

THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD #7

“Supernatural Transformation”

We have been teaching on “The Power of God’s Word” and what it will do for you.

Review

We have seen that God’s Word is how faith comes. (Romans 10:17)

We have seen that God’s Word is the agent of the new birth. (1 Peter 1:23)

How God’s Word is our spiritual food, our daily bread. (Matthew 4:4)

We have seen how God’s Word gives us victory over Satan. (Revelation 12:10)
And victory over sin.

Now tonight I want to show you how the Holy Spirit uses the power of God’s Word to supernaturally transform us into the very image of Jesus Christ; I call this the miracle of...

“Supernatural Transformation”

I am not speaking of change-I’m talking about transformation.
And not transformation by natural means-will power; religious activity-but true spiritual transformation!

Our text is from Paul’s 2nd letter to the church at Corinth...

2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

This verse gives us the keys we need to know to experience...

I. Supernatural Transformation

A. Take a Look at the Text

1. “We all”-this means that the promise here is not just for a few “super-spiritual” people; God expects all of us to become more like Jesus.

2. “With unveiled face -Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord”: the Greek word for ‘beholding’ means to look at a reflection-it means that the Word of God is like a mirror; it reflects the fullness of the glory of God in Christ and in the Gospel...

God’s glory is reflected to us in the mirror of God’s word!

3. When we open the Bible it’s like opening a compact mirror which reflects the glory of God; as we read and study it we are “beholding” the glory of God and a miracle takes place...:

2 Corinthians 3:18

As we behold His glory we are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.

The Greek word translated “transformed” is “metamorphoo”, from which we get the English word “metamorphosis” which means “to change into a different substance or form,

- What do we do? We simply “Behold”; we look at God’s glory in His word.
- What does God do? He supernaturally transform us into the image of Christ.
- How? By the Spirit of God!

The Holy Spirit supernaturally transforms us into the image of Christ as we behold the glory of the Lord in the mirror of God’s Word.

4. The Greek verb is the continual present; we are being changed “from glory to glory”; the change is gradual.

The Pulpit Commentary

“The present tense implies a gradual transfiguration, a mystical and spiritual change which is produced in us while we contemplate Christ, from glory to glory. Our spiritual assimilation to Christ comes from his glory and issues in a glory like His.”

5. Being more like Jesus does not come by church membership or a lot of religious activity...

Supernatural transformation comes by beholding the glory of the Lord in the mirror of God’s Word.



a. How does a pussycat become like the Lion of Judah? By spending time in the Word of God!

b. In the Book of Acts, 2 fishermen (Peter and John) performed a great miracle that astounded the religious leaders.

Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were *uneducated and untrained men*, they marveled. And they realized that *they had been with Jesus*.

c. They had spent 3 years with Jesus; now they were doing what He did!

d. Jesus is in Heaven; but we can still behold His glory in His Word; and when we do we will become more like Him.

6. This is one of the one of the greatest spiritual principles you can ever know: beholding produces becoming.

7. God has designed us to become more like whatever we consistently look at.

a. The English poet William Blake said it this way:

“You become what you behold.”

William Blake

1757-1827

B. We Become What We Behold

1. God made us out of clay; we are impressionable; and there is supernatural power in the images around us that shapes us more than we realize!

2. We know this from natural experience!

- We pick up habits and speech patterns from those around us
- Our young people put posters of rock stars on their walls and soon have haircuts and body art to match
- We become what we behold

a. This is not a new thing; one of the Puritans wrote this:

“It is a law of our nature that we are molded, in our moral feelings, by the persons with whom we associate, and by the objects which we contemplate.

We become insensibly assimilated to those with whom we have social contact, and to the objects with which we are familiar.

“We imbibe the opinions, we copy the habits, we imitate the manners, we fall into rite customs of those with whom we have daily conversation, and whom we make our companions and friends. Their sentiments insensibly (without our realizing it) become our sentiments, and their ways our ways.

3. Notice this is quite supernatural; it all takes place without any conscious effort on our part; we become what we behold. He goes on...

“So it is thus with the books (today it would include movies and TV shows) with which we are familiar. We are insensibly, but certainly molded into conformity to the opinions, maxims, and feelings which are there expressed. Our own sentiments undergo a gradual change, and we become like those with whom we converse.

4. Transformation can be toward the good or toward the bad; it all depends on what we look at most.

Romans 12:2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. *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.*

a. This seems to say we will be conformed to something.

b. There are 2 options: conformed to this world or transformed by the renewing of our mind.

5. The primary way we renew our minds is by the Word of God!

a. The Greek word for “renewing” means “a renovation; a complete change for the better”!

6. All the great religions of the world have a “Book”; Islam has the Koran; Hindus have the Vedas; the Latter Day Saints have the Book of Mormon; but only Christianity has a Book that has the power to transform us into the very image of the One who wrote it!

C. This is Not a New Revelation!

1. This miracle of supernatural transformation is not a new revelation: many great men of God have taught it.

a. American theologian Albert Barnes:

Albert Barnes
(1798-1870)

“Christians, by looking on the gospel, see the glorious perfections of God as a light reflected from the surface of a mirror and thence reflected to the eye and the heart of the Christian; this has the effect of transforming them into the same image.”

b. Scottish philosopher James McCosh:

James McCosh
(1811-1894)

“The Spirit carries on the work of sanctification by making us look unto Jesus, and whatever we look to with admiration and love we are disposed willingly, sometimes almost involuntarily, to imitate. We grow in likeness to Him whom we love and admire.”

He notes the cooperative nature of the work; we do the “beholding”; the Holy Spirit does the transforming....

James McCosh

“What He does in us He does by us. It is when we are beholding the glory of the Lord Christ that the Spirit changes us into the same image from glory to glory. The Spirit directs our eyes to Christ, and it is when we look to the Lord Christ that we are changed into the same image.”

c. Another Scottish minister, Andrew MacLaren agrees:

Andrew MacLaren

(1826-1910)

“The apostle proclaims the great principle of Christian progress: that the beholding of Christ leads to the assimilation to Him. To be like Christ, we must look upon Him intently. Then, on the Divine side, there is the inward change. As we look, the Spirit works within.”

2. The bottom line is that we become what we behold; to become more like Jesus we have to “behold” Him in His glory in the mirror of the Word; as we do that, the Holy Spirit produces the supernatural transformation that makes us more like the Lord.

The Biblical Illustrator

“Surely this message –‘behold and be like’ -- ought to be very joyful and enlightening to many of us, who are wearied with painful struggles after isolated pieces of goodness that elude our grasp. You have been trying half your lifetime to cure faults, and make yourselves better. Try this other plan. Live in sight of your Lord, and catch His spirit.”

III. Let Me Conclude With A Question

A. What is God’s Ultimate Purpose?

1. I’ve asked Christians this question for many years and am always amazed at many get it wrong:

- He wants to bring us to heaven
- He wants to give us blessings and prosperity

2. God has many good purposes but only one ultimate purpose; one great goal; stated here:

Romans 8:28-29 NKJV

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

a. The great Puritan George Walker said:

“Likeness to Christ is the aim of all religion. Doctrines, ceremonies, church services are helps only in proportion as they show us the Savior, the image of whom is our perfectness, the beholding of whom is our transformation.”

3. Here is why God saves us; this is what He wants of us; this is what’s behind all He allows us to go through; He is working all things for this one thing!

Charles Spurgeon

“Conformity to Christ is the ultimate end of God’s decree. I do not read that the saints are predestinated to paradise, but to be conformed to the image of His dear Son, that He may be the first-born among many brethren.”

a. If there’s any one yardstick to measure whatever that’s going on in your life it’s this!

“God’s ultimate goal for your life is not comfort but character development. He wants you to grow up spiritually and become like Christ.”

Rick Warren

4. This message tonight teaches us how He does it! We become what we behold! It’s in the power of God’s word! Don’t be impatient!

George Walker (1581-1651)

“Our transformation comes gradually. ‘We are changed’ is a continuous operation. ‘From glory to glory’ is a course which has well-marked transitions and degrees. Be not impatient if it be slow. Do not be complacent over the partial transformation which you have felt. See to it that you neither turn away your gaze nor relax your efforts till all that you have beheld in Him is repeated in you.”

5. The power of the Holy Spirit works supernatural transformation in us as we behold the glory of the Lord in His Word!

6. Let me leave with these words from the great “Prince of Preachers”:

Charles Spurgeon

How much therefore should Christians prize and improve these privileges! We should not rest contented without an experimental knowledge of the transforming power of the gospel, by the operation of the Spirit, bringing us into a conformity to the temper and tendency of the glorious gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

CLOSE WITH COMMUNION AND PRAYER

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