

BECOMING FATHER PLEASERS

- A. Introduction: Recently we've been discussing how God gives us peace of mind. Last week we began to talk about how peace of mind comes from knowing our true identity—who and what we are because of what Jesus has done for us. We have more to say in this lesson.
1. We must first understand that God's plan since before He formed the earth was and is to have holy, righteous sons and daughters. However, sin disqualified humanity from the family of God. Eph 1:4-5
 - a. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has made it possible for sinners to be reconciled to God and transformed into sons and daughters of God through faith in Him. Col 1:21-22
 1. At the Cross Jesus took the punishment due us for our sin on Himself. Jesus' sacrifice so completely cleanses us from the guilt of sin that when we believe on Him, God can put His life and Spirit into our innermost being. Isa 53:6; Rev 1:5
 2. The entrance of God's life and Spirit changes us and gives us a new identity. We are now sons and daughters of God, born of Him. John 1:12-13
 - b. Through the Cross, Jesus not only made it possible for us to be restored to our created purpose as sons and daughters of God, He showed us what family members look like by the way that He lived.
 1. Jesus is God become man without ceasing to be God. While on earth Jesus didn't live as God. He lived as a man in dependence on God as His Father. John 1:1; John 1:14; John 14:10
 2. Jesus (in His humanity) shows us the kind of sons and daughters that God desires. Jesus is the pattern for God's family. Jesus was a Father pleaser, fully pleasing to His Father. John 8:29
 - c. Jesus, through His death and resurrection, opened the way for all who believe on Him to become Father pleasers. Through His life and Spirit in us, God restores every part of our being to what He always intended us to be, sons and daughters who, like Jesus, are fully pleasing to Him in every way.
 2. This brings up an issue we must address in tonight's lesson. Even though we have become sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ, how can we be Father pleasers since we aren't always pleasing to Him in every thought, word, attitude, and action?
- B. During His three and a half years of public ministry Jesus made a number of statements about why He came to earth. Jesus Himself said that He came to give life to men and women. John 10:10
1. Let's first be clear about what Jesus was not saying. This verse (John 10:10) has been taken by some to mean that Jesus came to give us a life of blessing, success, and prosperity in this life.
 - a. However, Jesus was not referring to quality of life in this life. He was referring to a type of life—eternal life. Eternal life is not live forever life. All human beings live forever in the sense that no one ceases to exist when their body stops working,
 1. Jesus came to bring the life of God to men and women—the uncreated, eternal life in God Himself. God fashioned us in such a way that He can indwell us by His life and Spirit.
 2. When we read John 10:10 in the context of everything Jesus said up to that point, His meaning is clear. Jesus had already made numerous references to the kind of life He brings, everlasting or eternal life (John 3:16; John 4:14; John 6:40; John 6:47-48; John 6:68; John 8:51; etc.). Abundantly means super abundant, excessive—to the full; till it overflows (John 10:10, Amp).
 - b. When a person believes on Jesus He is given (receives) eternal life from God. Eternal life (the life and Spirit of God) is imparted to that person's innermost being, his spirit. To impart means to give or grant from one's storehouse or abundance.
 1. Before we move on I need to make a few comments about human makeup. Human beings have an inward, immaterial portion as well as an outward, physical component. II Cor 4:16
 2. The outward component is the physical body. The immaterial portion is made up of spirit (the portion where God dwells) and soul (our mental and emotional capacities).

- A. A full discussion of this topic requires much teaching because word usage is not always consistent in the Bible. The word heart is used occasionally to mean our entire inward being. Other times heart is used only for our emotional portion. Soul is sometimes used for our entire physical and inward being (or our natural life). The word flesh is sometimes used for the physical body and sometimes for man's fallen nature.
 - B. Some popular teachings on the topic of spirit, soul, and body also add to the difficulty because people get too tied to precise definitions of specific terms and miss the point. Almighty God is in us by His Spirit and life to transform us in every part of our being.
 - c. Jesus referred to the experience of receiving eternal life (the life in God) through faith in Him as being born again or from above.
 - 1. The new birth is an impartation of life accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. John 3:3-5; I Pet 1:23; James 1:18
 - 2. When we believe God's Word about Jesus and His sacrifice, the Holy Spirit unites our spirit to, fills our spirit with, eternal life—the life in God.
 - A. Because we are talking about how a transcendent, eternal Being (Almighty God) and how He has chosen to interact with finite beings (humans), words and attempts to fully explain it fall short. The Bible uses several word pictures to help us understand what happens.
 - B. John 15:5—We are joined to the life in Jesus (God) and become partakers of the life in Him, as truly as a branch is joined to a vine and draws life from the vine.
 - d. The new birth takes place in our innermost being and is instantaneous. The entrance of eternal life produces a tremendous change in our spirit. Our nature (spiritual condition) is changed.
 - 1. II Cor 5:17—Therefore if any person is (ingrafted) in Christ, the Messiah, he is (a new creature altogether,) a new creation; the old (previous moral and spiritual condition) has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come (Amp).
 - 2. The condition of our spirit is the basis of our identity (John 3:6). We were dead; now we are alive. We were sinners; now we are sons and daughters of God. We were unrighteous; now we are righteous. Rom 5:19; John 1:12-13; Rom 5:10; Eph 2:1; Eph 5:8; etc.
 - 2. Our mind and emotions and our bodies are not directly affected or changed by the new birth. They must be progressively brought under the control of the Spirit of God and the life of God in us.
 - a. I John 3:2—Right now we are finished works in progress—fully God's holy, righteous sons and daughters because of the new birth (the entrance of eternal life), but we are not yet fully like Jesus in every part of our being, not yet fully pleasing to God in every thought, word, and action.
 - b. What we do does not yet match what we are. But what we do doesn't change what we are. What we are will ultimately change what we do. God deals with us on the basis of what we are (sons and daughters) because He is confident that His plan and purpose will be fully accomplished. Phil 1:6
 - c. The new birth is the beginning of a process of transformation that will ultimately restore every part of our being (spirit, soul, and body) to everything we were intended to be before sin infused the human race—holy, righteous sons and daughters who are Father pleasers.
- C. How much transformation takes place in our mind, emotions, and body (thoughts, feelings, actions) in this life depends in large part on our cooperation because we have a part to play in the process.
- 1. This progressive process will not happen without the Bible. The written Word of God is the instrument that the Holy Spirit uses to work in us to change and transform us into consistent Father pleasers.
 - a. Our initial entrance into the family of God is accomplished by the Spirit of God through the Word of God. And it is God's plan to continue to work in us by His Spirit through His written Word.
 - b. We're born again through God's Word and progressively cleansed by the Spirit through His Word.
 - 1. I Peter 1:23—Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable,

- through the living and abiding word of God (ESV). James 1:18—By his own wish he has made us his own sons through the word of truth (J.B. Phillips).
2. Titus 3:5—He saved us...by [the] cleansing (bath) of the new birth (regeneration) and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Amp). Eph 5:25-26—Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word (NIV).
 2. Rom 12:2—Paul wrote to men and women born of God (sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ, alive with the life of God) that they must undergo further transformation by renewing their minds.
 - a. The Greek word translated transformed is made up of two words, change and form (*metamorphoo*). It has the idea of undergoing a complete change that expresses itself in character and conduct (*Vine's Dictionary*). You can see the root of our English word metamorphosis in this Greek word.
 1. The Greek word translated renewing (*anakainosis*) comes from a word that means to renovate. It means to renew qualitatively. It is a renewing that makes a person different than in the past.
 2. Rom 12:2—But be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind—by its new ideals and attitudes (Amp); Rom 12:2—Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do (NLT).
 - b. All of us grew up in and have been influenced by a world that is in opposition to God, a world filled with cares, temptations, and moral and physical evils. Eph 2:2—(We followed) the course and fashion of this world—were under the sway of the tendency of this present age (Amp).
 1. Consequently, our thought processes, attitudes, and views about life have been affected. We have ideas, thought patterns, beliefs, and opinions that are ungodly, unhealthy, and destructive.
 2. How we act is based on how we think. Even though our spirit has been transformed through new birth and our identity has changed, if our thinking doesn't change, we will not accurately reflect those inward changes.
 3. You cannot renew your mind (be made new in the way that you think) without regular, systematic Bible reading, especially the New Testament. We need a source outside of ourselves to show us what truly righteous actions and holy living (or living like Jesus) looks like.
 - a. God's Word changes us and cleanses us by teaching us what righteousness looks like. II Tim 3:16
 1. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. (NLT)
 2. Every Scripture is God-breathed—given by His inspiration—and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, and for training in righteousness [that is, in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose and action] (Amp).
 - b. One quick note. Some Christians mistakenly believe that, as believers, they automatically have the mind of Christ. They base this on the phrase “we have the mind of Christ”. I Cor 2:16
 1. But this phrase doesn't mean that we automatically think like Jesus thinks. The Greek word that is translated mind has the idea of what is the thought, purpose, or opinion of.
 2. We have the mind of Christ in the sense that we now have access to His intentions and purposes through the Bible. Jesus, the Living Word is revealed in and through the written Word. But if we don't find out from the Bible what His mind is (His thought, His purpose) then we don't have (know) the mind of Christ.
 4. The Bible is a supernatural book because it was inspired by God. Supernatural means of or relating to an order of existence beyond the visible observable universe (*Webster's Dictionary*). When we read His Word, God, by His Spirit through His Word, works in us to transform us into Father pleasers.
 - a. II Cor 3:18—And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit

(Amp).

1. The Greek word translated transfigured (changed in the KJV) is the same word used in Rom 12:2 where we are instructed to be transformed (*metamorphoo*) by renewing our mind. It means to change form and has the idea of undergoing a complete change that expresses itself in character and conduct (*Vine's Dictionary*).
 2. This same word is used in Matt 17:2 to describe what happened when Jesus was transfigured in front of His disciples. What was on the inside of Jesus showed up on the outside.
 - b. In order for the wonderful changes on the inside of us because we're born of God to affect us outwardly, our thinking (our view of reality, our perspective) must come in line with the way things really are according to God.
 - c. This happens as we read the written Word of God, the Bible. God's Word works in us and exposes thinking patterns, attitudes, and behaviors that need to change. God, by His life and Spirit in us empowers us to make necessary changes.
 1. Heb 4:12—For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are (NLT).
 2. Eph 3:16—(He will strengthen and reinforce you) with mighty power in the inner man by the (Holy) Spirit [Himself]—indwelling your innermost being and personality (Amp).
 5. Consider one example where misinformation prevented the inward changes in Christians from showing up on the outside. Paul was concerned about a group of believers who lived in a region called Galatia (modern-day Turkey).
 - a. They were being influenced by false teaching that said believers in Jesus must be circumcised to be saved from sin. This false teaching was preventing Christ from being formed in them.
 1. Gal 4:19—My born ones, concerning whom I am striving with intense anguish until Christ be outwardly expressed in you (Wuest). Until Christ is completely and permanently (molded) within you (Amp).
 2. The Greek word translated formed (*morphoo*) means to be shaped. It expresses the necessity of change in character and conduct so that it corresponds to the inward spiritual condition (*Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words*).
 - b. Rom 8:29—God's plan for His sons and daughters is that we be conformed to the image of Christ. The Greek word translated conformed means having the same form as, referring to an inward transformation (*summorphos*). (God destined us) to be molded into the image of His Son [and share inwardly His likeness] (Rom 8:29, Amp). This transformation takes place at the new birth.
 - c. Paul wrote the Galatians a letter (gave them the Word of God) to straighten out their thinking so that what was on the inside of them could be accurately expressed outwardly.
- D. Conclusion: What you are by new birth (a holy, righteous son or daughter of God) pleases Him. And, He has given you the means to deal with the parts of you that aren't yet always fully pleasing—His written Word.
1. Through the Bible we learn what behaviors please and displease God. Faulty thinking patterns and inaccurate views of reality are changed. Ungodly attitudes are exposed so that we can deal with them.
 2. Almighty God will work in and change you by His Spirit through His Word as you read it regularly and systematically. (See the lessons from January and February, 2021 about how to read effectively.)
 3. Rom 5:1-2—So now, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith in God's promises we can have real peace with him because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. For because of our faith, he has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be (TLB).
 4. We're Father pleasers by birth and will be Father pleasers in every part of our being. More next week!