



The Power of a Transformed Life

While working my way through Seedbed's series on the book of Acts, a number of J.D. Walt's devotionals had captured my attention. I was hungry to hear the new addition to his series each morning, so I was not surprised when one particular recording left me wanting to share his challenge.

That specific day his words had prompted me to think of the Presence Point team encounters who tell us of the good and godly shepherds they had in their lives whose influence led them to life transformation. Some had taken great risk when trusting these future leaders. Others had simply loved deeply and knew their investment in another was an imperative part of their calling. True, the transformation itself had been from the Father, but the effect of how these men and women shepherded resulted in a deep desire for those they affected to shepherd well themselves and to live a life of devotion to the King.

Let me set the stage... Saul, the one who held the robes of those who stoned Stephen and was murderously devoted to extinguishing all who followed Jesus, had himself been transformed by his meeting with the Good Shepherd on the road to Damascus. Not surprisingly, the followers of Jesus seriously and genuinely doubted his metamorphosis.

Acts 9:26

When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe he had truly become a believer!

J.D. Walt writes, "... we are witnessing what is perhaps the most profound and convincing proof of them all – the power of a transformed life. This story of the apostle Paul is next level. Here was a man who was so convinced in his established faith in God and so convicted by his convictions he committed himself to destroy anything that came against it – especially the church. The disciples in Damascus were terrified of him. They didn't believe the story, and with good reason, because it was unbelievable.

"I love this bit of the inside story," Walt comments:

Acts 9:27

Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus.

"...don't underestimate the significance of Barnabas giving his thumbs up on Paul. Also, don't underestimate the significance of your own endorsement of a perhaps unlikely witness of Jesus. It matters a lot."

Acts 9:28

So Saul stayed with the apostles and went all around Jerusalem with them, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.

"Take this in. Behold what Jesus is doing here. This is the stunning power of a transformed life. [It's] like a sign and wonder that keeps on going. A transformed life is like a miracle turned into a movement. It keeps

on picking up steam, overcoming obstacles, enduring suffering, doing impossible things, winning unwinnable battles, and all while demonstrating unfathomable love. It's why your life and your transformation matter so much.

"Never underestimate the significance of the transformation afoot in your own life. It just might matter the most."

Fellow under-shepherd, take a moment and evaluate the influence your behaviors have on those with whom you come in contact. Pray the Prayer of Transformation every day for one week and watch the Holy Spirit work within you!

*The Prayer of Transformation to which J.D. Walt refers...

"Lord Jesus, I am your witness. I receive your righteousness and release my sinfulness. I receive your wholeness and release my brokenness. I receive your fullness and release my emptiness. I receive your peace

and release my anxiety. I receive your joy and release my despair. I receive your healing and release my sickness. I receive your love and release my selfishness. Come, Holy Spirit, transform my heart, mind, soul, and strength so that my consecration becomes your demonstration; that our lives become your sanctuary. For the glory of God our Father, amen."

Digging Deeper Questions

1. What thoughts come to mind as you evaluate the influence your behaviors have on those with whom you come in contact?
2. Which behaviors do you need to exhibit more intentionally? Which behaviors do you need to stop demonstrating immediately?
3. Will you commit to praying The Prayer of Transformation? If so, when will you take the time to do so each day this week?