

# Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

**Date** : 4 Feb 2024

**Sermon Title** : The Heart of Transformation

**Speaker** : Rev Reuben Ng

**Text** : Ephesians 2:10

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## INTRODUCTION

The term “Christians” was coined by non-believers in Antioch (Acts 11:26) to refer to those associated or belonging to Christ. It is a good word but let it not be a stumbling block for us to remain just there having associated with and belong to Christ. This is because “I am now a Christian” may connote “I have arrived” and the end goal has been achieved. But if we understand that we are called to be a disciple, it is a lifelong journey of not really achieving but constantly trying to be like our Master, learning and getting feedback from Him, being discipled by Him, and being changed and transformed to be more like Him. We are associated with and belong to Christ, but we are also called to be disciples of Christ, to be like Him.

### Ephesians 2:10 - For we are God's masterpiece..... (NLT)

Bonsais are beautiful not by chance but because there is a 'bonsai master' who prunes, cultivates and nurtures each of the different species of trees into a masterpiece. Similarly, we are God's masterpiece. God comes to cultivate us, lovingly tend to and prune us, each being very different, into His masterpiece. Together, we make up the body of Christ, with different roles, functions and strengths to shine for Jesus.

### What is Transformation?

In this sermon series called the Heart of FAITH, we learnt that 'F' stands for Fellowship which requires us to do something - respond, to engage and participate. 'A' for Adoration which also requires us to do something – live a lifestyle of worship where routine becomes reverence to God with everything done for the glory of God in worship to Him. "I" for Involvement which of course requires us to do something - to be involved and serving. When it comes to 'T' for Transformation it appears that we just stand there and let God do everything. If we think that is true, then we are wrong – there is still a part for us to play in Transformation.

In Philippians 2:5 Paul writes, “*Let the same **mind** be in you that was in Christ Jesus,*”. This is found in the same chapter we discussed in the last sermon, where we are to ‘*consider others better than ourselves*’. This tells us that we can choose to want to be of the same mind or not of the same mind as Jesus.

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*For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7*

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- As disciples it is important for us to be of the same mind as Christ, and therefore on our part, this is what we need to do in terms of transformation.

## How can we be Transformed?

*“So then, if **anyone** is **in Christ**, he is a **new creation**, what is **old** has **passed away** – look, what is **new** has **come!**” (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

- The condition is that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. If you have received Jesus Christ before, you are new. Before we received Christ, we were all under the power of sin (slave to sin) and in the kingdom of darkness. There is no way we have the same mind as Christ. But after the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, we were liberated from the power of sin, death, and the devil. God transported us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Now we have the freedom of choice to have the same mind of Christ and allow Him to transform us or remain unchanged where we are.
- Our “old self who is inclined to sin” has passed away. We now have the choice to walk in the path of light and allow Christ to transform us. We are no longer under the power of darkness because the old has died.

## Outcome of Transformation

To some, the transformation or change is visible but to most, what has changed inside is not immediately visible.

*“For we are God’s **masterpiece**. He has created us **anew** in Christ Jesus, so we **can** do the **good things** he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10)*

- At whatever stage of our Christian life, whether we are a young believer or have been a believer for many years, we can change to do the good things in Christ that He has prepared for us to do. We can because God has done everything possible to enable us through the strength of the Holy Spirit.

## Three areas in our lives God will transform

### 1. The Mind

*“Do not be **conformed** to this age, but be **transformed** by the **renewing** of the **mind**, so that you can discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2)*

- The transformation is not about change in external behaviour or the way we talk. It is about change from the inside out. When God says “do not be”, it means we can choose not to conform by the renewing of the mind.
- It is the word of God that renews our mind. For example, even though I have been

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told that I am useless, my mind is renewed when I learn from the scriptures that I am God's masterpiece. We call our church's Bible reading plan – 'Transformed by the Word' because we are prepared to be transformed by the reading of the Word so that we may discern what is the will of God – which is good, acceptable and perfect. Sometimes, if we do not know the will of God, it can mean that our mind has not been sufficiently renewed. The mind is about values, perspectives and what we think is right or wrong, which needs to be aligned with God's.

## 2. Fruit of the Spirit

*"But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Galatians 5:22)*

- This is the fruit of the Spirit which means by ourselves, we cannot bear fruit. We can only bear fruit by partnering with the Holy Spirit. Again, the change is on the inside but a bit more visible. We need to tap into the Holy Spirit to respond differently from our old ways, and overtime, it bears fruit. For example, instead of lashing out and saying hurtful words to others, the fruit of the Spirit of self-control will come out as our response when angered. All believers in Christ have the Holy Spirit to bear and grow its fruit in our lives.

## 3. Holy Conduct

*"... like the Holy One who called you, become **holy** yourselves in all of your **conduct**, for it is written," You shall be holy because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16)*

- This is what is visible. It is not about what we try to do on our own strength to be good, for we will be constantly warring inside if we do that. When God works from the inside out, our conduct is true, genuine and thorough, not a plastering. Because it is the Holy One who calls us to be holy, He will enable us to be holy/set apart, and after some time we will really become like Christ. It begins with renewing of the mind by spending time with the Word of God.

Our Fellowship, Adoration and Involvement all work toward this. Imagine being in our Life Group where we can be corrected when we share how we reacted negatively to challenges at work, over time we will not do the same. If we are constantly worshipping God in everything that we do being aware of His presence, there are immediately some things we would not say or do. When we are serving, we will realize there is ample space for the fruit of the Spirit to grow.

## CONCLUSION

Transformation is not a painless journey. When God chisels us, there is pain and friction and when that happens, we can choose to stay put since we are already a

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Christian or allow Him to transform us. May we choose to continue to have the same mind as Christ as His disciple, admit that it is painful but thank God for His grace to see us through so we can learn and grow to be more and more like Christ.

## **A. Review Sermon Application**

***Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.***

1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk?

1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?

2. Appoint someone to read Ephesians 2:10 slowly.

a. Reflect on your life as a member of the Christian community. How have you aligned to what the author exhorts in Ephesians 2:10? How can it be more intentional?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

- 3a. Compare your understanding of Christlike 'Transformation' before and after the sermon. Share if there is any difference in how this transformation is expected to take place in your group members' lives from how it should really be.
- 3b. What are some advantages of being transformed by the Word in fellowship with other believers?
- 3c. Visible transformation must be from the inside out through the work of the Holy Spirit and not our own doing.
  - (i) Why is this important?
  - (ii) Is your internal transformation visibly expressed in the fruit of the Spirit and holiness?
  
- 4a. In what ways can your group members help you in your transformation to be more like Jesus?
- 4b. Are you tempted to stay as you are when facing the pain of being pruned by God?
- 4c. How can your group members encourage or help you to press on with your transformation journey despite the pain?

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## **C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action**

*Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.*

5. Share your personal testimony on your transformation journey and how your community of faith has helped you be more and more like Christ.

## OR

Give thanks to God for His Word and the Holy Spirit that helps you to be transformed so you can be holy as He is holy.

6. As a group, seek the Holy Spirit's leading to support one another in this transformation journey especially when going through the pain of being pruned by God, so that together and collectively as Faith Methodist Church, we may be more Christ-like and reflect, represent and reveal Him to the world.

## Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Living Hope – Phil Wickham <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f2FXxDVO6w>
2. On That Day – CityAlight <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McX9SdQS4ml>
3. Take My Life and Let It Be – Reawaken Hymns  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3qWwGDGgVA>

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