

LESSON 2

GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION

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Perhaps you've compared other religious figures and what they said and did with who Jesus was and what He said and did. There's really no comparison! In John 14:6 Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* Jesus radiated with light and truth and goodness and beauty and love. He was sinless. He had authority. He walked on water, raised the dead, forgave sins, had compassion on people. He died and then defeated death, rising from the dead transformed and glorified. No one can compare to Him! Perhaps you've heard the Gospel and believed it but you're not sure exactly how you should live for Jesus today. The Gospel, which means the "good news" is the message that we're all sinners guilty of breaking God's law but God became a man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth and died for *our* sins on the cross. And through faith in Him alone we are redeemed, adopted by God the Father, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and given a new life and purpose. It says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"* The Gospel, when fully embraced, will radically transform our lives in at least four ways: Redemption, Adoption, Pastored, Purposed.

Redeemed. The first way the Gospel transforms us is through our redemption. To be redeemed means we were "purchased back" by God. We've all sinned and fallen short of God's righteous standards. Do you realize you're a sinner? Or do you think you're already a good person? 1 John 1:8 says, *"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."* Jesus said in John 8:34, *"everyone who sins is a slave to sin."* The truth is that we deserve God's wrath, and it is already upon us. Jesus told us our need for Him; there's only two options: God's gracious offer of forgiveness for those who belong to Jesus and God's wrath for those who reject Him. In John 3:36 Jesus said, *"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them."* Good deeds won't make us acceptable to God, *especially* when our efforts to "do good" come from a faithless heart still in rebellion to Him and not driven by love for Him. Isaiah 64:6 says even our righteous acts are like filthy rags in God's sight. But we don't have to feel guilty for

not being perfect because Jesus *is* perfect and He is our *way* to perfection. Examine your own heart. Do you feel guilty about your past? Do you feel shame about things you've done? Maybe you beat yourself up every day because of the terrible ways you sinned against God, or the ways you hurt yourself or others. The good news is that you don't need to *earn* your forgiveness. It is freely given to us as a *gift* from God the moment we put our faith and trust in Jesus! So give all those garbage thoughts and toxic emotions to Jesus right this second. Jesus *already* died for those sins so you don't need to pay for them too! (not that you could) So don't you dare hang on to them! Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for you and you are now redeemed (purchased back) from the debt of your sins. Your debt has been paid in full! You're also set free from your bondage to sin and the consequences of sin including separation from God, judgment, death, and Hell. Continuously give it all to Jesus and live in the peace of God every day.

Adopted. The second way the Gospel transforms our life is that we get a brand new identity as an adopted child of God. Galatians 4:5 says Jesus came, "*to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.*" Jesus didn't just die for us just to take away our guilt and our punishment. He also did it to make the way for us to receive an entirely new identity, life, future, and relationship with God. Ephesians 1 says God "*predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ*" and this is because, in Christ, we're "*God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*" Jesus is the only-begotten (one-of-a-kind) Son of God. He's fully God meaning He's of the same divine essence as God the Father. As John chapter one describes, Jesus is the eternally-existent Word of God that became a man, conceived miraculously in the womb of the virgin Mary by the Spirit of God. Jesus makes our sonship possible *through* Him. By believing in Jesus we are spiritually put *in* Him. And not only are we in Him He is also in us! We are "*marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.*" And what or who is the Holy Spirit? Who. Well, *He* is the very spirit of the Living God! How incredible is that! If you believe in Jesus you will have the Spirit of God Almighty, the very God who created the entire universe by just speaking it into existence, living inside of you! Let this amazing promise and reality never escape you. In Christ, you are special and loved and family and God is with you in the most intimate way He can be. No trial or temptation or persecution or famine or obstacle will be impossible for you. God is with you and He will empower you to either *overcome* it, or to *persevere through* it—whichever is His will. All to His glory. Romans 8:14-17 says, "*For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*"

Pastored. The third way the Gospel transforms our life is that we now have Jesus *with us* in so many

ways. He's our Good Shepherd. Though we can't see Him He hasn't left us behind here. He's with us all in spirit. He leads us, guides us, teaches us, provides for us, protects us, and defends us. He's our Savior, our Lord, and our majestic King, yes, but He's also our helper, our friend, and our elder brother. In Him, we have the same Father. He stands at the right hand of God the Father as our mediator and our high priest, advocating for us on our behalf. Jesus said He would not leave us as orphans but will be with us always. The Holy Spirit, who in John 14 Jesus called the Advocate, lives with us and is in us. And He will glorify Jesus, and only speak what He hears from Jesus, who only speaks what He hears from the Father. The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus, teaches us all things, and guides us into all truth. The Holy Spirit gives us supernatural power, spiritual abilities, spiritual understanding, internal strength, fortitude, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. He renews our mind, thoughts, and attitudes. He heals our emotional wounds and gives us comfort and wisdom about our past. And He sanctifies every part of our soul and life; repairing, cleaning, and restoring us from the inside-out. Don't resist His prompting or quench His presence. Submit to Him and seek more of Him!

Purposed. Lastly, the Gospel gives us new purpose. Rather than living for ourselves the purpose of life is to bring glory to God. Glorify God in your earthly life in all ways which prepares us for your eternal life with Him. Surrender your will to the Holy Spirit daily, letting Him change you and make you more like Jesus. In John 16 Jesus said it was for our good it is this way and that by His Spirit in us we will do even greater things for God's glory. This is because, through us, *He* will impact the whole earth. As a disciple of Jesus we obey Him and serve Him by participating in His mission for His Church. We're to join in the adventure! The Holy Spirit calls each of us to specific assignments, providing the direction, talents, abilities, and opportunities. He's leading you individually in your own unique calling as well as all us together corporately for the benefit of the whole global Church. 2 Corinthians 5:20 says in regards to us being evangelists and sharing this Gospel good news with others, "*we are Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.*" Your mission is to advance God's kingdom on earth, which means to help every person, and area of life and practice around you, be impacted by this Gospel message. We are to share this good news with those that are still lost. We are to be the hands and feet of Christ that bring love, hope, peace, and spiritual and physical healing to the hurting. We are to teach, train, and raise up more disciples of Jesus so that they also bear much good fruit with their lives.

The Gospel has the ability to completely transform our lives. Jesus has redeemed us from sin and death and we can now walk with God daily and intimately in freedom, peace, and joy. We now have a new spiritual family with one Father and we are all equal as brothers and sisters. Jesus is with us and by the Holy Spirit He is pastoring us to live a life of purpose and action.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for the Gospel and all you've done for me. Empower me by your Spirit. Help me to fully surrender to you to transform every part of my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.