

A Transformed Life

Helpful Resources

Map of Palestine in the Time of Christ

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

This week we witnessed a transition in Jesus' ministry, as He began to talk more about His eventual suffering and death. As He would soon endure these difficulties, Jesus warned that His followers too would endure hardships. The Lord has high expectations, and our transition from the old life to the new life comes with its own aches and pains. In this review, we will consider some of the challenges we will face as we are transformed into the image of Christ.

- The Transfiguration

A key moment occurred this week at the transfiguration of Jesus, which three of His disciples witnessed (*Mark 9:2-13; Matt. 17:1-13; Luke 9:28-36*). Of all the things they saw during their time with the Messiah, that event might take the prize, especially when Moses and Elijah showed up, and they heard the voice of God. For a moment, the disciples got to see Jesus in His glorified body, as He will appear after His resurrection. At that moment, they should've known that not even death could stop the Lord.

The word *transfiguration* means to change in form. Jesus changed before their eyes, from what He was to what He will be (or what He was originally, before coming to earth). Just as Jesus was transfigured, the Bible says that His followers will also be transfigured, changed in form, from what we are — sinful, broken, and flawed — to what we will be. One day, we will be like Jesus, sinless, having imperishable, glorified bodies (*Rom. 8:13, 8; 1 Cor. 4:17; 13:12; 15:35-54; Phil. 3:20, 21; Col. 3:4; 1 Jn. 3:2*).

- The Transformed Life

The process of our transfiguration began at salvation. When we were born again spiritually, we became a new creation internally (*2 Cor. 5:17*). However, our new creation is still trapped in our flesh, our sinful, imperfect bodies. For now, the two entities wage war. Our sinful flesh combats our regenerated spirit (*Gal. 5:16, 24, 25; Rom. 7*). God has given us His Spirit to enable us to overcome our flesh and to pursue His desires and expectations. The Holy Spirit uses God's Word, the influence of others, and our circumstances to change our form into the image of Christ. This process is called sanctification (*1 Thess. 4:3; John 17:17*).

While we will not achieve complete sanctification (holiness) in this life, upon the death of our physical bodies (flesh), we will be given new glorified bodies. Though the Lord is working in us now, He will complete His work later (*Phil. 1:6*). We will be wholly transformed into the image of Christ, as Adam was before sin entered the picture. We were created in God's perfect image, and although sin marred that image, He is now re-making us into His image. Thus, there should be evidence of this transfiguration, traits of a life being transformed.

- Traits of a Transformed Life

1. **A Renewing of Our Mind** (*Mk. 8:33; Col. 3:2; Rom. 12:2; Phil. 4:8*): More and more, we should set our minds on God's interests, not man's.
2. **Dying to Self** (*Mk. 8:34, 35; Matt. 16:25; Lk. 9:23, 24*): We will replace our will and ways with the Lord's, laying our lives on the altar daily to follow His lead (*Rom. 12:1*).
3. **Growing in Faith** (*Mk. 9:24; Matt. 17:20*): The trust we have in our sovereign God will replace our fear, doubt, and worry with peace and quiet confidence (*Heb. 11:1, 6*).
4. **Setting an Example for Others** (*Matt. 17:24-27; 18:7*): Knowing others are always watching us, we avoid attitudes and actions that might cause others to stumble or sin.
5. **Replacing Pride with Humility** (*Lk. 9:46-48; Mk. 9:33-37*): Not viewing ourselves more highly than we ought, we instead humble ourselves and put others first (*Phil. 2:3, 4*).
6. **Confronting Our Sin** (*Mk. 9:42-50; Matt. 18:7-10*): We are constantly aware of our shortcomings and take necessary measures to eliminate anything displeasing to God.
7. **Confronting Others' Sins** (*Matt. 18:15-20*): After dealing with our own shortcomings, we humbly and privately seek to restore others (*Gal. 6:1-4*).
8. **Forgiving Others** (*Matt. 18:21-35*): As God has forgiven us our offenses, we also must forgive those who offend us, not seeking revenge or holding grudges.
9. **Dealing with Rejection and Separation** (*Jn. 7:1-9; Matt. 8:18-22*): As the Lord transforms our life, we understand that relationships may change with family and friends.
10. **Pressing Forward** (*Matt. 8:18-22; Lk. 9:57-62*): Forgetting what lies behind (with our old life), we press forward to what lies ahead (*Phil. 3:13, 14*).

This list is not exhaustive, of course, but they are aspects included in our reading this week.

The Bottom Line

God is at work in us, to transform us into the image of His Son, a work that He will complete.

Questions to Consider

1. Have you recognized this transformation in your life? If not, what might that indicate?
2. How have you seen your old life changing into the new life?
3. Review the traits in the list above. Which aspects of the transformed life are the most difficult for you? Explain why.
4. Which of the traits above are you still lacking? You recognize that God is working, but it is still an area of needed improvement.
5. What are some other traits of a transformed life not listed above?
6. Do you recognize the struggle between your sinful flesh and your new spirit-led life? Describe your experiences. How might you counsel a younger believer in this area?
7. Does God expect perfection in you? Explain your answer.
8. The process of sanctification ends with glorification, when God's work in you is complete. To what part of glorification are you most anticipating?