

May you have the power to understand... how wide,
how long, how high, and how deep His love is.

—EPHESIANS 3:18

TRANSFORMATION

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When a person comes to faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, there are at least two paths they can take. Some Christians only *learn* about God and will live out those truths. Some, however, seek *transformation* by the Holy Spirit. Christ is welcome to begin His great work in their lives, and as they become transformed they are set free and healed. Sadly, the average Christian seems to be about 30% transformed by God. One reason for this lack of transformation is religious legalism.

Much of today's teaching focuses only on correcting behavior. The thinking is that if we keep the rules we will become mature. The small church I grew up in was a very loving church, but it had its limits. Much of the teaching I received concentrated on, "Don't drink, don't dance, don't be promiscuous: don't, don't, don't!" What I experienced as a young person was a list of rules which in my mind became a form of legalism. No one ever taught me about the power of the Holy Spirit and my need for healing and transformation. By the time I reached college, I became disillusioned

and moved away from God. Later, after moving to Israel, I met some remarkable Christians who were living transformed lives. They lovingly helped me find the path to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. My life was never the same!

As our desires line up with the Holy Spirit's guidance, our behavior begins to change. In my life, one such revelation occurred when the Lord guided me to start praying for healing. At the university level, I was receiving training to be a psychotherapist. After moving to New England, I realized that many people competed for work in this field. I finally landed an amazing job at a newly opened psychiatric hospital. I worked full time at this hospital and consulted at two others. I was assigned a 21-bed in-patient psychiatric unit, which had a very progressive and caring staff.

The patients admitted had a variety of psychiatric issues ranging from general mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions, attempted suicide, and clinical depression. For several years I worked with these disorders in my patients. Late in the fall I had to leave my job for three weeks because of a death in my immediate family.



While I was away, my patients were in the care of other excellent therapists at the hospital. These were caring and professional people. While I was away, one of my patients named Steven, who was suffering from depression, managed to obtain a gun and commit suicide. It was devastating to me since I had grown to care deeply for this young man. I had great hope for his recovery. How could I cope with this? I was tempted to leave the counseling profession.

Instead, I prayed, "Lord, this is too painful! These are people that have gone through serious tragedies and can't pull themselves out of severe pain and trauma. What do you want me to do?"

In answer to my prayer, the Lord gently revealed His sense of humor.

I heard Him clearly. He said, "Judith, this is the first time you've asked My advice about anything!" I suddenly realized He was right. I don't know about you, but I was always advising God, as if He needed my input. In my mind, I wrote God a letter of resignation from trying to run the universe. I then prayed, "What do you want me to do?" I waited and listened.

He said, "Bring them to Me. I created them, I know them, I love them, and I can also restore and heal them."

I was then led to read Isaiah 61. As a young Rabbi, Jesus quotes this passage in Luke 4: 14,16-19.

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

That day, the Lord gave me that scripture to own as my mission in life. I have tried to live out of these truths ever since. When I returned to the hospital, I prayed for my patients every morning. At that time, I didn't know how to pray, so I prayed using simple words. "Lord, help them, heal them. I am bringing them to You." Some suffered from clinical depression, some were schizophrenic, some were bipolar. One by one they were healed. After a while, the hospital staff noticed people were getting better. The chief psychologist called me in and said, "What are you doing with your clients?"

"Just therapy - group therapy and individual therapy."

He said, "No, there must be something more."

All I could think was, *I'm going to lose my job if I tell the truth.*

I heard the Lord say, "Tell him what you're doing."

In a whisper, I answered, "I'm praying for them."

I'll never forget his response. This doctor was a brilliant, caring therapist. Many times in the past as I sat with him, patients told him about the horrific things that they had done or had experienced. He never expressed any emotion, but when I said *I'm praying for them*, he said, "You're what?! Did I hear you right?"

"Yes, sir." I was worried that I would lose my job.

He met with other supervising therapists to discuss what action to take and then related their decision. "You may remain in your position, but you can't pray for people."

I was relieved to keep my job, but so disappointed with his response because people were being healed through prayer!

I followed his request to not pray out loud, but I continued to pray quietly and patients continued to improve! A few years later, the Lord led me to move to Israel, along with my friend Lynne, where I directed a House of Prayer. Finally I could minister as I wanted, as I was led by the Holy Spirit. In those years I grew in my understanding of healing as I saw miracles that brought people lasting freedom. I saw many with broken hearts healed, and more captives were set free through the power of prayer!

The Good News is that your destiny is to be like Jesus. Unfortunately, all of us display weaknesses. We struggle with sin, wounded memories, trauma, physical illness, or some area of darkness in our lives. The Holy Spirit is the one who helps us in our weakness. With the power of the Holy Spirit in your life, your life with change through the renewing of your mind and heart. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he/she is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.* (2 Cor 5:17)

This transformation can take place in the here and now—not in the abstract, but in the concrete. He accomplishes this change by the power of His Holy Spirit working within us. In Romans 8:27, Paul says, *The Holy Spirit searches our hearts and intercedes for us in accordance with God's will.*

First as a Spirit-filled Christian you become transformed. Then you in turn become a transformer! The world will be drawn to Jesus through what they see in you—a transformed life! ➡

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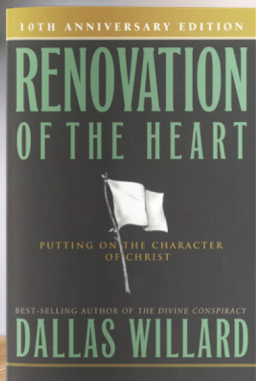
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capivate

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I came to this conference because

I needed to get away to hear the Lord without distraction.

I told the Lord that I needed to know if my son Joseph, who died July 26, was saved and in heaven.

I confess I said that to myself sarcastically, not expecting it to happen! (Forgive me, Lord.) The last thing Judith said was to remind us who God is. I went to my room and beat myself up for not being a better mother, even though I had tried hard. The Lord asked me if my parenting skills were stronger than His. I started to argue but then realized that God is stronger.

I wanted to know if Joe was in heaven. He gave me a vision of Joe on his couch facing the back of the sofa. I saw him turn and get up and I saw Jesus' love, healing, forgiveness flowing around Joe as he embraced Jesus. What I asked for happened!

— Elizabeth

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