

East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:

Transformed: It's an Inside Job

Speaker: Pastor Keith Jenkins

Date: June 2, 2024

Introduction: In the third installment of the "Transformed" series, Pastor Keith Jenkins delved deeper into the process of inner transformation, emphasizing that true change begins within our hearts. Drawing from various scriptures, particularly from Matthew 23, he contrasted the dangers of focusing on external appearances with the necessity of allowing God to renovate our hearts from the inside out. Pastor Keith also explored the dynamics of our three-part being (spirit, soul, and body) and how each aspect plays a role in our spiritual growth and transformation.

Key Points and Discussion Questions:

1. **Transformation is an inside job:** Pastor Keith stressed that genuine, lasting change cannot be achieved through mere behavior modification or external appearances, but must start with a transformation of the heart.

Discussion Questions:

- Why is it insufficient to focus only on changing our outward behavior or appearance?
- How have you experienced the difference between external changes and internal transformation in your own life?

Supporting Verses: Matthew 23:25-26 - "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean."

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Jesus confronted the religious leaders of His day who prioritized outward appearances and adherence to religious practices while neglecting the condition of their hearts.
- **Theological Significance:** This passage underscores the importance of inner purity and the futility of focusing solely on external righteousness.

- **Application:** We must allow God to transform our hearts and motives, rather than settling for superficial changes that do not address the root issues.
2. **Understanding our three-part being: spirit, soul, and body** - Pastor Keith explained the interplay between our spirit, soul (mind, will, and emotions), and body, and how each part influences our spiritual growth and transformation.

Discussion Questions:

- How does the condition of our soul (mind, will, and emotions) impact our ability to live out our faith authentically?
- What practical steps can we take to align our soul with our born-again spirit and cooperate with the Holy Spirit's transforming work?

Supporting Verses: 1 Thessalonians 5:23 - "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church, encouraging them to pursue holiness and sanctification in every aspect of their being.
 - **Theological Significance:** This verse highlights the comprehensive nature of God's sanctifying work, encompassing our entire being—spirit, soul, and body.
 - **Application:** We should seek to submit every area of our lives to God's transforming power, recognizing that our spiritual growth involves the integration of our whole being.
3. **Cooperating with God's transforming work:** Pastor Keith emphasized the need for surrender and cooperation with the Holy Spirit's transforming work in our lives, acknowledging that change is a process that requires patience and perseverance.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some areas in your life where you sense God calling you to surrender and cooperate with His transforming work?
- How can we cultivate a posture of openness and responsiveness to the Holy Spirit's leading in our journey of transformation?

Supporting Verses: Philippians 2:12-13 - "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out

your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Paul wrote to the Philippian church, encouraging them to persist in their obedience and spiritual growth, recognizing God's active role in their transformation.
- **Theological Significance:** This passage highlights the synergy between human responsibility and divine empowerment in the process of spiritual growth and transformation.
- **Application:** We must actively engage in the process of transformation, obeying God and cooperating with His Spirit, while ultimately relying on His power to bring about the change He desires in us.

Conclusion: Pastor Keith's message challenges us to prioritize inner transformation over external appearances, recognizing that lasting change begins in our hearts. By understanding the interplay between our spirit, soul, and body, and cooperating with the Holy Spirit's transforming work, we can experience genuine, comprehensive transformation that impacts every area of our lives. As we surrender to God and patiently persevere in the process, He will continue to mold us into the image of Christ from the inside out.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what areas of your life have you been focusing more on external changes than inner transformation? How can you invite God to work in your heart in those areas?
2. What steps can you take this week to cultivate a greater awareness of and responsiveness to the Holy Spirit's transforming work in your life?
3. How can our church community support and encourage one another in the process of inner transformation, while extending grace and patience as we grow together?

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the transforming power of Your Spirit at work within us. Forgive us for the times we have settled for external changes rather than inviting You to renovate our hearts. Help us to surrender every aspect of our being—spirit, soul, and body—to Your transforming work. Give us the courage to cooperate with Your Spirit, even when the

process is uncomfortable or challenging. May our lives increasingly reflect the beauty and character of Christ as we are transformed from the inside out. In Jesus' name, Amen.

References:

Primary Sources:

- "Transformed: It's an Inside Job," East Hill Church, 06/02/2024. Delivered by Pastor Keith Jenkins.
- Sermon Transcript, East Hill Church.
- The Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV). Biblica, Inc.™, 2011.

Secondary Sources:

- Contextual and Theological Insights: Derived from general biblical scholarship and commentaries relevant to Matthew 23:25-26, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, and Philippians 2:12-13.

General Sources on Biblical Studies:

- Foster, Richard J. "Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth." HarperOne, 2018.
- Willard, Dallas. "Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ." NavPress, 2012.
- Scazzero, Peter. "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to Be Spiritually Mature, While Remaining Emotionally Immature." Zondervan, 2017.

Collaborative Contributions:

- LLM Contributions: Based on a mixture of licensed data, data created by AI models, and publicly available data, synthesized for the study of the provided sermon transcript and related biblical passages.

LLM Training Data:

- LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to September 2023.