

Priceless! You are Transformed!

I recently moved to a new appointment, as did several of my friends. One of my friends wrote to me as the moves were announced and asked me "Do you ever feel like you will hopefully only take the best version of yourself to your new appointment?" I responded that "I always hope to only take the best version of myself...!" Her question, even more than my response, has lingered on my heart and in my thoughts. I couldn't pinpoint why....

Deep inside I knew what I thought might be the reason. I'd been through a lot. There had been family health struggles, looking for a retirement home and getting beat by cash offers too many times...and now a move across country with less than fourteen months before retirement which would come with yet another move back across the country. A new role. A new focus. A New this, a new that. These things weren't the cause; they were merely distractions that allowed me to let my guard down, causing my relationship with God to fade more than I desired and realized, and probably causing me to spend too much time thinking about myself and my circumstances.

I am sure I was not the best version of myself as I was. I had to ask myself where do I even begin this journey of restoration and transformation? How can I ensure that I maintain this version of myself in the future? First, I need to remember who I am. 1 John 3:1 states: "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him." I am a child of God!

I needed to embrace God's design for me as stated in Ephesians 2:10, *"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"*. Then I needed to surrender again to God and spend time with Him in prayer and study because that is where the real transformation begins. I needed to restore those Holy Habits that keep me steadfast. Spiritual Disciplines, time with Him, knowing Him, becoming more like Him in my everyday ordinary life. Jeremiah 29:13 says, *"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

Here is a powerful scripture from Romans 12:1-2 – The Message Version:

"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

I want to be content with who I am, where I am, what I have, and what I do in relationship with My God, My Family, My Church, and people I meet along the way. I want to feel that if things are not perfect that's ok. That I don't need to perform or compare myself to others, (that would be a great transformation), and that I am who God created me to be – the best version of myself.

A Mastercard video I remember ended with these words: "Turning the everyday into days that change everything is priceless." That's what I want from my relationships, my work, free time. God turning my ordinary day, my ordinary everyday self and transforming it (me) into the best version of myself – which is me, a child of God, made in His image, embracing and being embraced by God. Priceless.



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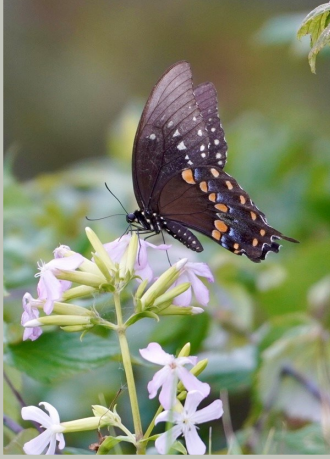


Territorial Women's Ministries Department

Commissioner Colleen Riley
Territorial President
of Women's Ministries

Colonel Genevera Vincent
Territorial Secretary
for Women's Ministries

Lt. Colonel Jeanne Baker
Territorial Women's Ministries



Music for the Heart

Here are a few prayerful songs which speak to me of the “Priceless” change I seek:

Draw Me Close to You: <https://youtu.be/67yWFbmVxAA?si=AbU9j8ygAj1YOxJb>

Change My Heart, Oh God: https://youtu.be/IIsmG-_eJTU?list=RDIIsmG-_eJTU&t=2

The Power of Your Love: https://youtu.be/H9_0jiO5ZRM

“NOTHING HAPPENS...until the pain of remaining
the same OUTWEIGHTS the pain of CHANGE.”

~ Arthur Burt

Transforming Helps

Some books about Holiness,
Holy Habits and Spiritual Trans-
formation:

*Spiritual Disciplines Handbook:
Practices that Transform Us* by
Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

Renovation of the Heart by
Dallas Willard

Sacred Rhythms. By Ruth Haley
Barton

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality
by Peter Scazzero

*Emotionally Healthy Spirituality
Day by Day: A 40-day Journey
with the Daily Office* by Peter
Scazzero

Conversations about Holiness
by Bill and Diane Ury

*Rest for Your Soul: A Bible
Study on Solitude, Silence &
Prayer* by Wendy Blight

“Transforming Quotes”

“We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.” ~ Maya Angelou

“Change is the essence of life; be willing to surrender what you are for what you could become.” ~ Reinhold Niebuhr

“Transformation is not about becoming something you’re not, but rather, becoming the best version of yourself.” <https://graciousquotes.com/transformation/>

“We take what we think are the tools of spiritual transformation into our own hands and try to sculpt ourselves into robust Christ-like specimens. But spiritual transformation is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the Master Sculptor.” ~ Jerry Bridges

“I pray because I can’t help myself. I pray because I’m helpless. It doesn’t change God – it changes me.” ~ C.S. Lewis

“All change comes from deepening your understanding of the salvation of Christ and living out the changes that understanding creates in your heart.” ~ Tim Keller

“When we wrap our minds and hearts around God’s gracious work in the gospel and root ourselves in Jesus, we find the strength and power to change, because the power to change comes from him alone.” ~ Matt Eachus

“If Christ’s people genuinely enter Christ’s way of the heart, they will find a sure path toward becoming the persons they were meant to be: thoroughly good and godly persons yet purged of arrogance, insensitivity, and self-sufficiency”...“Your task then, is to cooperate with God in being changed on the inside so that we take on the personality of Christ. As we let what is stored in our heart be transformed, we behave as Jesus would behave.” ~ Renovations of the Heart in Daily Practice: Experiments in Transformation by Dallas Willard, Jan Johnson

“But Christlikeness in the inner being is not a human attainment. It is, finally, a gift of grace.” ~ Renovation of the heart in daily practice: Experiments in Transformation by Dallas Willard, Jan Johnson



For the month of August read through these scriptures about Transformation and the Word of God.

Flourishing in the Word

For the month of August, read through the book of Galatians. See how we are free in Christ.

August 1	Matthew 18:3	August 17	Psalms 139: 23-24
August 2	Romans 12:2	August 18	Joel 2:12-13
August 3	2Corinthians 3:18	August 19	Colossians 3
August 4	2Corinthians 5:17	August 20	Isaiah 43:18-19
August 5	Galatians 2:20	August 21	John 14:15-17
August 6	Galatians 5:22-23	August 22	Ezekiel 36:26-28
August 7	Ephesians 2:10	August 23	Matthew 18:13
August 8	Ephesians 3:14-21	August 24	Proverbs 23:12
August 9	Ephesians 4:22-24	August 25	Proverbs 30:5
August 10	Philippians 1:6	August 26	Psalms 12:6
August 11	2Timothy 2:15	August 27	Psalms 33:4-5
August 12	2Timothy 3:14-17	August 28	Psalms 56:10-11
August 13	Psalms 1:1-3	August 29	Psalms 119:10-11, 16
August 14	Psalms 16:8	August 30	Psalms 119:36-37
August 15	Psalms 23:1-3	August 31	Philippians 1:3-6
August 16	Psalms 51:10-12		

Transforming Ideas from the Territory

Fairbanks, AK: Five women from our women's group signed up to do the online 'lifestyle evangelism courses' and they want to teach others in our church. They felt inspired.

Nampa, ID: Ladies held a "Galentines" Party, celebrating friendship and fun. They also have a craft theme of "shop from our closet", trying to use up old craft supplies as much as possible, and just adding the supplies we don't have.

Auburn, CA: The ladies enjoyed a Haku Lei making craft and devotional time. The idea was on the TSA West Women's Ministry website by Lt. Helen Reyes.

Redding, CA: The Home League/ CCM puts together bags with Hershey's Kisses in them and gives them to Veterans. The ladies call it "Kisses for Vets".

Santa Rosa, CA: The group has grown spiritually over the past quarter as we have dug into our new Beth Moore "James, Mercy Triumphs" Bible study.

Ridgecrest, CA: Ladies "Lunch and Love" is as strong as ever. In the second quarter they made Kintsugi, celebrated MLK Day and had Weeble Wobble fun.

Guam Corps: Launched a new Women's Ministries program with the women residing at the newly opened LRC Women's Facility. Current WM members are providing monthly opportunities, including a cooking class.

Aurora, CO: Held a clothing swap, where the ladies brought clothing items to bless other ladies. Everybody went home with wonderful items but also with a full heart.

Gresham, OR: Ladies re-started their wom-