

Transformation

by J.R. Miller

Transformation is a call to be changed from within, to let the glory of Christ break through in our lives, and to live a life of love, joy, and peace.

Scripture: Matthew 5:16, John 15:5, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:23-24, Philippians 4:8, Colossians 3:2, 1 Peter 1:15-16

Topics: "Transformation", "Inner Beauty"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the transformative power of a renewed mind and heart in his sermon 'Transformation.' He explains that true transformation is not reserved for extraordinary circumstances but can occur in the mundane aspects of daily life, where work and love can lead to spiritual growth. Miller highlights that transformation begins from within, driven by beautiful thoughts and the presence of Christ in our hearts, which ultimately reflects in our outward appearance. He encourages believers to resist conforming to worldly patterns and instead embrace a life filled with love, joy, and peace, which are the fruits of the Spirit. The sermon concludes with the idea that our lives should radiate the glory of God, marking us as His followers in a world that often reflects the opposite.

Transcript

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."
Romans 12:2

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:18

Transfiguration, not Christ's--but ours. It does not seem strange to read that one wonderful night Jesus was transfigured. Deity dwelt in him. The wonder was that he was not always transfigured. But we are to have transfigurations too--we who belong to this earth. Paul says to Christians, "Be transformed." Our dull lives should shine. This is not to be, either, after we get into heaven--but now, right here, in the present life. Nor is it to be in certain favored conditions, merely, in some holy service--but in the midst of the world's common experiences.

Henry Drummond said, "The three ingredients of a perfect life are:

work, which gives opportunity;

God, who gives happiness;

love, that gives warmth."

He reminds us also that the one perfectly transfigured life the world has known was spent, not with a book--but with a hammer and a saw. Thus the possibility of transformation is brought very near to us. Not in some rare ethereal circumstances only can the problem be worked out--but in the plainest, commonest lot in life.

Some people complain because they have so much to do, giving this as an excuse for not living beautifully. But there is no other way in which a life will become transformed so quickly, so surely--as in the faithful, happy, cheerful doing of everyday tasks. Ordinary daily work, is one of the best means of grace. Household life is not merely a sphere merely for good cooking, tidy sweeping and dusting, domestic duties, and the thousand things that it includes; it is a sphere, primarily, for transforming women's souls into radiant beauty. The shop, the mill, the store, the office, the farm--are not places merely for making machines, selling goods, weaving cloths, building engines, and growing crops; they are places, first of all, for making men, for building character, for growing souls. Right in the midst of what some people call life's drudgery--is the very best place in the world to get transformed character!

We do not get the transformation out of the air. It is more than 'complexion', it runs deeper. It is not the result of the use of certain brands of cosmetics. The truth is, transformation is from within. It works from the heart--out to the surface. It is something which the soul creates. It is the work of will and thought and feeling and being. One may have fine features, classically molded, with a complexion pure, fresh, and beautiful as a child's, and yet not have a transformed face. It is what shines out from within, that transfigures.

"Beautiful thoughts make a beautiful soul,

And a beautiful soul makes a beautiful face."

There is a whole philosophy in the couplet, and the whole secret of growing beautiful. With the lesson written out so plainly, every young person should be able to get a transformed face. Someone says that every face ought to be beautiful at forty. That is, forty years ought to

be time enough for the mystic chisels to carve loveliness in any face. It is more than the work of a day or a week. An artist may put a shining portrait on his canvas in a little while--but no one can put a transformation on human features in a day. It is the work of years. Slowly the beauty works up from the mind and spirit, through the nerves and muscles, and into brow and cheeks and eyes.

"Beautiful thoughts"! So we see where we must begin--not with atmosphere and dainty cosmetics and lotions--but with thoughts. If we

would have the heavenly shining on our face--we must get heaven within our heart. One writes of another,

'Her face was pinched and pale and thin,

But splendor struck it from within.'

That is the only way to get the splendor on any face--from within. And it makes little difference whether the physical features are handsome or not, whether the cheeks are full and fair and blooming, or thin and pale

and pinched--if the glory breaks through from within--there is a transformation. The problem then is to get the beautiful thoughts, to have the sweet, radiant inner life. If God is truly within, the enswathings of flesh will by and by become transparent, so that the loveliness shall shine through.

How to work out the problem is the question--how to get the splendor within, how to get in mind and heart, the beauty that shall work out into the face.

It is not easy to live a heavenly life--in a world where the influences are antagonistic. It is much easier to conform to the maxims, habits, and dispositions of those about us--than to maintain a life of prayer, of holiness, of love, in an atmosphere that is uncongenial. People sometimes grow weary in the struggle and say, "It is no use! I cannot stem the tide of worldly tendency. I cannot keep my heart gentle and sweet--amid the selfishness, the baseness, the injustice, the dishonesty, all around me!" Yet this is just what we must do--if we would be victorious in life.

The secret of transformation must always be within. It begins in the new birth, being born again, born from above. A Christian, according to the New Testament, is one in whom Christ lives. Luther said that if anyone would knock at his heart's door and ask, "Who lives here?" he would answer, "Jesus lives here!" One picture in the book of Revelation shows Christ outside a door, knocking, and we hear him saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." This seems very wonderful--but it is no mere fancy.

A German tale describes a fisherman's log hut, that was changed into a temple of exquisitely wrought silver by a silver lamp, which was set within the hut. This illustrates what takes place in our lowly earthly lives, when the glorious Christ is let into our hearts to dwell there.

Transformation is something very real. Sinful things are put out of the life--and the beauty of Christ takes their place. All holiness of character is summed up in love. If we truly love--our life is transformed. Love is bright and shining. Love makes all the world bright to our eyes. One writes: "A woman with a loving heart is sure to look upon the bright side of life, and by her example induces others to do so. She sees a good reason for all the unwelcome events which others call bad luck. She believes in silver linings and likes to point them out to others. A week of rain or fog, an avalanche of unexpected guests, a dishonest servant, an unbecoming bonnet, or any other of the minor afflictions of everyday life have nothing to disturb the deep calm of her soul. The love-light is always in her eyes, whether the day is dark or bright. It is she who conquers the grim old uncle, and the dyspeptic aunt. The cross-eyed baby reaches out its arms to her and is comforted. Old people and strangers always ask for her in the crowded streets. Her gentle heart helps her to see the reason for every poor sinner's mistakes." That is transformation!

Paul's list of the fruits of the Spirit, all are shining qualities. Love is the first. Joy is another. Joy is always bright. It is blue sky filled with stars. Peace is another. All in the wonderful list are transformed graces, "long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control." They all are features of the image of God, which though dimmed or marred by sin--are restored by the Spirit in the new Christian life. This is the ideal for every Christian life--shining with the glory of God's grace.

In a certain heathen temple, the priest puts a mark on the face of the worshipers who have made their offerings before the idol, and all day they bear this mark wherever they go. All who see them know where they have been in the morning, and what they have done.

Just so, nearly everyone we meet on the streets, carries some mark which tells whence he has come, at what altar he has knelt. In some faces, one sees the look which tells unmistakably of a carnal life--appetite, lust, passion. It is easy to know at what shrines these bow. Some faces show hardness, coldness, bitterness, and one reads in them of the crushing out of the gentleness of the heart in resentment or misanthropy. One's face is marked with the deep furrows of care, telling of anxiety and worry. Here is one that bears traces of sorrow. There are men, too, who worship at the altar of Mammon and women who bow before the goddess of Pleasure. Each face tells the story of the life's devotion.

There are those, too, whose faces carry in them the shining of peace which tells of the love of Christ in their heart. Wherever they go they shed a quiet, holy light, which witnesses to their faith and their devotion to the will of God. This is the one secret of transformation.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/transformation/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net