

East Hill Church Sermon Discussion Guide:

Transformation through Drawing Near to God and One Another

Speaker: Jan Brauer (Guest Speaker)

Date: July 28, 2024

Introduction:

In this powerful sermon, guest speaker Jan Brauer continued the TRANSFORMED series by focusing on how we can experience transformation through drawing near to God and one another. She emphasized that true transformation happens from the inside out, leading to the abundant life Jesus promised.

1. Drawing Near to God:

Jan highlighted the importance of intentionally drawing near to God as a key element in our transformation process.

Discussion Questions:

1. How have you experienced transformation in your life as you've drawn closer to God?
2. What practical steps can you take to spend more time in God's presence?

Supporting Verse:

Hebrews 10:21-22 (NIV) - "Since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water."

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** The author of Hebrews was encouraging Jewish Christians to fully embrace their new relationship with God through Christ.

- **Theological Significance:** This passage emphasizes our ability to approach God directly because of Christ's sacrifice.
- **Application:** We should approach God confidently and regularly, knowing that He welcomes us.

2. Holding onto Hope:

Jan stressed the importance of holding unswervingly to the hope we profess, trusting in God's faithfulness.

Discussion Questions:

1. What things in your life might you need to "let go of" in order to more fully grasp God's hope?
2. How has trusting in God's faithfulness helped you maintain hope in difficult times?

Supporting Verse:

Hebrews 10:23 (NIV) - "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful."

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** The early Christians faced persecution and needed encouragement to persevere in their faith.
- **Theological Significance:** This verse emphasizes the unchanging nature of God's promises as the basis for our hope.
- **Application:** We should anchor our hope in God's faithfulness rather than in changing circumstances.

3. Meeting Together:

Jan emphasized the importance of gathering with other believers for encouragement and mutual growth.

Discussion Questions:

1. How has meeting with other believers contributed to your spiritual transformation?
2. In what ways can you be more intentional about encouraging others in their faith journey?

Supporting Verses:

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV) - "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Context and Reflection:

- **Historical/Cultural Context:** Some believers were neglecting gathering together, possibly due to persecution or complacency.
- **Theological Significance:** These verses highlight the communal nature of the Christian faith and the importance of mutual encouragement.
- **Application:** We should prioritize regular gatherings with other believers for mutual support and encouragement.

Conclusion:

Jan Brauer's message reminded us that transformation is an intentional process that involves drawing near to God, holding onto hope, and meeting together with other believers. By focusing on these three aspects, we can experience the inside-out transformation that leads to the abundant life Jesus promised.

Reflection Questions:

1. What is one practical step you can take this week to draw nearer to God?
2. How can you cultivate a stronger sense of hope in your daily life?

3. In what ways can you be more intentional about meeting with and encouraging other believers?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for your invitation to draw near to you. Help us to intentionally seek your presence and hold onto the hope we have in you. Guide us as we gather with other believers, that we may encourage one another and spur each other on toward love and good deeds. May we experience the transforming power of your love as we grow closer to you and to one another. In Jesus' name, Amen.

References:

Primary Sources:

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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 notes and biblical passages.

LLM Training Data:

LLM Training Data. Includes a diverse range of texts (books, websites, and other publications) up to April 2024.