

Visions and Revelations

Message 15: The Apostle Peter (5, Cont.)

Note: This is a lightly edited transcript meant to aid saints in personal and small group fellowship and pursuing.

Well, we're continuing our burden, "The Visions and Revelations of the Apostle Peter." More than just growth, this growth is actually transformation. The more you grow, the more you are transformed. So with a *process of transformation – all the saints who have revelations must: a) be transformed to be one with God's will by the renewing of the mind.* What does transformation mean? It's very simple. There is a form and when the form is changed, it's transformed. I'm in one form, and then I'm transformed, changed to another form. With my physical body, I'm being transformed every day. After 85 years, I have transformed to my height. It could be forty-some years ago when I reached my height, and then I'm even transforming downward! Look at me today, so ugly, filled with spots and wrinkles, and everything is unpleasant. You want to walk, you want to do anything, whatever you want, something seems wrong. This also is a kind of transformation. But brothers, spiritual transformation is from glory to glory, from one stage of glory to another stage of glory, from life to life, from maturity to advanced maturity.

Transformed means I, when I'm saved, I just have my old mind, the old "I." I'm saved, I'm a Christian now, I believe in Jesus so I go to meetings. I like the message, I don't like the message. See? You see? You're not transformed. I like this brother, I don't like that brother. I like this brother's preaching, I don't want that brother to preach. You see brother? You are so much yourself, you are not transformed. The very form you were when you were saved that came into the church life is still the same form. That is okay for 3 months, or for half year. That is not okay for the long term. How long you been saved? 10 – 15 years. I've been in the church life for 10 years. Okay, so how are you today? I don't know, I'm bothered. You know why I'm bothered in my church life? I don't like that elder. Every time I see that elder, my head aches. I'm very bothered. That elder has bothered me for 10 years. What does that mean? In 10 years, there was no transformation within you. The elder may not even realize he's bothersome to you. If he realized, he may have quit his eldership just to make you happy. But do you realize how terrible we can become? We need to be transformed from one form to another form, to grow from one level of life to another level, another level, and another level. In every level there's a new form exhibited, it's transformed.

What is transformation? *Be transformed to be one with God's will by the renewing of the mind.* How do you know you are transformed? First, come to your mind. Your mind is settled right? I want to be a doctor. I want to be a millionaire. I want to be a CEO. I want to be a teacher. I want to be a professor. Or, I want to just be a family man. I just want to be with my wife and my children. There's nothing called right or wrong. There's nothing wrong with being a doctor. There's nothing wrong with being a rich man. There's nothing wrong with being a family man. But, let me ask you this question: is this what the Lord wants? Is what you want, what the Lord wants? I served the Lord with my capacity. I see a millionaire, he can also serve the Lord with his capacity. I see a professor, he can also serve the Lord with his capacity. I see another one who is just a common family man, and he serves the Lord with his capacity. But, we all

have one central goal: to find out what the will of God is. Do you realize you can have two kinds of living? Your living according to you or your living according to the will of God. How marvelous is this?

You need to be transformed, transformed so your mind is renewed. You begin to know what the will of God is, what God desires, if I can use a strong word, what is God's economy, what is God's eternal purpose, and what God wants to accomplish. One day, your will matches that will (God's will)! Well, that is very great. You know what's our problem? We do things to just please ourselves or please whom we think we should please. Children do things to please the parents. Parents do things to please the child. You know brothers, God says, "You can do many things. I don't care what field you are in. I want to ask you, in whatever field you are in, wherever you are, can you live a life according to the will of God, according to God's purpose, according to God's economy, according to what God is after, according to God's desire?" Will your manner of living make God so happy that God says "The way you live is exactly the way I see that you ought to live."

Maybe I'm a professor and you are professor. I'm a professor who is very successful and famous in my field. You're also a professor who is very successful and famous in your field. But brothers do you realize God desires both of us to be one, that regardless of whatever the field we are in, we are both for God's purpose, for God's economy, for God's will, and for the will of God. You know brothers, this is the first transformation God brings you out of: out of your own scope, your own field of life, your own hope, your your own expectations. God desires to bring you out of your own plan of life. God says "You can do anything but it has to be for my purpose, my will, my desire, you must be one with my will. Renew your mind." Brothers, renew your minds so you will know what the will of God is.

Then more than that, you need to grow deeper. You need to have a life, a life of what? Beholding and reflecting. Here, if I go a little bit slower, number one: I really desire to be one with the Lord. How can I be so one with the Lord? How can I say I know the will of God? I have to put aside my choice, I have to say Your choice. I have to put aside my plan of life. I have to say Lord, You plan my life. How would you have it? By beholding and reflecting. That is a very beautiful word. You can behold Christ and then you can reflect Christ. If you see Christ all the time, eventually you will look like Christ. Just like even today living on the earth, do you realize husbands and wives are beholding and reflecting? So eventually, a husband looks a little bit like his wife, and the wife looks a little bit like the husband. We call that a family face. More than that, even their children share the family face. I see some families where the father, the mother, and a few of their children, all look about the same. The way they move is the same. The way they do things is the same. The way they see things is the same. The way they think logically is the same. Why? Because they are beholding and reflecting.

The Bible says we need to have an unveiled face. When can the family not reflect one another? When is the family unable to behold and reflect? When one member is fake. When that member is fake, the beholding and reflecting is gone, because he is veiled. Do you understand what fake is? I don't like to get into the improper, unhealthy family situations, but it could happen. You know brothers, how much we need the Lord's mercy. We say Lord I want to come to You with unveiled face. "Hey! Lord, I just look like this. Please see me. I just look like this. I'm just this simple. I'm just this improper. I'm just this much in my fallen state. I'm just this much in my weakness and limitations. I'm just like this in all kinds of frustrations. But Lord I come to You, oh Lord I come. Lord I come just as I am. Lord I confess who I

am. I want You to know who I am. I want to tell You this is what I am. I want to let You know how limited I am, how joyful I am, how sad I am. I want to let you everything and know all of who I am.” When I present my real situation to the Lord with unveiled face, the Bible says it’s just like there’s a mirror. Who’s on the other side of the mirror? It’s not you, it’s Christ. You come to see your own face but Christ was on the other side of the mirror. So you look at the mirror and 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 is this?

You know brothers, how can you have transformation? Renew your mind. Don’t live for and by yourself, live for God’s will. More than that, be one beholding and reflecting Christ. Every day dear brothers, I advise you, don’t make religious prayers. “Lord I pray do this and do that for me.” Rather, spend 20-30 minutes every day and come to the Lord’s presence groaning, sighing, and calling on His name. “Lord I’m just like this, I need You.” If the Lord leads you to sing a hymn, enjoy a hymn. If you have a bible with you, read some verses. Then, reading the verses and enjoying the hymns will bring you more into Christ. You are beholding Christ and reflecting Christ. Eventually, transformation will be there. You know brothers, I should say I’m very thankful. Renew your mind and be transformed. Then beholding Christ and reflecting Christ you can be transformed.

And more than that the Bible says the Lord is able to bring all things together to transform us. If I can read the verse: *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good for those who love God.* Could you believe in that? God works all things together. The reason you are able to find such a place to live, the reason you buy such a car, the reason God allows you to have such a job. The reason you have these coworkers. The reason some are so sweet, some are so hard. Some are so greedy, some are so nice. The reason why, you have to take my word in a good way, the reason why you have these few kids. Some are so sweet, perfect children. Some are so hard to handle. The Lord works in simple ways. God causes all things to work together for those who love God. In other words, if you do not love God, you just get into, “I got this naughty boy.” No, you don’t have a naughty boy, that poor boy has a naughty dad. That’s why God has to arrange all things to work together.

For those who love God, “Lord I love You. Because I love You, I don’t insist on anything. I don’t hold anything, I want everything to be in Your presence.” *To those who are called according to His purpose.* Eventually he wants to bring us through transformation into glory. How marvelous is this. Brother, seemingly things are very simple right? How do you have transformation? Change your mind. Make God’s will first. Second, live a life that’s very honest, genuine, and sincere before the Lord. Open everything up to Him. Number three, there is nothing called, “I am unlucky,” nothing called, “I am not blessed.” God always blesses you. You are always under His blessing, but when He blesses you according to His way, many times it is very hard, but you have to say, “praise the Lord, it is hard, but transform me.”

With this, you labor. You know, brother, nothing can help you more than laboring. But don’t just say “I go, I go.” No, no. Paul says, “I labor, I warn every man, admonishing every man or teaching every man. I warn every man and teach every man.” Or, “I rebuke every man, and also I nourish every man. That I may present every man full grown in Christ.” Now, you have some transformation. So you have to learn to be with others. When you are with others, remember, you labor, teach him, warn him, nurture him,

encourage him, rebuke him, so that he can be full grown in Christ. That will give you real transformation. Nothing gives you more growth than the brothers and sisters in the church life you labor with. You labor with them, they give you growth. Eventually this will produce a corporate operation. This is marvelous.

If I read: the process of corporate operation. *Out from whom (Christ), the body being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply.* That means every joint is a blessing. Joint means those who are quite useful. The elder can be a joint. The brother who ministers can be a joint. But more than that, *through the operation of the measure of each one portion causes growth of the body unto the building up itself in love.* You know, brother, we always ask the question, is the gifted one precious or the not so gifted? Are the mature ones precious or some of the younger ones? The Bible here gave us the crucialness of the situation.

The Lord desires to have joints in the church life. You need good joints. But joints never can operate properly unless there is the operation of each one of the parts and each one's portion. Who are you? You can say I'm a joint. Maybe I'm not, but I'm a portion. Look at my arm, I don't have a marvelous arm. You look at the muscle man, look at his arm, with eggs all over. You can count eggs through their arm. You can see strong muscles. So when the joint works, it becomes very powerful. When you stretch out the fist, it's not the joint that stretches out the fist, but it's the muscle that produces the strength of the stretching. When the joint says I want to do something, the parts, the portions have to say, we want to as well. We rich parts make the joints very valuable.

Look at me, my hand will not have much strength. Actually, to tell you honestly, at my age, 80-some, I cannot walk that long, I cannot walk speedy, as fast as I used to. Brother, what happened? It's not the joint, I don't have a problem with my knee, I don't have problems with my ankle. I have a problem with my muscle. The muscle in my leg has problems now. That part is not that good. Therefore I cannot walk that well. Could you believe in that? We usually think it's the joint that decides everything. Right or wrong? Yes. But when the joint does everything healthily, strong, with strength, with testimony, that is not a joint, it's a part. Do you know how crucial you are? You can tell the Lord, "Lord, who am I? I am not a joint. I have been saved only one year, two years, three years. I don't have much, but I tell you, I am a really good part. If you want to stretch your hands, the part here says, "Amen. A lot of eggs here with strength. With my strength the joint becomes powerful."

I tell you, no matter how strong is the ministry, without the parts, the saints, being strong, that church will never stand up. No matter how strong is the joint, when the parts, the saints, are weak, are common, are churchgoers, are only making meetings, they will never have a prevailing church life. A prevailing church life does not just come from joints, it comes from the parts. I hope we can tell the Lord, "Lord build us up. If I'm a joint, make me an able joint, but if I'm a part, make me a healthy part." The very part is where the strength is. The very part is where the display of healthiness is. This very part decides the healthiness of the building up of the body. So when you see the body built up, when you see the testimony built up in localities, you need joints, you need the ministry, you need good leading ones, able leading ones, but more than that you need all the saints to be healthy parts. So you can see in this, "Lord transform us to a point, so not only our mind changes, not only daily we have the Lord's presence. Not only we are being transformed, all things working together for us to gain the glory. More than that, now,

we labor. More than that, Lord, make us either a strong joint or a strong part. When I'm a strong part, maybe eventually my operation will come into the strong joints." Brothers and sisters do I make sense to you? I hope we can see something. We can tell the Lord, "Lord make me healthy. I want to go through such a marvelous process. I don't want just to be a churchgoer. I want to go through a process for the Lord's building up." Eventually, I am very happy to say everybody can declare, "I can be a healthy part for the building up of the body of Christ. I don't have much, but I am a part. For me to lead, no! For me to exhibit life, yes! For me to have Christ yes! For me to display strength yes! With the joints operating, I'm the part supporting with full strength." Here you can see there's a building up of the body. If you read the verse it says the operation of the measure of each one portion. I'm a portion, I operate, and this causes the growth of the body unto the building up. Joints give you supply. But eventually it's all the portions, all the parts, operating so strong. Then the growth of the body. What is the growth? The growth is building up. How good is that? If you ask me, "Titus what is building up?" I say, "When you brothers all grow properly. Your growth in life is the building up, but with what? With exercise." I labor on people. I become a real life-giving part, real strength, supporting strength, that you can even say in a very nice way, "Lord Jesus, I am not much, but with the joints I am such a marvelous portion with such a marvelous part. My portion, my part can be a real blessing, to whatever the joints desire to do. The joint says "I go to preach the gospel," then there are many parts that say "Amen!" Gospel is preached. If the joints say, "Let's preach the gospel," and all the parts are like 85 year old muscles, with no strength, how can you do it? May the Lord have mercy.

Let's come to the next point: "The building up testified by the apostle Paul." The apostle Paul also talks about the building up. He said that he was a wise master builder who laid the foundation which is Jesus Christ. Christ is the foundation and we must take heed how to build upon it. Do you want to be in the church life? Then take heed how to be in the church life properly: we must build on the foundation of gold, silver, and precious stones. The foundation does not change. There is a foundation, and that foundation is Christ. When we use gold, silver, and precious stones to build upon it then God is very happy. So, what is gold? Gold is God Himself. Gold is the nature of God. What is silver? Silver is the redemption of Christ. We have God Himself. We have the redemptive work of Christ. Brothers and sisters, this is marvelous—not only am I saved, but I also have salvation. This salvation work within me changes my whole person. I am a person of Christ. I am saved from my disposition, from my temperament, from my talents, from my intellect, from my self-centered life—I am saved from all these. I have become a "man of silver," so one with Christ and willing to give up everything for the Lord's interests—for God's interests. Finally, precious stones are the work of the Spirit. I allow God to work on me and to do everything to me so that I can be one with God. So we have Father, Son and Spirit. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit produce these three things: gold, silver, and precious stones. We must build with these. Without God there is no building. Without the salvation of Christ there is no building. Without the transformative work of the Spirit there is no building. Brothers, we can be a builded material by having God, having Christ, and having the work of Spirit.

Now, this building is being built on the triune God's work. But if anyone builds more than this, his work is by wood, hay, and straw. Wood is not that bad, and hay has very little value, but still has value, and straw has zero value. But, brothers, all of these have no value before God. These indicate when we build according to our power, our wisdom, our talent, our ability, our means, our ways, or our skillfulness. You can have all these, but when you try to build it shall all be burned. Brothers, I have been building the

church all these years, yet I always have this prayer: “Lord, take care of me.” If I only build with my talent or my ability, if I only build with my wisdom, if I only build with my ways or my means, if I only build with my skillfulness, then God says, ‘I will burn it!’ But if I can build with gold—what does that mean, to build with Gold? It means people served by me become gold; People served by me experience the salvation of Christ; People served by me are willing to go through all the environments, through every circumstance, and let the Spirit pressure them so that they can become the precious stone. If I can produce this, then what I have is valuable. I can build meeting halls, but God says, “Little value.” I can do a lot of things, but God says, “No value. Eventually, it will be burned.” So, each one’s work, eventually, Paul said in this way: Each one’s work is revealed and tested by fire (1 Cor. 3:13). One day, fire will come and burn it. If anyone’s work which has been built on the foundation endures, he will receive a reward. Why does it say “endures”? You cannot burn gold. You cannot burn silver. You cannot burn precious stones. Even if you burn them, they’re still gold, they’re still silver, and they’re still precious stones. But, if you’re work is wood, hay, straw, then eventually they will go through the fire and they all become ashes. Nothing is left but ashes.

If any one’s works burn up, he will suffer loss. In other words, you say “I did so much!” but the Lord says, “Let Me burn it.” After it is burned, we find in all that I served is little Christ, little God, little work of the Spirit; only man’s wisdom, only man’s ability. Outwardly it is a beautiful building, but God says, “When the fire comes and they disappear, he will suffer loss.” Of course he suffers loss! Your lifelong labor is burned up. Just like that it disappeared! But, eventually, he himself will be saved. I am thankful for that. I tell you, I have learned to build with gold, silver, and precious stones. Then at the same time, I know, unconsciously, that there is a lot of wood. I cannot say, “Everything with me is gold!” Only Christ can do that. But all of this, I’m happy, will be burned. One day, in eternity, I will see whatever I labored and built for the testimony which is of gold, of silver, of precious stones. All the things I do which can be beautiful, when it is all burned, has no value. Why? Because they are wood, hay and straw.

You know, brothers, when the church is built, it is so solid. Why is it so solid? Because the builded church is full of life. It is full of the growth of life. It is full of the maturity of life. The life element’s domain is the church life. When this church life is builded up, what do you see? You see everything that has eternal value. You see gold, you see silver, you see precious stones. When a group of these kinds of materials are built together, then eventually the Lord will say, “The gates (which are the power) of Hades shall not prevail against her, the builded church.” Why? There’s nothing to overcome. You try to overcome gold—how can you? You try to overcome silver—how can you? You try to overcome precious stones—how can you? You try to overcome maturity of life, which is eternal—how can you? You try to overcome the element that bears the nature of eternity—how can you? Let me tell you, Hades has a lot of gates. One gate goes to college, one gate goes to money, one gate goes to politics, one to business, to sin, to all kinds of proper, improper, sinful, or common—there all kinds of gates, but all the gates issue a lot of devilish elements which belong to Satan. You say, “No, I’m a professor!” Your university belongs to Satan. I say, if anything is not of Christ, it belongs to Satan. And all this cannot burn. Don’t say “that day.” Even today, isn’t that true? Let’s say I’m a professor and Brother so-and-so is also a professor. I’m a professor because I want to be a professor. I’m bright enough to be a professor, I’m good enough to be a professor, I’m very special—manifest—in my field. Brother so-and-so is also a professor. As a professor, he has to be bright. He had to study hard as a student. There must be something with him. But for some reason, I’m a professor and so many things touch me that I just cannot be proper for God’s building. Yet,

for him, he's very solid. Does anything frustrate him? No. "I'm for Christ. I'm for the church. I'm a professor. I honor my professor-ship. I honor the university I'm in. I honor the students I teach, and I love them. At the same time, nothing touches me, because I am for God's will. My mind has renewed! My person is with Christ! And I am transformed!" You know, brother, when I'm such a man, the gates of Hades cannot overcome us.

Don't say "that day." *Today* the gates of Hades always release all kinds of elements. All kinds of things come out of the gates of Hades just to trap man—just to try to capture man. They even try to capture Christians to blind many Christians, to cause them to say "this is ok." But there's something that says, "I am of gold." Anything that is not related to God—to God Himself—I'm not interested. I am of silver—I'm not interested in anything that is not through Christ's salvation. I am a precious stone—I only care for testifying of Christ alone." Don't you like this verse? The gates of Hades cannot prevail against a builded up church. Why? Because in the builded up church you see the precious elements; You see a marvelous growth of life process. You see the elements that are needed. We all have the revelations, we all have the experience of our mind being renewed, reflecting the Lord's presence, and being transformed. Then we all have labor. We are builders, with gold, silver, and precious stones. Over here, I think Satan would sigh, "I cannot make it. These people are so Christly. These people are so Godly—as God. I cannot overcome it." That's why the Lord says, "Peter, I say also unto you, upon this rock"— that is Christ— "I will build the church." When you have the vision of Christ, you are ready to be part of that building. "Upon this rock, I will build the church." In this marvelous building, you can say we have lifelong experience for us to enjoy, for us to pursue, and for us to be in. Eventually, you can say, "Lord, I don't know much at all, but I'd like to be a good part, a good muscle, that I am one producing the strength of the church life because I'm so strong in the Lord!" May the Lord have mercy, and may the Lord bless us. Lord be with you. Amen.