will change everything in your life!!!!

Close: - Pastor I came in one way and ***I would like to leave here different*** - -

I came in with a reputation, but ***would like to leave with all things new!***

I need the presence of Calvary to change **my nature** of a *sinker to a swimmer* - -

- **You were not** made to be at the bottom.

Today I've thrown the stick in your proximity ---All you got to do is say **yes Lord**.

Just tell the Lord ***I'm desperate in my life*** ---And ***today I'm reaching up for that stick!***

Final thoughts:

Changing ourselves is a daunting proposition.

True transformation is difficult on our own but becomes a reality through the **CHURCH and the CROSS.**

Why keep struggling to change through our own power when God offers His transformative power to move us from where we are to where we need to be?