



September 20th, 2015

Turning Toward a Better Life

1. Reject the FALSE NARRATIVE:

IF IT'S GOING TO BE IT'S UP TO ME

*Not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven's armies.
– Zechariah 4:6 NLT*

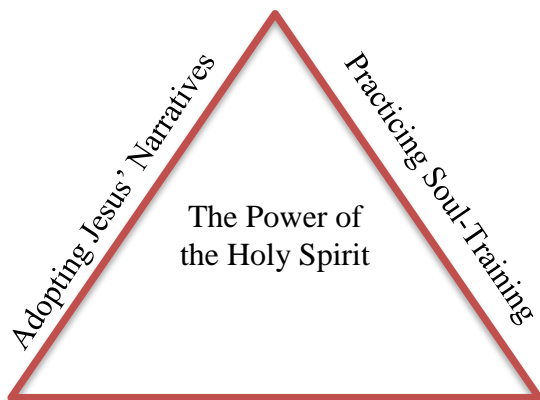
2. Embrace the JESUS NARRATIVE:

RADICAL LIFE-CHANGE & RADICAL TRUST

*I taught you...a radical life-change before God and an equally radical trust in our
Master Jesus. – Acts 20:21 MSG*

THE TRANSFORMATION TRIANGLE

By James Bryan Smith



WORKING Participating In Community THE ANGLES

1. Learn To THINK LIKE JESUS

Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. – Matthew 11:29 NLT

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. – Romans 12:2 NLT

Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. – Philippians 2:5 NIV

Say This With Me: I am shaped by the stories I adopt.

2. Train With GODLY EXERCISES

I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. – 1 Corinthians 9:27 NLT

Train yourself to be godly. Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come. – 1 Timothy 4:7-8 NLT

3. Get Into SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together... – Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT

CENTERING IN THE SPIRIT

When the Father sends the Advocate as my representative-that is, the Holy Spirit-he will teach you everything and will remind you of all I have told you. – John 14:26 NLT

The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. – Romans 8:26 NLT

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. – Acts 13:2-3 ESV

I Will Turn To God by...

- Memorizing **1 Timothy 4:8**
- Letting His Spirit teach me more about Jesus.
- Working the angles of the Triangle of Transformation.
- Surrendering my life to Christ as my Savior & Lord.

WALK THE TALK A Growth Group Guide

1. What was one of the hardest habits of yours to break? How did you end up breaking it out of your life?
2. How would you respond to the statement: We are shaped by our stories?
3. Why do you think it is so important to adopt into your life the way Jesus sees God?
4. What are some of the soul-training exercises (prayer, Scripture reading, solitude, etc.,) you have found to be the most beneficial to helping you change for the good?
5. Have you found it helpful or harmful to be in Christian fellowship? Explain. Why is something so messy, at times, so needful in the long run of life?
6. How has the Holy Spirit helped you with the process of turning toward God more with your mind, will, and emotions? How do you see him helping you with the three sides of the triangle (see outline above)?

SOUL TRAINING - SLEEP

A Personal Transformation Exercise

The Principle:

According to numerous studies, the average person needs approximately eight hours of sleep a night in order to maintain health. The failure to sleep properly results in damage to our physical health, loss of energy, and decreased productivity. God designed us to be stewards of our lives—body, mind, and soul. This starts with sleeping properly.

What does this have to do with spiritual formation? Great question! The human person is not merely a soul housed in a body. Our bodies and souls are unified, and if our bodies suffer, so do our souls. If we fail to sleep properly and are sick, drowsy, and unproductive because of it, our spiritual lives will suffer as well as our physical bodies. Without proper sleep, we will be unable and unmotivated to pray, read the Bible, go to church, and spend time with God.

The Plan:

This week the plan is simple. At least one day this week, sleep until you cannot sleep any more. This means you may need to find a day to “sleep in.” More than likely, however, instead of finding a day to sleep in, you may perhaps need to go to bed earlier. Your aim is to sleep, or stay in bed, until you are completely rested and cannot stay in bed, or sleep, any longer.

If you are unable to do this exercise, try another. Aim to get at least seven hours of sleep at least three nights this week. Here are some tips to help you fall asleep:

1. Go to sleep at a consistent time.
2. Try not to have “screen time” with electronics right before bed.
3. Avoid stimulating foods (caffeine, spicy foods) in the evening.
4. Don't try to force yourself to sleep. Read a book, meditate on a Psalm, listen to soft music, or gaze out the window until you are drowsy.