

The Supernatural Power of Transformation
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GFC – 12-30-18

Today I'm speaking on the supernatural power of transformation.

How many of you make New Year's resolutions? How many keep them?

Do you know what the most common New Year's resolutions are?

Top 10 New Year's Resolutions

- 10) Travel More
- 9) Quit Smoking and/or Drinking
- 8) Spend More Time with Family & Friends
- 7) Make New Friends
- 6) Reduce Stress and Enjoy Life More
- 5) Get a New Job
- 4) Learn Something New or Get a Better Education
- 3) Get Out of Debt and Save Money
- 2) Get Organized
- 1) Get in shape by exercising more and losing weight

The interesting thing is that 35% of people break their New Year's resolutions by the end of January and only 23% don't ever break them. That means that 77% of people who make New Year's resolutions don't keep them. Why? Part of it is a lack of commitment.

What we call New Year's resolutions are usually just New Year's wishes.

I wish I could lose weight

I wish I would eat right and exercise

I wish I would pray more and read my Bible

A resolution is much more than a wish. What's the difference?

A wish says, "I hope this happens."

A resolution is saying, "I'm committed to making this happen."

You see, most of us want to be in shape, but we are more committed to eating and entertainment than we are to exercise and eating right.

Most of us want to tithe and give offerings, but we're more committed to spending the money on ourselves.

Most of us want to get out of debt, but we are more committed to getting what we want now rather than saving up to buy something.

Where we are right now in life shows what we are committed to. The decisions we have made in the past have worked perfectly to get us to where we are in life now.

All us of have areas where we need to change or grow. But that change or growth will not happen automatically. It starts with the choice to change and it happens when we are committed to change. That takes resolution. Resolution is a firm decision to do something.

We need resolution, we need commitment and we need determination, but I believe we need something even more than that. All of us have tried to change through sheer willpower and have failed miserably. We all can relate to the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:15-19

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do-this I keep on doing.

Do you ever feel this way?

The things you know you should do, you don't do.

The things you shouldn't do, you do.

Paul is saying this: willpower is not enough. We need something more. That something more is the power of God. That's why we need the supernatural power of transformation.

What Paul is describing is the war we all fight between the spirit and the flesh. Before we are saved, we don't care about what God thinks. We want to live to please ourselves. That's the flesh. But when we are born again, we begin to care about what God wants. Unfortunately, we've lived our whole lives for ourselves and it's a struggle to overcome the flesh and live for God. Paul goes on to describe that struggle in Romans 7:21-25

So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God-through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Paul talks of three laws here: the law of God in the spirit, the law of the flesh and the law of the mind. These three laws relate to the three parts of man: spirit, soul and body. Your spirit man wants to serve God. Your flesh wants to serve yourself. They are at war and that war takes place in your mind. That's where the battle is won or lost.

What you think and what you believe will determine your choices and your actions.

We are all in this war. And there is only one way to win this war. Paul asks, “Who will deliver me?” and then he answers his own question: “Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Jesus is the only way to win this war.

Jesus is the only way to overcome.

There is no other way. That’s why Jesus Himself said in John 14:6

I am the way and the truth and the life.

Remember the three laws we mentioned earlier? Spirit, soul and body? Jesus is telling us in this passage that He is the answer to those three things.

He is the way. The word for way here means “conduct” or “way of life.” That corresponds to our physical life in the flesh. That means Jesus is the Lord of the way we live.

He is also the truth. That means Jesus is the Lord of our soul – of the way we think. He is also the life. The word for live used here is not bios (physical life) or psuche (soul life) but zoe – which is spiritual life – God’s kind of life.

That means Jesus is Lord of our spirit. And that’s where His work in us begins. God works from the inside out. Philippians 2:12-13 says:

Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.

You can’t work something out in your life until God works it in. True change is from the inside out.

How does God work in us? How do we tap into the supernatural power of God? There are many ways, but the two main sources of the power of God are the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Both are needed. Matthew 22:29 says:

You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

All Word without the Spirit of God leads to error.

All Spirit without the Word of God leads to error.

We need both.

The supernatural power of transformation requires the spirit and truth.

And transformation is a process. It takes time.

Even so, growing to spiritual maturity is not an automatic process – you can be old and immature. I don't want us to be that way. I want us to tap into the supernatural power of transformation through the Spirit of God and the Word of God. We access the power of the Spirit through prayer and faith.

And without the power of the Spirit, we will never receive the power of the Word. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says:

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

It takes the Spirit of God to understand the things of God.
It takes the Spirit of God to understand the Word of God.
It takes the Spirit of God to gain the wisdom of God.

So – we need the power of the Spirit and the power of the Word to be transformed. Romans 12:1-2 says:

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Life transformation comes through renewing your mind. The Greek word translated here for renewal does not mean a little change. It means a complete renovation.

Renovation has three stages, tearing down, cleaning up and rebuilding. So, the first stage of renewing your mind is tearing down misbeliefs and wrong thinking. That's why Jeremiah 23:29 says that God's word is like a hammer.

"Is not My word... like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?"

God's word will tear down the things in our life that need to be torn down before it will build us up. Otherwise, you are building on a faulty foundation.

The White House was originally built in 1792, which meant it had old plumbing and no air conditioning. By 1948, the wood beams were on the verge of collapse. So, the two main floors of the building were gutted and completely renovated. For most of his presidency, Harry Truman was not able to live in the house because they literally took out everything inside the walls and rebuilt it. Wood was replaced with steel.

God wants to do that with us, rebuild us from the inside out.
He wants to take out the old way of thinking that will not hold up under pressure.
He wants to get rid of misbeliefs that keep us stuck.
He wants to tear down strongholds that keep us bound.

He will tear all that out and clean us up before He starts to rebuild.

Don't be surprised when God's work begins in you with tearing things down and cleaning things out. You'll probably feel empty and unstable at first. But when God tears down the old, He will rebuild and restore.

And when God restores, the new is better than the old.
The new is stronger and more stable than the old.
The new has more life than the old.

That's because there's life in the Spirit and life in the Word. The Bible is the only book ever written that is alive! There is life in it. Hebrews 4:12 says:

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul & spirit, and of joints & marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

We all love these verses about the power of God's Word. But I wonder if we really understand what it is saying when it says that God's word is sharp and it cuts. What does it cut? US!
God's word will change you, but first it will challenge you.
God's word will build you up, but first it will tear down whatever needs it.
God's word will heal you, but it will first cut you up.

It will divide soul and spirit. It will show you the thoughts and intents of your heart. And that's not always a pretty sight. We think we know ourselves, but God has a way of showing us what's really inside us.

We should be led by the spirit, but sometimes our spirit gets so intertwined with soulish thinking that God has to come in with His Word and divide the soul and spirit.

As long as we are dominated by the soul rather than the spirit, we will be easily overcome.
As long as we are led by our wisdom rather than God's wisdom, we will be easily deceived.
As long as we go our way rather than God's way, we will go the wrong way.

God's answer is His Word.
It will divide soul from spirit so we can live in the freedom of His Spirit.
In other words, the living Word of God comes to divide and conquer!

True change comes through the Word of God.
We all know the Scripture "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." But do we know what comes before that – what it is contingent upon?

John 8:31-32 says:

If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Change comes as we continue in the word. Continue means to stay in a given place - to abide, dwell, remain – to be at home in.

The Amplified Version says: *If you abide in My word (hold fast to My teachings and live in accordance with them), you are truly My disciples.*

In other words, true disciples know the Word AND do the Word.

So, in order for us to experience supernatural change, we need to be people of the Word - people who read the word and hear the word and believe the Word and confess the Word. But we must also DO the word. James 1:22 says:

Be doers of the word, and not hearers only.

Too many of us are waiting for God to do something when we are not even doing the things we know to do.

In order for you to become who you were meant to be, you must abide in the Word of God. True disciples are students of the Word who read it regularly and want to learn everything the Bible has to teach.

Not just for knowing, but for growing.

Not just for information, but for transformation.

Not just to master the Word, but to be mastered by the Word!

You will not change for the better apart from God's Word.

You will not grow in Christ apart from God's Word.

You will not get free apart from God's Word.

Abiding in the word is more than occasionally reading your Bible.

Abiding in the word is more than hearing a sermon once a week.

Abiding in the word means to read the word regularly and then to meditate on the word, which means to think about it through the day.

Joshua 1:8 says:

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Notice that successful people don't just read the Bible – they meditate on it – they think about it – they speak it – they do it – they live it.

So, if we are going to grow as Christians – We need to get God’s Word off our shelves and into ourselves.

Every year, I encourage you read through God’s Word. The majority of Christians say they believe the Bible, yet they’ve never even read it! The average reader can read through the Bible in 1 year in 12 minutes a day.
So, get in the Word. It will change your life!

Now, remember, I said earlier the key to change is willingness. I once heard leadership expert John Maxwell make this statement:
People change when they learn enough that they want to change,
or when they receive enough that they are able to change,
or when they hurt enough that they have to change.

Now you can choose which motivation you respond to. You can change by revelation - you can change by impartation. Or you can change by devastation. You get to choose.

You can see this every time a hurricane hits the coast. Everyone is told by authorities to evacuate before the hurricane, but some chose to stay. Some die and some survive the storm, but afterwards there is no water, no food, no electricity, no phone. Now they are anxious to leave.

The revelation that the storm was coming did not move them.
The impartation of the government’s help to leave did not move them.
What caused change?
Total devastation got their attention and now they’re ready to move.

Too many Christians are like that: always choosing to learn the hard way.
They refuse to change until they hurt so bad they have to.
They wait until their life is falling apart – their family is falling apart – their health is falling apart – their finances are falling apart.
They wait until they hit bottom – until there’s no other option – until there’s no way out except through change.

Unfortunately – many wait too long and the change comes too late to save the marriage or the family or the job. I would rather learn enough to want to change and receive enough that I’m able to change without having to hit bottom first.

What I want to propose to you today is this: with God’s help, you can change now. You can choose change before the point of devastation.

You can start that transformation in your life today!
You supply the willingness and God will supply the power.

Abide in His word and abide in His presence and you will be transformed because there is supernatural power in the word of God!

When you're down it will lift You Up!
When you're lost it will show you the Way!
When you're fearful it will give You Courage!
When you're hurting it will give You Healing!
When you're weak it will give You Strength!
When you doubt it will build your faith!
When you're in despair it will give you hope!
When you're spiritually hungry, it will feed you.
When you feel spiritually dead, it will give you life.
The Bible has the supernatural power to transform us.

I encourage you to take the next step:
If you're not born again, give your life to Christ today.
If you are saved, get filled with the Spirit today.
Let the Spirit and the Word transform you from the inside out!