

Putting On the
New Man
EPHESIANS

“SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION”

Eph 4:24

“Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

I read some where - a new world order of peace, - prosperity and safety can only be accomplished by a God having authority and power. This invisible author reads like Paul's writings when he said, “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible” (Heb 11:3).

Obviously, he was thinking back to Gen 1, where nine times it says, “God said.” Every time God spoke, it came to pass. This is the enormity of the power of God's word. With God's word having so much power, what all does it have power to do?

One: God's word has the power to transform human nature, to **having a** Godly spiritual nature, called putting on the new man! **Example**, when our family was called into God's church over 50 years ago, the church sermons were giving advice on God's dietary laws, called clean and unclean foods, found in Lev 11 and Deut 14.

White sugar was out, brown sugar or honey was in. Pasteurized milk was questioned, eating cold cereal was a no-no. White flour was not to be used, white bread was unhealthy and not to be eaten. We were encouraged to use real butter, not imitation butter like margarine. And we were to drink raw milk not pasturized milk

I remember our Sabbath morning breakfast was putting a hand full of wheat grain into a thermos bottle on Friday night, then filling the thermos up with hot water and seal it shut. After sitting all-night, the grain would swell up and be ready to eat for our Sabbath breakfast.

With all that health food advice and living a healthy farmers life in the city, we decided to move out of the city— kinda. We move to an outer edge of a city where we could raise chickens and have our own home grown eggs, along with raising a variety of

animals.

We found a small fixer upper house on a half acre, zoned for animals. So we had chickens, a couple sheep, a few milking goats, a Shetland pony. We also boarded a couple horses and a pet Jersey cow— named Tinker Bell. We were really living the righteous life, eating out of our own vegetable garden. We were now hooked on healthy foods and loving to have our own **fresh eggs** and eating our own healthy **grain feed** animals.

Our three children were not all that sold on this new adventure, we were on. Too much after school work had to be done, feeding the animals, cleaning their yards. After a year or so—living on this half acre, we found it was just not **big enough** for the few beef cattle, goats, chickens, turkeys and horses we were raising, for us and for people in the church, so we sold the house and half acre and found a un-developed 3 acres out of town, that had been a grove of olive trees.



When buying the land we thought the yet growing olive trees would provide the animals with shade, because it can get very hot in Southern

California. For convenience, we kept the goats close to the house for milking, not realizing at the time the goats loved eating the leaves and branches off the olive trees, which flavored their milk and their meat. **Learning -- you are what you eat!** This also applies to spiritual food – God's word!

Notice what Apostle Peter a bond-servant of Jesus, the Christ said, in 2 Peter 1: 3 - 4, “According as His divine power has given unto us all things that

pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue: By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the Divine nature.” It is partaking of the promises of God's word that makes us like our Lord of Lords. It changes us from the inside out, it transforms us.

If the Bible was the main literature in schools today, the result would be no need for jails or prisons because there would be no violence or crimes. No drugees, no killings, no divorces, or practicing homosexuals, but there would be only a high level of health, joy, and happiness.

The word of God transforms!

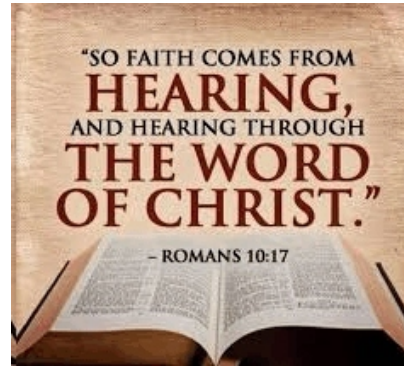
The Apostle Peter puts it this way, in 1 Pet 2:2, “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.” Peter is saying, young and old should thirst for the pure words of God, just as infants cry for milk. By taking in the pure milk of God's word, a called believer will grow up spiritually minded and be moving in conformity to the image of our Lord Jesus, the Christ.

What other instructions does God's word have for us? Proverbs 1, where we read of Solomon the son of David, the wise, richest, and most honored of the kings of Israel wrote: **Prov 1: verse 2**, “To know **wisdom** and **instruction**; perceive the words of Understanding.” **The word wisdom** occurs 141 times in the Bible. Knowledge and understanding are the basis of wisdom. **Prov 1: 7**, continue's to tells us, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools Despise wisdom and instruction.”

The fear of the Lord is reverence for the Lord. This is the first step in the acquirement of all true knowledge. If knowledge does not lead to the surrender of life to Jesus, the Christ, it has missed its aim.

Lets look at one more verse here in the book of **Prov 1: 23**, “Turn you at My reproof: behold, I will pour out My **spirit** unto you, I will make known My words unto you.” This verse may be understood in two ways: First, it may mean since you won't listen to My invitation I will pour out My spirit in words of judgment and will tell you what lies ahead for you. The second possible meaning is turn and repent when I reprove you if you do, then I will pour out My spirit on you in blessings, and make My words of wisdom known to you.

Notice now the book of Romans chapter 10, we will find God's word has the power to bring forth faith. **“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”** (Rom 10: 17). Faith comes



about by what is heard if God's word produces faith. Then a person has to be regularly exposed to the word, if they want to be strong in faith. Anybody who is serious about spiritual growth has to be a person of the

word, God's word!

Another factor is hearing. Did you know that it is actually possible to hear God's word and not hear God's word, both at the same time? We can hear with our physical ears and yet not hear with our spiritual ears. Jesus highlighted this when He said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (Mat 11: 15).

To have ears to hear means that we must have hearts that are soft, pliable, and teachable, willing to hear what God wants to say to us, not just what we want to hear. It's that kind of hearing heart, that becomes rich in faith.

Another question? Does God's word have the power to heal? When searching to prove all things, we find an example written in Psalms 107, “Then they [Israel] cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions” Psalms (107: 19-20).

Jesus did exactly that during His ministry here on earth. There is an illustration of that in Matt 8:5-13. This is where Jesus Christ heals a centurion's servant. The centurion said at the end of verse 8, “Speak the word, only and my servant will be healed.” The centurion understood that it only took a word from the Creator to heal his servant. Verse 13, “ So, Jesus spoke the word and the servant was healed.”

This same God framed the worlds by His word, and holds all things together by His same powerful word. God can heal a person's body and create worlds in His universe, all done by the authority and power of His word.

God's word also gives us power to fight our enemy. Our enemy is the wicked one, the evil one,

Satan the devil, who is the leader of all the assaulting armies. What advice are we given from God in answer for our protection? The Apostle Paul conveys to us, in the book of Ephesians chapter 6, "Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph 6:17).

What is the helmet of salvation? Proverbs 23 :23 declares it's meaning, "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." This helmet of salvation, safeguards God's called, mental powers from ungodly influences.

The sword of the spirit God's word is also indispensable to our calling. It wards off false teachings and the traditions of men, replacing those things with God's truth. There are way to many that call themselves Christians who go out to war, and are confronted by the enemy, they reach for their sword, but find there's nothing there. Where's my sword the conscience asks,? That's when the enemy just smirks at them.

It's been said, "If God's called don't have the word of God in their hearts, **that is**, be ready to give a defense to everyone who ask you a reason for the hope that is in you, then they are leaving the Holy Spirit in them without a weapon. That is a true statement, because God's word is the sword of the Spirit.

Notice how Jesus defeated the enemy in Matt 8:16. "When the evening was come, they brought unto Jesus many that were possessed with demons: and He [Christ having God's Holy Spirit] Cast out the [evil] spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick." When reading Matt 4 you will find Christ defeated Satan's temptations by quoting God's word from the Old Testament. It's God's word that transforms us from defense-less ordinary people into powerful warriors, armed and ready to face Satan our enemy! **How can we access the power of God's word?** We have to do what it says, obey what His word says!

We all know the story of Naaman, who was a man of velour that had leprosy and went to the house of Elisha, to ask him to ask God to heal him of his leprosy. Let's pick up this story in 2 Kings 5, I love this example of obedience God's word gives us. "So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall come again to you, and you shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, behold, I thought, he will

surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the Name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, my Father, if the prophet had bid you do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to you, wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (2 Kings 5:9-14).



There are several principles in a story like this.

One = God doesn't always use the most important people.

Two = pride can rob you of God's blessings.

Three = obedience produces blessings!

The principle, that I want to focus on is that if we want to receive what God has for us, we have to follow His instructions. It's like God was saying to Naaman, Naaman, I've given you My instructions, I told you what to do, and I told you what will happen when you have done it, now it's on your shoulder to do it.

Obedience is one of the crucial principles of living as a called out disciple of God. In James 1:23-24, the Apostle James gives the analogy of obedience by saying, "For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; For he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was."

Be honest in thought, for a minute! If we had a

mirror with special powers, one where you could look into it, and if you touched any part of your face, you could change it to whatever you wanted, say make your nose shorter, remove blemishes, flatten your ears, straighten your teeth, smooth wrinkles, change the shape of your eyes, remove your freckles. wouldn't you be tempted to buy one of those mirrors! A lot of people would. But what would be the point of owning such a mirror, if you never used it? If you never look into it

James likens the word of God to a mirror that reveals the problem areas and then gives the power to change them. But the key to using that mirror is putting God's word into practice. Living it, that's the only way it works. The next verse, James 1:25, "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."

We are reminded often in sermons to read, study, and meditate on God's word. **Why is that?**



If we're going to obey God's word, we must first know what it says. Example: it's a little like a

man who goes to the doctor. "Doctor" I'm coughing my heart out. It feels like my lungs are burning up. Well, let's have a look, so the doctor examines him and said, it's not looking good, but you're in luck. I've got a bottle of medicine here, the instructions are on the bottle, it'll clear this up in three days. Five days later the man returns, doctor, you told me this stuff would cure me in three days. I'm not getting better. I'm getting worse. The doctor said, "did you read the instructions?" Of course I read the instructions. it says ..." **the doctor snatches it out of his hand**, gimme that bottle! This bottle is un-opened, you didn't say I had to open it. Listen you turkey, you came to see me, I examined you. I diagnosed your problem, I gave you the medicine, now the rest was up to you!!

How many people have we seen over the years, who knows God's word, has God's Holy Spirit to transform their lives, to heal, to deliver, to acquire wisdom, but they just never seem to get around to reading God's word on a regular basis, to find their problem?

It seems we find time to eat daily meals, but no time for a spiritual meal, reading, studying, meditating on God's word. It seems we have time to read and hear the local and world news but no time to read and study the Bible. We find time enough to glue ourselves to the TV set, but no time for glueing our selves to scriptures.

What does all of this say about our values in life? The more of God's word we have in us, the more word-like, and the more Christ-like, we become. The word must be acquired in spirit. The less word, the less word-like, the less Christ-like, we become. It's an elementary formula, it separates the men from the boys, so to speak. We should have a great desire to see God's church full of self-feeders.

Using another illustration: Imagine a couple getting married; they're in love. Then their first child comes along and they're so excited, they don't mind feeding their beautiful baby, but what if that child had to be fed right up until it's in its forties? What a disappointment it would be. If their child never learned to feed it's self. Is that how God created life to develop? **NO!**

We can learn lessons from God's created earth. Imagine planting a avocado seed, watering it and then the next day you go out and there are ripe avocados lying on the ground. Is that how it really happens? What comes before the developed fruit? First, the seedling is planted, then the sapling develops, then the mature tree grows and stands tall, bearing fruit.

Many people give up before the word produces fruit in their lives. They try for a couple days or weeks, but when they don't see fruit, they give up, telling themselves, "my calling from God, does not work." God's word says, in Gal 6, "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" (Gal 6:9). In other words, don't be discouraged, be patient.

Once God's word is planted in us, we must water it, care for it, and do everything in our power to ensure that it develops the godly character, God is judging us on. This growth of godly character we are to be developing takes deep study and meditating on God's word.

In Joshua 1, we read where the Israelites are about to enter the promised land, and they are being told about the book of the law. "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to

2 Cor 5:1-21

do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Josh 1:8). Meditating on God's word is the single most important key to a successful and prosperous life, as the Bible defines success and prosperity.

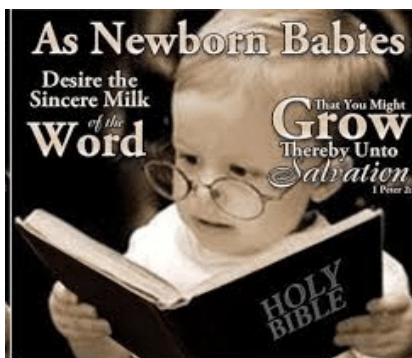
We are to let God's word in the Bible speak to us. It is His instruction book for our eternal life. If we regularly read and meditate on God's word, it will speak to us, you and me. Notice Prov 6:20 - 23, “My son, keep thy Father's commandment, and forsake not the Law of your mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about your neck. When you go, it shall lead you; when you sleep, it shall keep you and when you awake, it shall talk with you. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.”

The words of verse 20, is sort of a formula used to introduce important instructions. It is saying that we should make the word of God so much a part of our lives that it will accompany and direct us wherever we go. Chapter 7 of Proverbs, continues to warn against ruining our lives by disobedience. “My son, keep My words, and lay up My commandments with you. Keep My commandments, and live; and My law as the apple of your eye” (Pro 7:1-2).

We should recognize, most sermons come from meditating on God's word. When we lie awake in the middle of the night, and our spirit is quiet, and there is no hustle and bustle, that seems to be a good time for meditating on God's word, that we had read earlier in the day!

If we want God's word to speak to us, we have to make it a high priority in our life. Just- as newborn babes, desiring the nourishing sincere milk from its mother, so must we desire the same pure sincere word from God, so we may grow up nourished and be spiritually strong ☞

James Russell



1 “For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, Eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. 12 For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to glory on our behalf, that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. 13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. 14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. 16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”



