

THE TRANSFORMATION OF JOHN From Son of Thunder to Apostle of Love

TEXT: Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

INTRODUCTION:

- A. All people change.
- B. The younger you are the more you will change.
- C. Not simply in your appearance and physical characteristics, but your character, beliefs and views as well.
- D. You used to know all the answers now you realize you don't know all the questions.
- E. Many factors contribute to the developing of our character.
- F. There could be no greater influence on one's character that that of Jesus.
 - 1. Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.
 - 2. Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
- G. Today we want to notice some changes in the life of the apostle John.

BODY.

- I. BEFORE CHRIST'S INFLUENCE. (John's earlier years) When we first encounter John he is a fisherman Mark 1:19-20 When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.
 - A. John had a violent temper- Luke 9:51-56 51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to

Jerusalem, and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. "For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.

1. This type of anger is not a good thing.
 - a. Prov. 15:18 A wrathful man stirs up strife, But he who is slow to anger allays contention.
 - b. Prove. 16: 32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.
 - c. Ecc. 7: 9 Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.
 2. Jesus was of course right when he told John- You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.”
 3. There will come a time of fire raining down and consuming evil people but it is not now. 2 Pet. 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up .
- B. John had worldly ambition- Matt. 20:20-28 Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

1. Worldly desire causes lots of problems-
 2. Luke 12:15 (NKJV) And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."
 3. Mark 10:42 – 43 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant.
- C. John was very intolerant of others- Mark 9:38-41 Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is on our side. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

II. AFTER CHRIST'S INFLUENCE

- A. This is still the same man.
- B. But having been exposed to Christ's words there was an amazing transformation that has occurred.
- C. He has developed his character traits.
- D. What about the social test? How do we treat one another?
 1. Remember before he wanted to call down fire from heaven and destroy the Samaritans because they would not let them pass through their land.
 2. 1 Jn. 2:7-14 Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is

from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

3. The influence of Jesus had transformed his violent temper into Love

D. The Material Test Do we love the world? What's our Goal?

1. Remember he was striving to be top dog in Jesus organization before.

2. 1 Jn. 2: 15 do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

3. After Jesus teaches us we can get our priorities in order

a. Matt 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

b. Matt 6:19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

E. What about his intolerance

1. Remember before John had forbid anyone from being a part of the work of Christ if they were not a part of the small group he knew about.

2. Now notice John's attitude. 1Joh 2:18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. Therefore let that abide in you

which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

3. He rightfully draws a line in the sand, but it a more tolerant line now. He is not tolerant of error, just more tolerant of people.
4. He seems to understand that some might indeed prove eventually to have been an enemy of the Lord; but knows it is not the place of the servants of God to make it their business to monitor and pass judgment upon the works of others. The lesson here is the same as that against pulling up tares, as forbidden in the parable of Matt. 13:39.
5. Notice what he says in 1Joh 2:28 -29 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

CONCLUSION:

1. The transforming power of Christ in the lives of a believer can be seen in John.
2. To go from a hot tempered worldly ambitious, intolerant fisherman to being know as the Apostle of Love could only occur with the transforming power of God in his life.
3. What about you? Will you allow God to transform you into what you ought to be?