

We are in a transformation process! Feels great, doesn't it? It's exciting to know that we are being changed more and more into the image of Christ Jesus!

- I'm talking about our sanctification process that began the moment we surrendered our lives to Christ Jesus, confessed our sins, and received the new life that only Jesus can give. Like we said a few weeks ago, we couldn't get any more saved than that!
- But what we have to understand was that even though our Spirit man was 100% transformed from death to life, our Soul, our mind will and emotions, still has to conform to the image of Christ.

This is an exciting journey, and in this series we've been sharing with you some things we all can do to help or hinder this process of transformation in our lives.

Last week, we talked about the vital role that Godly relationships play in our transformations, and I hope that you joined a Life Group this week, if not, what are you waiting for? Join one today!

Today, I want to share with you another, oftentimes overlooked, action that you can take to expedite Spiritual transformation in your life! Transformation leaps forward when you participate in “Transformation Celebration!”

Transformation Celebration

That is, when you celebrate the fact that you are dead to your sins and alive to God in Christ, by being obedient to the command of Jesus to be water baptized! Baptism is a huge part of our spiritual transformation and it should be celebrated!

First and foremost, we should be celebrating that our Spirit man was totally transformed at salvation! That's worth celebrating isn't it?

But we should also be celebrating that the transformation of our soul is continuing.

- When it comes to Celebrating Transformation with Water Baptism, Pastor Scott has shared with me that he really can't explain it, and I really can't explain it either, but both of us agree that something just happens within you when you are water baptized!
- It's a spiritual thing that's hard to put in words. It's sort of like trying to explain what happens within when you receive Jesus as your savior. You know something wonderful and powerful has happened but it's hard to describe. The same is true for water baptism.

Why Does Baptism Accelerate the Transformation Process?

1. Maybe it's the resolve that comes from a public declaration.

Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved

Next Sunday, we are going to have a very public water baptism for all to see. Several people will be baptized, and this will be a very, very special time; a defining moment for them.

They will make public declarations that they have been transformed by Christ Jesus and that they will be continuing in a transformation process of their mind, will, and emotions.

Now most of us realize that transformation isn't always easy. Sometimes we are hard headed. Sometimes we think we still live by the standards of this world. Sometimes we willfully participate in our old sinful nature.

But as people make this public declaration, it will give them the fortitude and the resolve to continue to “die to self” and continue to let Christ Jesus live through them, and change them into His image.

- **In Baptism, we declare that Jesus has forgiven us all our sins.**

Colossians 2:12-13 ...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, (NIV)

That's worth celebrating! Don't be ashamed of what Jesus has done for you! Declare it! Celebrate it!

Why Does Baptism Accelerate the Transformation Process?

2. Maybe it's the fact that you are doing what Jesus told you to do.

To be transformed into the image of Christ you are going to have to learn to quickly do what Jesus tells you to do. And the first act of obedience after salvation is water baptism.

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Jesus' call for us to believe in Him also includes a call to be baptized, showing us the importance and high value that the Lord places on Baptism.

Notice that even though we are expected to be baptized, Baptism is not what saves us, the believing does. "He who does not believe will be condemned."

Baptism is an outward display of an inward change.

Many of you have made a faith decision. Have you gone public?

Have you obeyed Christ's words and entered the waters of New Testament Baptism?

- Some say, "I trust Christ with my eternity. I trust Christ with my forgiveness. But, I'm going to balk at the first test of obedience. I'm going to balk at Baptism."
- You don't want to start your spirit-filled walk of obedience to Christ Jesus with a blatant act of DISS-obedience.

Next Life Transformation Step: If you profess Jesus, but haven't obediently been baptized, ask yourself why and give your answer to Christ Jesus.

Why Does Baptism Accelerate the Transformation Process?

3. Maybe it's that you realize you are being transformed into your new identity.

- You realize as you move forward in this transformation process you are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

In water baptism, a Christian is bodily submerged in water as a public identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our old sinful nature symbolically dies under the water.

Romans 6:3-6 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-

Romans 6:11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

When we come up out of the water, we come up as a new person in Christ Jesus. We are no longer controlled by sin, but we are alive in Christ Jesus! Dead to sin, alive in Christ!

Were you selfish?	That's dead.
Were you manipulative?	That's dead.
Were you bitter?	That's dead.
Were you an alcoholic?	That's dead.
Were you addicted to drugs or even nicotine?	That's dead.
Were you sexually immoral?	That's dead.
Did any other sin control your life before?	That's dead.

Now that you are dead to your old sinful nature, you can move forward in your transformation process and stop doing those things.

Romans 6:1-4 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Walk in this newness of life! Walk out this transformation process! Enjoy it!

- You realize that you have received fullness in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 2:9-10 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

The spiritual void is now filled. The world tried to tell you how to fill that spiritual void in your life, but conforming to the ways of the world didn't work! We realize now that our only fulfillment is living according to God's standards and being transformed into this fullness of Christ.

Why Does Baptism Accelerate the Transformation Process?

4. Maybe it's that you are taking your Next Step to Continue in Jesus.

Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,

I John 2:28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

When does this transformation process end? When we stand before Jesus completely transformed Spirit, Soul, and Body. Until then, continue to be transformed. Carry on in Christ Jesus.

Why Does Baptism Accelerate the Transformation Process?

5. Maybe it's that you know you now belong to the Body of Christ.

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many ...” 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Baptism is an outward picture of something that has occurred within. No matter what your background or ethnic origin, by one Spirit, we are baptized into one body.

- Baptism represents your adoption into the family of God. You now belong to Christ's family and are members of His Body.

When new believers are baptized, we are welcoming them into our family.

We are saying, "This person is now one of us!" As a family, we can love, support, care, and pray for one another.

As you are baptized you can breathe easy and say, "I am now a new creation in Christ Jesus, the old has passed away and all things are new! I am now baptized into the Body of Christ Jesus. I am part of His family."

Knowing that you are part of this family of God and a vital part of the Body of Christ, you can be assured that your transformation will not stop until Christ Jesus has completed His work in you!

Philippians 1:6 ...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Celebrate Your Transformation Into The Image of Christ

2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Celebrate with water baptism.

Next Life Transformation Step: I will be Celebrate my Transformation by being water baptized next Sunday, 01-28-18. _____ 9 am or _____ 11 am

Life App Group and Family Devotional Application

1. If you have been water baptized, share your experience and why it was important for you to do.
2. How did being water baptized give you a sense of resolve to continue in Christ Jesus?
3. Why do you think water baptism is so "down played" in our world today? Why are people so reluctant to do what Jesus has asked them to do?
4. Who do you know that would respond well to you encouraging them and nudging them to be water baptized?