

LIVING



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Week Four: Transformed by Truth

THE MISSIONARY TASK

Component Three: Discipleship

INTRODUCTION

Bible study is not an end, but a means. We study our Bibles that we might be transformed. Truth applied and thus obeyed will always lead to a changed life. To be sure, Jesus noted three proofs of genuine discipleship: Obedience to His teachings (John 8:31), love for fellow believers (John 13:35), and the bearing of spiritual fruit (John 15:8). As we learn to study our Bibles, let's be sure to see signs of growth.

BIBLICAL MATERIAL

As Christians we know and believe that the Bible is true, so we cannot ignore what it says. The Bible clearly tells us in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 the product and process of God's Word. It states "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man [and woman] of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." No one likes to feel unprepared or unqualified. Scripture tells us we don't have to feel this way. It is essential for a believer to learn the Truths of God's Word in order to be complete and equipped for the work of God.

This week we are talking about the necessity of studying Truth with the goal of being transformed. At some point we've all been suckered into believing something that over promised and underdelivered. This is not the case when it comes to the transformation that Truth can produce. God's promises are always fulfilled, and His truth will transform your life if you let it. We see this all throughout Scripture.

We aren't called to be transformed by our truth but by The Truth of God's Word. As a believer, our desire should be to become like our Savior. To be Christlike in our thoughts and beliefs. Our heavenly Father wrote a book; shouldn't we want to read and obey this book? Truth will sharpen you and transform your life and how you live. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand Scripture and be changed (1 Cor. 2:14). We are called to a new life in Christ. We see this concept explained to us very clearly in Colossians 3:1-17. Paul instructs and informs us in these verses through the Holy Spirit's leading that we have been raised in Christ's resurrection and now have a new life in Him. We must not think on earthly or worldly things but on things above. He then goes on to tell us what to put to death in our lives and what to put on as believers chosen by God.

It is very clear all throughout Scripture that you cannot be a Christian and not be transformed by the Word of God through the working of the Holy Spirit. Don't let laziness and excuses keep you from spending time in His Word and getting to know who He is. As a Christian the Bible reads you, and it reads you differently every day. The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to show us how we need put to death our own earthly desires and put on what Christ has given to us in this new life. Be intentional about becoming more like Christ through the studying of His Word.

MISSIONARY TASK RELEVANCY

The idea of being transformed by Truth is vital in the missionary task. If you do not grasp the concept of becoming more like Christ and bending your earthly desires to eternal desires, the other components of the missionary cannot happen in a healthy way. All you have then is broken, wicked sinners trying to build healthy churches and leadership in their own strength and not in the Truth of God's Word.



LIFE APPLICATION

This life application is simple, yet challenging. Yes, you can read your Bible because that's what you're supposed to do or you can read your Bible with the intention of transformation. That is more challenging. That requires self-evaluation and sacrifice. Take notes in church. Examine the sermons and apply Biblical Truths to your life. Get plugged into a small group. Surround yourself with godly influences that are going to pour Truth into your life. Transformation does not happen by itself but it should be happening in every believer's life. God's love for you pours out in the Truth of His Word. Dive into it and let it change you.

1. Can you think of examples of individuals whose lives have been transformed through encountering God's word? What has transformation looked like in your own life?
2. How does God's word equip us? Can you think of passages or studies that have helped to prepare you for specific challenges or ministries?
3. In what sense does "the Bible read you"? What has been the outcome of your awareness of the Bible reading you?
4. What role does being transformed by truth play in the missionary task? Why is it essential for discipleship?
5. What practical activities or mentalities have you adopted that have helped you to be transformed by God's truth?