The Way God Changes Us

Message Notes

Tension

- The goal of discipleship is really **a new you.**
  - The old you
    - Powerless against sin
    - Contaminated with sin
    - Lost
  - Jesus wants to transform you, and form you.
- What we have seen in true disciples:
  - A new nature
  - Fruit of the spirit
  - God working through them
- I can promise you that life is better when Christ changes you!

Transition - Last week we saw that Jesus wants to change us with God moments and spiritual rhythms. This week I want to give you two more ways that God transforms you.

Two Ways God Transforms You:

Relationships

1. For a moment, consider how important relationships were to Jesus.
2. Mark 3:13-15 (ESV) 13 And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. 14 And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) **so that they might be with him** and he might send them out to preach 15 and have authority to cast out demons
3. Acts 4:13 (ESV) Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that **they had been with Jesus.**
4. How Jesus did it:
    1. Proximity - they were close!
        1. Like a family vacation that didn't end!
    2. Consistently - for three years they were together!
    3. He was lifting them

        1. Lifting their understanding
        2. Lifting their confidence
5. How I have been formed - RELATIONSHIPS
    1. People who have shaped me
6. You have been shaped by people
    1. Teachers
    2. Coaches
    3. Parents
7. You need spiritual relationships to help form you!
    1. You need lateral Christian relationships
        1. Real and honest
        2. Encouraging
        3. Pushing you closer to Christ
    2. You need upward Christian relationships
        1. All of you need someone in your life that is ahead of you in the game.
        2. You need someone who has been there, done that, and knows what lies ahead.
8. Action point
    1. CONNECT! Make every intention to deeply connect.
    2. PURSUE! Find someone who you admire deeply and pursue a relationship with them.
9. **Christ is being formed in you by the relationships around you!**

Identity

1. One thing is for sure, Jesus worked on the identity of his disciples. He challenged who they were and called out who they were becoming.
    1. Ask Peter how his identity changed
        1. John 1:41-42 (NLT) 41 Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means “Christ”). 42 Then Andrew brought Simon to meet Jesus. Looking intently at Simon, Jesus said, “Your name is Simon, son of John--but you will be called Cephas” (which means “Peter”).
    2. Ask John, who together with his brother was called the sons of the thunder, then Jesus changed John so drastically that he was called the **apostle of love.**
    3. Ask Mary Magdalene, who was known as demonically possessed woman, but she became the first person who saw Jesus after his resurrection.
    4. Ask Zaccheus, who was known as an extortioner, but became the most generous man in Jericho.
2. How change really happens:

    1. Your behavior follows what you believe to be true about yourself.
    2. James Clear, in his book *Atomic Habits*, talks about how important your sense of identity is in changing your habits.
        1. His wife memorized all the names of the people in her class. From that point on she saw herself as a person who remembered names.
        2. Some people try to stop smoking, but the successful ones say “I am not a smoker.”
        3. Some people try to start playing the violin, but the successful ones say, “I am a musician.”
    3. So the way to truly change as a person is to accept a new identity!
3. Your mind needs to be renewed!
    1. Romans 12:2 (NLT) Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think**. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.
    2. Basically, you need to think differently. You need to think more like Him.
4. This is where identity teaching comes in.
    1. Identity teaching is teaching that say “who am I now because of Christ?”
    2. Identity needs to be received, not invented.
    3. Identity precedes transformation.
    4. Identity is basically “In Christ.”
5. This is identity teaching
    1. From Slave to Son - Romans 8:15 (NLT) So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.”
    2. From Outsider to Citizen - Ephesians 2:19 (NLT) So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God’s holy people. You are members of God’s family.
    3. From Dead to Alive - Ephesians 2:1 (NLT) Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!)
    4. From Slave to Free - John 8:35-36 (NLT) 35 A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.
    5. From Lost to Sent - 2 Corinthians 5:20 (NLT) So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!”
    6. You need to know what died
    7. You need to know what is true
    8. You need to know how to live
6. The more you become convinced of who God has already made you to be in Christ, you are maturing as a disciple!

Closing

- Christ brought people together in proximity so he could change who they were!

    - By the time he was through, Simon was Peter, Zaccheaus was generous, Mary Magdalene was devout, Thomas was a believer.
- Some people here are still hanging on to old identities
    - Your worst moment
    - Your divorce
    - Your addiction
    - But God wants to change your identity!