

IS THE TRUTH TRANSFORMING YOUR LIFE?

Note to the speaker:

Build faith in the transforming power of the truth. Give examples of difficult changes people have made in order to please Jehovah. Emphasize that all of us need to keep transforming our lives with the goal of more closely reflecting God's image and thereby glorifying him

THE TRUTH HAS TRANSFORMING POWER (6 min.)

Bible truth has power to accomplish a marvelous transformation of human lives

At Romans 12:2, "be transformed" comes from Greek word *me-ta-mor-pho'o*, indicating a complete change, like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly (*w90 4/1 16*)

Examples of people in first century C.E. prove the truth can do this (*g78 5/8 27*)

A transformation took place among Christians at both Corinth and Colossae (1Co 6:9-11; Col 3:5-10)

Such a transformation also occurred in the life of the apostle Paul (Compare 1 Timothy 1:13-16 with 1 Corinthians 11:1)

Does the truth have transforming power today?

The prophet Isaiah foretold transformation of human personalities for our day (Isa 11:6-9; *sl 183-94* [note ¶18, 20]; *w83 10/1 4-6*; *it-2 257*)

Many people have made such transformations, making their lives more pleasant and purposeful (*w90 4/1 17*; *w89 10/1 21*; *w88 1/1 5-6*; *w88 5/1 7, 18*; *w85 2/1 25*; *w83 10/1 6-7*)

RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION (10 min.)

All of us have need for transformation (Ro 3:23; 13:11-14)

Motivation comes from the desire to please the Creator and reflect his personality (Col 3:10)

The Bible identifies personality characteristics that have to be shed (Pr 6:16-19)

The Bible describes desirable traits that we should cultivate (Ga 5:22, 23; *w90 4/1 17-18*)

The Bible shows *how* to make the transformation (*w93 3/1 15-18*)

Must first 'make mind over' by feeding mind on God's Word (Ro 12:2; Eph 4:23)

By means of prayer, we can petition God's help through holy spirit (Lu 11:13; 1Jo 5:14, 15)

We can ask for the help of elders in the Christian congregation (Jas 5:14-20; *w89 9/15 17*)

We find, not long lists of rules, but counsel and principles that help us to know what changes are needed

New ones have definite aspects to work on, but there are also areas for attention by those who have been in truth a long time

TURNING FROM PRACTICES THAT ABUSE THE BODY AND MIND (15 min.)

Application of Bible principles helps individuals to turn from practices that abuse the body and mind, thus improving their lives

Alcohol abuse

Although the Bible does not prohibit the moderate drinking of alcoholic beverages, it does condemn drunkenness (Ga 5:21; 1Ti 3:8; 5:23; *yp 262-71*)

Getting the Bible view of alcohol abuse has helped many to turn from such a course (*w86 10/1 24*; *g82 7/22 15*)

Transformation brings benefits in the form of improved health, happier family life (*g87 5/8 6-7*; *g87 11/8 10-11*; *g80 3/8 7-12*)

Smoking and drug abuse

Smoking has a detrimental effect on the body and mind and is, therefore, not in harmony with Scriptural principles (Ro 12:1; *g89 11/8 26-7*; *rs 109-11*)

Scriptural principles show that Christians must avoid all drug abuse (Lu 10:27; Ga 5:20, where Greek word *phar-ma-ki'a*, rendered "practice of spiritism," literally means "druggery"; 2Co 7:1; *tp 158*; *rs 107*; *w73 339, 342-3*)

A desire to live in harmony with such principles has helped many to turn away from drug addiction; this change has brought benefits (*g89 7/8 14-15*; *w88 10/1 29*; *g87 11/22 21-3*)

Sexual immorality

The Bible specifically condemns fornication and uncleanness (1Co 6:9, 18; Ga 5:19-21)

Bible truth has helped many to clean up their lives and thus avoid many painful problems (*yp 181-91*; *w94 5/15 20*)

Transformation would include avoiding not only fornication but also any uncleanness with opposite sex (*yp 193-7*)

TURNING FROM WORLDLY THINKING AND ATTITUDES (10 min.)

Another need for transformation involves overcoming the subtle influence of worldly thinking and attitudes

Changes that Bible truth can help us make include:

Overcoming prejudices or pride regarding race or nationality (Ac 10:34, 35; *w89* 7/1 11-12; *g88* 1/22 27; *g88* 6/22 8-10)

Resisting pressure to be immodest or improper in dress and grooming (1Ti 2:9, 10; *w88* 8/15 17; *w77* 149-50; *g77* 9/22 27-8; *yp* 90-6)

Placing material things and self-interest in proper relationship to God and fellowman (Mt 6:33; 1Ti 6:6-8; *w90* 2/15 6; *w87* 10/1 5-6)

To make such changes requires constant effort because we are continually subjected to influences of the world (2Co 13:5)

Has the truth transformed your life in these areas?

All need to continue working on this

BENEFITS FROM TRANSFORMATION (4 min.)

Continued transformation of our lives brings increasing “glory” to Jehovah as we reflect his qualities more closely (2Co 3:18; *w90* 4/1 20; *w76* 327)

Will enjoy real physical and spiritual benefits, proving that even though effort is necessary, the results are worth it

(Review some of the benefits mentioned above)

Present benefits are just a small foretaste of those to come for all who continue to use Bible truth to transform their lives in harmony with God’s will

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)