

Visions and Revelations:
Message 15 — The Apostle Peter (5, Cont.)

After hearing and considering the word that was spoken, a group of brothers and sisters were inspired by some of the verses that were shared. We felt that it was helpful to reconsider these verses again to dig deeper into the burden of the message and to discover how rich it could be to us. We compiled these verses into six sections, one for each day of the week until the next message, in hopes that many other saints could spend a bit of time every day to reconsider the burden of our brother in a new light. If anyone considers some of these verses or questions and feels enriched by them, we ask you to please leave a comment on the Church in Cleveland site under the message to share your thoughts! Thanks! Grace and peace be to all the saints!

Note: These six sections are not comprehensive of the content of the message! This is just designed to be a help to get into a portion throughout the days.

DAY 1

Romans 12:2

“And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.”

Luke 22:42

“...saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”

The apostle Paul stressed that we need to be transformed by the renewing of the mind that we may prove what is the will of God and what is good and well pleasing to Him. In our human life we experience physical, emotional, and intellectual transformation as we grow up and develop. In a similar manner, we can also experience spiritual transformation. In this verse specifically, through the renewing of the mind, our thoughts, considerations, and plans can be transformed! From being self centered on what we like, what we think is best, and what we want to do, we begin to consider what God likes, what God would like to do, and what is in God’s will.

In this spiritual transformation we experience one stage of glory to another stage of glory! What one brother is doing or not doing may bother us, or what one sister says or doesn’t say, all these things may bother us. However, we should realize that these things could be from our old man, from our old opinion. When our mind is renewed we are very open to the Lord. We don’t insist on, “I want this car, that house, or this career,” but we are able to come to the Lord and say, “Lord, what would you like me to do?” We are able to come to God in this purity and simplicity, and we are able to say like the Lord Jesus, “Not my will but Yours be done.”

DAY 2

2 Corinthians 3:18

“But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.”

To grow deeper in the Lord, we need to learn to have a life of beholding and reflecting. We cannot change our own hearts nor can we force ourselves to desire the Lord’s will over our own. We can, however, spend many hours beholding Christ. If you see Christ all the time, eventually you will look like Christ. In the same way that a family who spends much time together begins to share similar mannerisms, values, and even physical appearances, so it can be with us and Christ.

The Bible reminds us that we need to have an unveiled face as we behold Him. This means we are genuine and sincere before the Lord, not praying prayers we think we *should* pray, but instead simply being honest with Him. Oh, how much we need the Lord’s mercy in this! To be able to tell Him, “Lord, I want to come to You with an unveiled face. Please see me exactly as I am. I don’t need to hide my fallenness, weaknesses, limitations, etc. Instead, I confess them to You. I want You to know exactly who I am, exactly what I’m going through, what joys and sorrows and frustrations and hopes are buried within my heart. I want to let You know everything.”

Brothers and sisters, when we present our real situations to the Lord like this, the Bible says it’s just like a mirror. Who is on the other side of that mirror? It’s not us; it’s Christ. So when you look in the mirror, you see Christ. The more you see Christ, the more you reflect Christ. The more you see Christ, the more you are conformed to Christ. How marvelous this is!

Use the 2 Corinthians verse above to exercise your spirit and come into the Lord’s presence. You can pray-read, softly recite, or even just sigh His name over and over again. This can bring you into 20-30 minutes of beholding Him with an unveiled face. The Lord may lead you into more verses, or to enjoy a hymn, or even to pour out your heart to Him. No matter what, may you be brought more into Christ. May we all take the time every day to behold Him, to reflect Him and, eventually, to be transformed by Him.

DAY 3

Romans 8:28-29a, 30b

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son...He also glorified.

Colossians 2:28-29

whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man fullgrown in Christ; for which also I labor, fighting according to His operation which operates in me in power.

When it comes to transformation, God uses all things to bring us into glory. Can you believe in that? The reason you have your job, your coworkers, your environment, even your kids. The way some are sweet and some are hard to handle. God arranges everything to work together for good for those who love God. Learn to see that there's nothing called "unlucky" or "unblessed," but it is all in the hands of the Lord.

Once you have some transformation, you have to learn to be with others. When you are with others, you labor. Teach, warn, rebuke, admonish, nourish, do everything so that every man can be full-grown in Christ. This will give you real transformation. Nothing gives you more growth than the brothers and sisters God has sovereignly placed around you and with you to labor with.

What brothers and sisters are around you to help you to grow? Do you realize these ones are the ones God has specially arranged for your good? Choose a saint the Lord has placed in your life for you to undergo the most transformation for the building up of His church and call them! Pray together that you could together be presented full-grown in Christ!

DAY 4

Ephesians 4:16

Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part [portion], causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love."

In the Body of Christ, the joints are a blessing. The joints are those who are quite useful and operative, like the elders or the serving ones who regularly minister to the church. But more than that, "through the operation in the measure of each one part causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love." So yes, the joints are important and the Lord very much desires to have joints in the church life. A human body does need good elbows, knees, hips, and so on in order to move and function. But the joints can never operate properly unless all the parts surrounding the joint also is operating. The knee may want to extend in order to walk, but it cannot do so unless the leg muscles contract properly, unless the toes splay correctly to balance, unless the feet are solid enough to bear weight, and so on.

So when the joint says, "I want to do something," the other portions also have to be saying, "We want to as well." Each and every one is crucial. We may often think that the joint decides everything. But no matter how strong a ministry may be, without all the parts (that is, the saints) being strong, that church will never stand up. A prevailing church life does not just come from joints, it comes from all the parts. It is within those parts that the strength the church lies.

May the Lord really reveal this to each one of us. Spend some time with the Lord in this verse. Maybe tell Him, "Lord, make me healthy. I don't want just to be a churchgoer. I want to go through a process for the Lord's building up. With You and Your working, I can be a healthy part for the building up of the body of Christ. Maybe I don't lead, but oh, may I be one who

exhibits life, who has Christ, who displays strength, who supports your Body. As a part, I operate and cause the growth of the body unto the building up of itself in love.”

DAY 5

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using **gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw**, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.*

When we work to build up the church, we should build with materials that have eternal value. These materials are gold, silver, and precious metals. Gold represents God Himself, the nature of God. Silver represents the redemptive work of Christ. Not only are we saved from our sins, but this salvation is constantly working in us to save us from our own disposition, temperament, and even intelligence. Precious stones represent the work of the Spirit. The Spirit is working in us and transforming us to grow properly. Without these three things (God, the redemptive work of Christ, and the Spirit working in us) there can be no building.

The wood, hay, and straw represents when we try to build with our own ability. Instead of building with materials of eternal value, we build according to our own power, wisdom, and talent. This may not be intentional on our part, but oftentimes we lose sight of the purpose behind what we are doing. We become so caught up in “serving” that we forget to ask ourselves, “Is this what God really wants? Does He really desire for me to do this?” Nevertheless, the fear of building with the wrong materials should not deter us from building, because eventually everything will be tested by fire. Only the gold, silver, and precious stones will remain while the wood, hay, and straw will be burned. So what does it mean to build with gold, silver, and precious stones? The people I serve become gold; they become a person *of* God. The people I serve become silver; they experience the salvation of Christ. The people I serve become precious stones; they are willing to go through different environments for the Spirit to work in them and transform them. I pray that we can see what is of value to God and build up the church according to His heart’s desire.

DAY 6

Matthew 16:18

*And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and **the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.***

When the church is built up with gold, silver, and precious metals, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against it. Notice that when it mentions “gates” it is plural. There may be many different gates that lead to Hades, and these may be different for each individual. It may be a desire for wealth, good education, stable career, ideal family, or even more obvious sins like lust or greed. Anything that’s not of Christ belongs to Satan, and he can easily use these things to lead you away from Christ and His church. That is why our minds need to be renewed. That is why we need to be transformed so our person is of Christ and reflects Christ. We don’t want to be attracted by the vain things of this world, but we should desire for our living to match His will. Only then can we build up the church with gold, silver, and precious metals. A builded church is a church that cannot be overcome by the gates of Hades. Reflect on what “gates” may be in your life and ask the Lord in prayer to remove anything that is not of Christ, until only Christ remains.