

Seek Transformation of Your Life Through Christ



When I think of transformation, I think of what happened to my husband Hal. When Hal and I were first married we had severe marital problems. These were compounded by his father's terminal illness and his mother's mental break down causing us to become their caregivers at the young age of 27. Hal was extremely critical and even cruel in his comments and dealings with me. He was often harsh and refused to help with our three small children. When I was overwhelmed with taking care of his parents, one who was dying and one who was in extreme mental crises, he would tell me, "You just handle it. If you were more organized, it would not be a problem." I grew to despise my husband. I told him I wanted a divorce.

After the death of Hal's father, we entered into marriage counseling. We were so volatile that we saw the counselor separately. Our marriage was in a terminal condition. For all purposes it had been destroyed. There was just debris left.

Our counselor was a high priest in the church and during one session Hal asked to be administered to. The Holy Spirit had entered Hal's heart previously to this session causing him to have a spirit of humility and repentance. A Spirit of extreme humbleness reigned in Hal's heart at that moment and during that administration a burning warmth came down through Hal's body starting at his head, where the counselor's hands were placed, and ending at his waist. Hal said he had never felt such a thing before.

At my session the next day, the counselor told me that he believed something extraordinary had taken place when he administered to Hal, for he said a burning came down through his head, into his arms and hands and poured into Hal. He was not sure what had happened, but he knew that something very unusual had taken place.

Hal was changed, transformed from that moment on. He was kind, considerate, helpful, and loving. It was absolutely amazing! It was such a sudden and drastic transformation that I had trouble believing it was real, but eventually I had my own experience that God had truly changed him.

Hal would tell you that for quite a long time, after that transforming administration and burning warmth, his loving and considerate actions were just automatic. He did not have to even think about it, it just came naturally. But then one day God spoke to his mind and said, "You did not know how to love but my spirit has taught you. Now you must choose to do that which you have been taught." Later he was spoken to by an Elder in the church and told that he did not know how to love but God had given him the gift of love and as long as he stayed close to God that gift would be his but if he drifted away, he would lose it.

Much later, our counselor told us that in the beginning he did not see how our marriage could be saved. He said he did not know how to help us and prayed mightily for God's help. He firmly believed the restoration of our marriage was indeed a miracle.

There is no doubt that God did transform Hal and gifted him with love, yet he was given his agency whether or not to continue to choose living out that transformation. God never takes away our agency. God transforms us in many different ways. Sometimes it is dramatic as in Hal's situation, sometimes it is slowly over a period of time but always we have our agency. My transformation, where love for Hal was restored once again in my heart, happened slowly, over time but it was still a dramatic transformation. We must choose what voice we will listen to and who we will follow and obey. I believe God's transforming power is available to all of us in many different ways, but our hearts must be softened, we must be humble or made humble by the power of God's Spirit to be truly transformed.

To be transformed into the children of Christ we have to first experience the “Mighty Change of Heart” brought about by the Holy Spirit. King Benjamin’s people were able to do that but only after they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth and had humbled themselves.



Digging Deeper

The Words of Christ, by Ray Zinser - (Chapter 4, p.51-52)

1. Zinser speaks of Strategic Moments in our lives: God knows the strategic moments in our lives and allows the Comforter to inspire “strategic angels” to come into contact with us to inspire us and to incite in us “strategic transformation”. *And also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually (Mosiah 3:3)*. Read Alma’s transforming experience in *Alma 17:5-19*.
2. Zinser on Strategic Worship: In the “strategic worship” experiences in congregational prayer and testimony meetings (whether in Sunday services, camps, reunions, or similar meetings) when conditions of “Zion” are met, that is ...*Because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness (Genesis 7:23)*. It is in that setting that “strategic transformation” is brought about by the comforter. The comforter “which knoweth all things” knows how to give special spiritual incentive so that perceptions and feelings are changed and thereby habits, actions, or tendencies are changed.
3. Zinser on the transforming power of the word of God: Responding positively to the words of Christ requires an act of agency. Men, women, youth, and children must voluntarily

hearken and hear and obey and when they do, the mysteries of God may be unfolded to their view. The unfolding process includes both revelation and inspiration to the person. The revelation and inspiration become a transforming power within the lives of people. People literally come alive. They become “Begotten sons and daughters of God”. *And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:18)*.

4. Zinser Comments on Transforming “Natural Man” to “Spiritual Man”: Transformation comes only by the light of the everlasting words of Christ. *Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awaked them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God. Behold they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless, their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word (Alma 3:11-12)*. Behavior changes or transformation occurs when one voluntarily chooses through one’s agency to obey the words of Christ...The power of transformation comes by the power of the Holy Spirit and the illuminating truth comes through the everlasting words of Christ. To become “begotten sons and daughters of God we must come under the influence of the Holy Spirit or Comforter. (Page 312)



Action Section

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Zinser in his book, “*The Words of Christ*”, chapter 19 talks about the process necessary to be changed or transformed. Let us consider this process in our own lives and work towards becoming that “Spiritual Man” that God calls us to become. Let us be **Transformed** and made ready to meet our Lord and Savior when He returns. Zinser says: “We can identify a series of stages which “natural man” must go through to become “Spiritual Man”.

The crucial stages for us to follow today to become “Spiritual Man” are as follows:

1. **Yielding one’s heart to God** = Either internal conditions (values & attitudes) or external conditions (crises & non-crises) or some combination of internal and external conditions incite a person to see the need to repent...Internal influences stimulated by personal worship may create the incentives for the yielding process. Coming under the influence of the Holy Ghost in a congregation of the Saints in prayer and testimony meeting may also be a powerful incentive for a person to repent. External crises influences may give incentive for people to return to the faith they were taught. Any form of yielding one’s heart to God is a response to repentant attitudes. *Nevertheless, they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God (Helaman 2:31).*
2. **Repentance = “Natural Man” sees himself as the center of the universe while “Spiritual Man” sees God as the center**...Zinser concludes that repentance and humility come together to transform us into the “Spiritual Man”. *And again: Believe that ye must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God; and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you (Mosiah 2:16).*
3. **Prayer is the vehicle for the 4 stages of worship which are = Praise, Repentance, Affirmation of Faith and Covenant.** These 4 stages allow individuals to meet the needs, wants, problems, opportunities and responsibilities they are involved in each day in a manner similar to Jesus. *But this is not all: ye must pour out your souls in your closets, and your secret places, and in your wilderness (Alma 16:221).*
4. **Fasting** = There is an inseparable connection between prayer, fasting and study. We must be in prayer continually to have constant communion with God through Jesus, and we must pray

and fast so that we can receive the ministry of the Holy Ghost to inspire us emotionally so that our lives may be transformed from the “Natural Man” state to the “Spiritual Man” state....Fasting is a spiritual link between prayer and study. *Verily this is fasting and prayer; or, in other words, rejoicing and prayer (Doctrine & Covenants 59:3b).*

5. **Study** = To study is to search and ponder the Word of Christ. This suggests a daily prayer and thoughtful study of the scriptures. Searching and pondering the scriptures are requirements for the “Spiritual Man” in time and eternity. *Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand; and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again (3 Nephi 8:3).*
6. **Firmer and Firmer in the Faith** = Once we are committed in our belief system, we are called to carry out the commitments in all our decisions and action patterns. *And now, if you believe all these things, see that ye do them (Mosiah 2:17).*
7. **Joy and Consolation** = Joy and consolation results from firmer and firmer commitment to the faith expressed in Christ where “wholeness” brings joy and consolation. *Therefore they gave thanks unto the Lord their God: yea, and they did fast much and pray much, and they did worship God with exceeding great joy (Alma 21:2).*
8. **Zinser brings this list to conclusion with Purification and Sanctification saying =**
 - A. Yielding one’s heart to God.
 - B. Prayer, Fasting and Study.
 - C. Humility.
 - D. Being Firmer and Firmer in the Faith.
 - E. Joy and Consolation.

These eight stages make it possible to free ourselves from sin or debasing thoughts and deeds. If we are not freed from defilement we will be destroyed.