

TRANSFORMING GRACE

Text: Luke 19:1-10

The real transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ is that he can take a heart of stone and turn it into a heart of flesh. Ref: Ezekiel 36:26-27

This is true transformation. You go from being cruel to being kind, from being greedy to being generous, from being self-obsessed to being others centered. This type of transformation is available to every follower of Jesus Christ ... if you'll take the first step and recognize your need for change. Ref: Luke 5:31-32

We've all sinned, just not everyone who is ready to admit it. All that any of us has to offer to God is brokenness and strife ... Ref: Ro.3:10

1. God hasn't given up on you, even if everyone else has.

I think Luke is being more than literal when he talks about Zacchaeus. He was not only small in stature; he was small in character.

When Jesus looks at you, he doesn't merely see who you are today. He sees the person you can be.

Even if no one else sees your potential, Jesus does. That's the first thing to remember if you want to experience God's transformational grace: It is possible. You can change. God hasn't given up on you.

2. Your transformation can (and should) begin right now.

If you don't know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you don't have to put it off any longer. You don't have to wait until you're good enough. He accepts you right now. Today is the best day to come to Christ.

3. Your transformation begins with a first step.

Zacchaeus experienced the acceptance, grace, and mercy of Jesus Christ, and it changed the way he lived.

His personal experience with Jesus resulted in his generosity toward others. The change of heart leads to a change of behavior. Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:26

Your correct response is this: God, since you promised to make me a new person, I'm going to be a new person. I'm going to act different. I'm going to change what I can and trust you to change the rest."

In this story we have seen the transformation of Zacchaeus. As the story opened, he was a sinner. We saw him become a seeker. He was an observer. He became a participant. He became a follower. And then, a fully devoted disciple.

Where are you in the process? Sinner? Seeker? Observer? Participant? Follower? Wherever, Jesus is ready to receive you.