

Thursday July 1, 2026

The Holy Spirit Brings Transformation

Romans 6:4

"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

As you enter your time with God today, take a moment to quiet your mind. Breathe this prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, come. Fill me with your Spirit. Open my heart that you might share your words of life with me."

We read today from Romans 6:4. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit bringing us to places of transformation?

This may come as a surprise to you, but we have been watching a lot of the World Cup in our house.

The games have been incredible. The skill on display is inspiring. The spectacle not only at the games, but also in the stories that come from people of other nations interacting with others has been heart-warming and for many, has given hope that maybe things are not as bad in our world as we're told they are. Maybe we can live together with those who are different than us in some peace and harmony.

Amid all those stories comes the story of Ismael Kone, a Canadian player who in a game against Qatar ended up with a horrific broken tibia and fibula while on the field. As of this writing, Canada is still playing, but Ismael is not. He probably won't play soccer for months. If you watch the previous games that he was in, you can see the skill, agility and speed of a professional soccer player on display. And then in a second, it all changes. Oof. Such difficult circumstances for a young man whose dream changed in one split second.

"Stop being a Debbie Downer Pastor Scott!" I hear you. Believe me, I do not like living in that space at all in this season of life.

But I want us to notice the change of feeling that comes in those moments. We're shocked. Our countenance changes. We were watching a game with a smile on our face and one image on the screen moves us to close our eyes and cringe. Instant transformation.

That's really what today's devotion is about, but in the best way possible.

Read today's text above. Notice what Paul is saying to the Roman church. "We were dead. You were dead. Sin had you in the grip that only sin has and it held your eternal future in hopelessness and pain. That's what Christ suffered. He took on the sin of all his children and experienced the full consequence of sin in a stilled heart and empty lungs. He died carrying the weight of all our sin."

"But then it all changed. One breath, one heartbeat and everything is different. The power of sin died in that breath and death ended in that one cardiac beat. Full and complete transformation in the return to life of the Son of God."

That's what grace does. It gives us life. You know that. I know that. We (hopefully) sing, hear, and pray into that every day and certainly every week. Good, be reminded of that truth.

But let us not move too fast. It's a transformation that changes everything. Completely. Lock, stock, and barrel. We are made new in an instant.

Our theological word for that is justification. The grace of Christ changes us from guilty to righteous in the moment of faith.

In a heartbeat, everything is different. Where sin was, holiness comes. Where death reigned, life shoves it into nothingness. If we know the grace of Christ, that space of life is ours right now.

I'm belaboring the point, but for good reason. Let us remind ourselves that we are people who know life, a sin-defeating, death disappearing life. We are not caught up with the meaningless and brokenness of the world, at least in our identity. Yes, that stuff is there. There is pain. Earthquakes still happen. Cancer still exists. Hospitals are still busy. But none of those things is either the focus of our story nor our end result. We are people of life, and that life has been gifted us through Jesus never to be taken by ANY power of this world.

You and I are changed. In a moment, the hopelessness, isolation, pain, sin and death are removed in their power and life in all its fulness and flourishing reigns forever.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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