

**Life Group Topic #31**  
**Is Transformation Really Possible?**

September 20, 2009

**WELCOME:** (15 minutes)

Tell about something you experienced that brought significant change to your life.

**WORSHIP:** (15 minutes)

Use whatever means possible to turn the group's attention to the wonder and majesty of our God- including music, prayer, meditation on the Psalms, and other art forms.

**WORD APPLICATION:** (45 minutes)

Briefly read or paraphrase the following sermon summary before moving to the heart of this section: the discussion around the application questions.

As we launch into the fall season of 2009, we need to slow down long enough to ask the question: What is God asking of us? What does He want of us?

Consider God's master plan for us, his people:

<sup>29-30</sup>God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him.<sup>29</sup> For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son...(Romans 8:29-30)

God's vision for us, before the world began was to bring us into the reign of Christ, and transform us into his likeness. But how does this happen?

**This fall, what will it take to be healthy, growing, transformed to look like Jesus?**

**1. We must be CONNECTED to Him**

**READ: Ephesians 3:17**

There can be no transformation apart from being inextricably tied into Jesus, like the branches to the vine where it draws its nourishment. We are not talking here about a few routine prayers or 5 minutes reading the Daily Bread. Prayer must be the defining posture of our life. Prayer must be keeping company with God throughout the day. Our spiritual life must not be defined by little pieces of the day/week but by a life, centered in Jesus; by a love that captures all our heart, soul and mind.

**2. We must be CONNECTED to each other**

**READ: Philippians 1:9**

When I say "connected to each other" I don't mean simply gathering with other Christians in a service or meeting. I mean surrounding yourself with a few others, who you will covenant to love deeply, and to be deeply loved. I mean committing yourself to a few others who have

permission to ask the tough questions, who will pray with you, who journey with you, who will help you shape your life according to God's purposes.

Jesus chose a 12 people to whom he showed the full extent of his love. We all need authentic face-to-face biblical community if we are to be transformed. You may find these people among your friendships; you may find them in small groups in Men's or Women's ministries, and we pray that we would find this in one of our Life Groups.

### **3. We must SERVE together.**

Listen to God's view of what the church is all about: **READ Ephesians 4:15, 16.**

To each one of us God has given gifts through his Spirit. These gifts are given us so that we might serve, not as individuals, but rather within the context of community. We must erase the paradigm that sees the church primarily as a building where we sit and receive. The Body of Christ is called both to serve one another and to serve the world.

And in all our service to each other and in the world, we must be certain that the goal is nothing less than making disciples. By that I mean we are not just trying to make life better for others, but to bring them under the reign of Christ, so they might also be transformed by his power.

Not only should these principles (#1-#3) increasingly define who we are, but we are calling others to join us in this pursuit. *We want more and more people to come under the reign of Christ in our city, so that more and more are transformed into the character of Christ. This is God's magnificent master plan!*

#### **Word Application Questions:**

**Please keep in mind that these questions are meant as catalysts designed to get the group talking about life application.**

1. Read and meditate on Romans 8:29-30. How would you describe God's master plan for people?
2. If God's purpose is to shape us into the image of Jesus Christ, does that mean our unique personalities and temperaments are obliterated in order to make us clones of Jesus?
3. What evidence do you see in your own life of Christ-like transformation?
4. Is your life well-positioned for spiritual health and growth? If not, what are the barriers that might need to be removed?
5. Consider the three fundamental steps to transformation discussed above. Which area is the weakest in your life? In the life of our Life Group?
6. READ Ephesians 4:15-16. Does our Life Group function in such a way that "each one does its special work" in building up the whole group? How can we better facilitate the use of everyone's gifts to build up the group?

**WITNESS: (15 minutes):** This section is a vision-casting time designed to get the group strategizing and making concrete plans towards reaching outward to a lost world. Relational outreach always has the goal of ultimately enfolding those we reach into the Life Group.