

TRANSFORMATION IN CHRIST

'Not that I am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.'

(Phil 3:12)

Words of Life

Day 1:

The Holy Spirit is at work in you. He wants to change you, to give you a better life, to make you holier. You can rely on him and his work in your life. Jesus did not leave you on your own to work things out.

God's word promises:

'God is at work in you for his own loving purposes, and he puts both the will and action into you.'

(Phil 2:13)

Day 2:

Never let this truth dim in your mind: there is nothing as worthwhile as knowing Christ and belonging to him. Your greatest treasure is the life you have in Christ. Give up everything to keep that life and grow in it. God's word says:

'I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the Supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For him I have accepted the loss of everything, and I look on everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ and be given a place in him.'

(Phil 3:8-9)

Day 3:

Sometimes you will run into trials. Friends will must understand you, your family may try to make you give up, you will experience doubts, fears, confusion. But all these things can be means of growth and change for the better if you go through them and faith. God's word promises:

'My brothers, you will always have your trials, but when they come treat them as a happy privilege; you understand that your faith is only put to the test to make you patient, but patience too is to have its practical results so that you will become fully developed, complete, with nothing missing.'

(Jas 1:2-4)

Day 4:

God is with you. Never forget that. He loves you and is with you and will never desert you. No matter what trial you have to face, the LORD WHO LOVES YOU IS WITH YOU. God's word promises:

'The trials that you have had to bear are no more than people normally have. You can trust God not to let you be tried beyond your strength, and with any trial he will give you a way out of it and the strength to bear it.'

(I Cor 10:13)

Day 5:

If you are faithful to God and love him, everything will work out to your good. There is nothing that will happen to you that will not be a source of deeper and better life to you. The Lord brings good out of evil. His word promises:

'We know that by turning everything to their good God co-operates with all those who love him, with all those he has called according to his purpose.'

(Rom 8:28)

Day 6:

You cannot be fully united to Christ without being united to the body of Christ. If you love Christ, love his body, love those who belong to him. If you want to belong to Christ, join yourself to his body, stay close to other Christians. God's word says:

'Just as each of our bodies has several parts and each part has a separate function, so all of us, in union with Christ, form one body, and as parts of it we belong to each other.'

(Rom 12:4-5)

Day 7:

Jesus will work in your life through the church and through other Christians. He wants you to take a care for the life of the Christian community and for helping other Christians. Be faithful to the meetings of the Christians who have helped you find new life in the Spirit. God's word says:

'Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. Do not stray away from the meetings of the community, as some do, but encourage each other to go.'

(Heb 10:24-25)

Study:

This week the two chapters we will read are about the resurrection of Jesus and our resurrection:

John 20, Revelations 21

Brother or sister,

If you had been given a million pounds, you would guard it very carefully. You have been given something of much more value. Guard it very, very carefully. It is worth giving your life for.

Jesus told a story about a merchant in search of fine pearls. He said:
'The Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls: when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.'

(Matt 13:45-46)

The pearl of great value is the Kingdom of God; it is life lived under the reign of God; it is God himself. Give up anything for this pearl.

Jesus says to you, *'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me.'*

(Jn 14:1)

Have no fear, God is with you and he loves you. He will care for you. With him in you nothing can overcome you.

All your problems have not yet been solved. You are not yet perfect. But you have the way, the truth and the life. You are on the path to eternal glory.

'After seeing this, what can we add? With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

(Rom 8: 31-39)