

Who are you becoming? Not what do you do. Not what do you want to do when you grow up, but who are you becoming? It's a question that, in a lot of ways, the modern world has lost for all of the freedom and autonomy that we have as individuals. We tend to focus on what do you want to do when you grow up. I'm guessing that's a question you've heard before. As a child, we get that a lot from adults. You probably had some general response: I want to be a firefighter or a teacher or an athlete or a doctor.

For much of our history, the primary question has been, what do you want to do when you grow up. But that's a new question. If we look historically, it really wasn't until the Industrial Revolution that this question began to take prominence. It was the mid-18th century, and economies were expanding, jobs were becoming more and more specialized, and education was structured more specifically around career paths when all of this shifted. Our relationship to the work that we do, and what we want to do when we grow up became the more prominent question. The focus shifted from who do we want to become to what do you want to produce.

Suddenly, for the first time in history, the production side of us was knit to our very identity. But the question of who do you want to become has far more ancient roots. It goes all the way back to the ancient Greek philosophers of Plato and Aristotle, who were far more worried about the cultivation of virtue than they were about your particular career path. Their understanding of the person was that to grow in wisdom, courage, and justice was the place from which our work would flow. But we've reversed that; our question changed. That isn't to denigrate the work that we do. In the fall, when we launch the practice of vocation, we'll talk a lot about how you were created to work, build, and contribute. But the question still persists. Who are you becoming?

We are coming near the close of the Book of Exodus. Next week, we'll finish the narrative arc of Exodus. We'll fast forward a little bit as Moses delivers the instructions for the Tabernacle a second time. We won't walk through the same thing a second time, but we'll arrive at the end of the Book of Exodus. What we've seen throughout this is that the question, who do you want to become, is a question that God has been working the Israelites through.

At the beginning of the story, God saved them from Egypt, liberated them from slavery, brought them out to Mount Sinai. It's at Sinai that God meets them and says that they are his people, and this is what that will look like. This is who they are to become. So he gives these commandments because the commandments did two things. They delineated how we relate to God, and they also formed those people

into who God wants them to be. It's this story that we drop into this morning.

In Exodus 34, we're reaching the end of three of the most important chapters in the entire Bible. Exodus 32, 33, and 34 are some of the most important texts if we're to understand the broad narrative of the Scriptures. Because what we find in these chapters is God's presence with the people, the people's failure, and also the atonement for their failure through an intermediary, Moses.

Those themes of God's presence, people's failure, and atonement through an intermediary is like the chorus of the Bible. The scriptures throughout, from Genesis to Revelation, sing this chorus over and over and over through different lenses, through a different narrative, through a different story. But you see the story of the Bible, like the harmony, coming back to it over and over. So, as we arrive here at the end of this, what we see is God commissioning Moses and the people. Moses has this fascinating interaction that gives shape to a lot of Paul's writing.

**When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and he spoke to them. Afterward all the Israelites came near him, and he gave them all the commands the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai. Exodus 34:29-32**

So Moses is up in the presence of God, and he receives the Ten Commandments. They're written on two tablets, not because there were five on each, but rather one was God's copy, and one was the people's copy. Think of it like a carbon copy of a contract. So, the two copies of the law were given to Moses.

He brings them down, and they would eventually find their way into the Ark of the Covenant, which would be placed in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle. So he comes down with those, but the people are looking at him, and it says that his face is radiant. The Hebrew word there is the same word for horn, which in some ways means that Moses had horns of light shooting out of his face. If you see artists trying to depict this, you often find Moses with two little horns coming out of his head.

Maybe a better way for us to understand the horn is more like rays of light because that's what it means. It's not so much that there are physical horns, but rather rays of light shooting out from his face. It's interesting because Moses comes down, and he doesn't seem distressed

about it. In fact, the text says he doesn't even know what's happening, but the people looking on are a little bit terrified. So they began to draw back from him. Moses would call to the people demonstrating leadership and pastoral care by reaching out to them and inviting them to come further in. So, all the Israelites are called back, drawn back to the presence of God.

**When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face. But whenever he entered the Lord's presence to speak with him, he removed the veil until he came out. And when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, they saw that his face was radiant. Then Moses would put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with the Lord. Exodus 34:33-35**

So, what's going on with this veil? It seems odd. For the scriptures to give this so much real estate within the text, there's got to be something going on. There's some connection between the veil in which when Moses goes into the presence of God, it alters his appearance. It's an encounter that changes him, so much so that it seems too much for the people, so he places this veil.

Well, through these three chapters, we've been talking a lot about that what God was doing in Exodus was planting seeds that would slowly germinate throughout the biblical story and come to fruition in the New Testament in a different, more beautiful way.

Some of the language we've been talking about is there's a shadow of something that takes place in Exodus, which points to a deeper reality. The Tabernacle was a shadow of a deeper reality. That reality was the overlap of heaven and earth. It was the very person of Jesus who is both divine and human. It's a shadow of a deeper reality. Then we've talked about how Moses is a shadow of Jesus. How Moses is that intermediary interceding between God and the people. Moses is just a shadow of the greater reality, Jesus, who is our intermediary. Jesus goes before God and intercedes on our behalf.

Well, the same is true here of this veil. The veil was reminiscent of the Tabernacle instructions that between the Holy Court and the Holy of Holies, there was a veil separating the priest and the people from the unfiltered presence of God in the Holy of Holies. The whole thing was set up so that one person, one time a year, would go through the veil into the concentrated presence of God and experience that for the sake of the people. The veil was the guard.

So you can envision the scene where Moses goes into the presence of God and is so impacted by that encounter that he must veil himself because it's too much. We will go into detail on Good Friday and at the end of Lent and Easter, the scene when Jesus died. It says he was crucified, and when he breathed his last, the veil was torn.

Everything changed when Jesus' death and resurrection took place. It's pointing to that same veil. The veil was the protective layer between the people in the presence of God. When Jesus dies, it says that the veil was torn. There is no longer a needed obstacle to get into the presence of God, but rather, you and I right now, enter into the presence of

God because of the work of Jesus. We are no longer barred. There is no longer any gap.

This is what's going on with this particular veil, Moses was interceding on behalf of the people. It's a physical representation of a spiritual reality. There's a separation at this point in the story that will later no longer exist. Moses bringing down these Ten Commandments is that covenant relationship. The covenant was how the people related to God and also God's instructions for who the people were to become. Hold that in your mind because it's really important when we advance into the New Testament.

This scene is very important to many of the New Testament writers because the Old Covenant being replaced by the New Covenant had all the New Testament believers rethinking everything they understood about who God was and who they were and how they related to God and lived out of that identity. So much so that when we get to 2 Corinthians, Paul is, in essence, in the middle of this letter, preaching a sermon on Exodus 34. He essentially bursts out into a sermon about the story that we just read.

So flip over to 2 Corinthians 3. Paul is a brilliant intellectual and one of the greatest minds in all of human history. Whether you're a Christian or not, it's hard to debate his intellectual prowess. You see that particularly here in these writings, but Romans is another document that is so sophisticated and intricate that it stands alone.

So when we parachute into the middle of this, you may have some questions that are left unanswered, and that's okay. We're coming into it with a particular purpose, but know that it's nuanced and complex, and there's a lot going on here. It's difficult for us to dive in, but let me tell you what Paul's doing.

Paul is comparing the distinction between Moses and Jesus. He, too, is talking about that shadow of the deeper reality, so he's comparing Moses to Jesus. He's comparing the way of life that the law and the Torah offered versus the way of freedom that is offered through life with the Spirit. He'll contrast the kingdom of the Torah. He'll contrast an era in which you couldn't enter into God's presence without the work of some intermediary versus the era now where we get to usher ourselves right into the presence of God.

**Now, if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 2 Corinthians 3:7-8**

Now, a few things here. As we know, the engraving of letters in stone are the tablets. He's looking back, and saying there was a time, a ministry that brought death. There was a ministry of initial relation with God where the law and all that was needed was etched in stone, was then given, and it says that it came with glory.

It came with glory so much that when Moses was doing that ministry, he was radiating those horns of light that we talked about. Notice right off the top that Paul does not denigrate the law. Often, we fall into that

trap. What he is going to do is a form of legal argument that speaks of something going from a lesser value to a greater value. So he's not denigrating it. He's just naming the reality that the law brought about death.

What does he mean by that? The law was this set of customs or statutes for the people of Israel to obey. And when they disobeyed it, that brought death upon the people. So within the law, God, in all his graciousness, knows they will fail and actually creates a system within the law as to how to reconcile with God. That was through the sacrificial system. So you sacrifice a lamb or whatever to atone for your sins, and then you offer that back to God, which cleans the slate, reconciling you to God.

He says that the ministry of the law ultimately brought death, but it did, in fact, bring glory. Think of Moses' face glowing. Then he compares that with the new one. So he doesn't denigrate it. He speaks of it as it was, and he says it was transitory. Your translation might say fading. I think that's not a great translation because we don't have anywhere in the story that would say that Moses' face faded. The glory was always there, as far as we can tell. This veil thing, he likely had to do the rest of his life. It doesn't speak to it, so we don't know exactly.

But transitory is a better translation. That word understands that the Old Testament covenant, for a time, was transitory. It had a place, but it is now, as Paul will say, obsolete in comparison to what happened. So, after saying it was transitory. The ministry of the Spirit is even more glorious. This is that lesser glory to greater glory. He says that if the old one brought glory, imagine what the ministry of the Spirit is bringing.

**If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts! 2 Corinthians 3:9-11**

Paul says that the old law brought condemnation. It spoke in laws that we would all fail to keep. You saw that already with the people of Israel. You'll see it over and over if you continue to track their story. They couldn't live up to the demands of the law. It constantly brought condemnation.

This new thing, through the Spirit, brings not condemnation but righteousness. It brings the righteousness of Jesus as the intermediary on our behalf. This new covenant through the blood of Jesus is what brings righteousness out. If the old way was a covenant of death, the new way is a covenant of life. Paul looks at it logically and says that if that brought glory, how much more so is this new covenant? He says that one was transitory. It was temporary. It was, in some ways, a placeholder on the way to Jesus. How much greater is this glory?

I love that tongue-in-cheek line in verse 10, for what was glorious has no glory. It was good then, but it has no glory. If you compare it to what Jesus has done on our behalf, it says that the covenant of his new law has brought tremendous glory.

There's this beautiful interchange in which Paul is speaking to the completion in Jesus of a long-held understanding that God was doing something new in Jesus' work on the cross. This is why you see the prophets would speak about this transition. Let me just show you two examples.

This is after Exodus, way further. The people of Israel failed over and over. So, God sends these prophets to help reset the course. A prophet is simply someone who speaks on behalf of God. Sometimes, that's about the future, and other times, it's not.

**"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Jeremiah 31:31-34**

Do you hear the echoes of the Exodus language? "I will be their God, and they will be my people." That goes all the way back to the story of Genesis, in which God says a new covenant is coming. In there, he says that it won't be etched in stone, but he will write his law on their hearts. He will place his law in their minds. See, the stones were transitory, but rather, God is saying through the Spirit, when we receive the Spirit of God, the direction of how we relate to God, the covenant language, is now mediated through the Spirit. God will instruct us on who we are to become through the Spirit. It says that this is the covenant God is bringing. He is bringing this new thing.

**"For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Ezekiel 36:24-27**

See Ezekiel prophesies about this as well. He says that they have a heart of stone, and God will replace it with a heart of flesh. He will breathe life into them. "I'll bring the Spirit who will direct you and will move from within you to follow my decrees." The New Covenant is about how we relate to God and who God is forming us to be. The reality is that through the Spirit of God, we are ushered into the presence of God without any intermediary, but he is directly dwelling within us.

In Corinthians, it says that you are the temple of the Holy Spirit. You are the Tabernacle. A better translation of that would be “you all,” by the way. It’s the communal that as we gather and seek to follow him, we become the dwelling place of God. It is a stunning picture of what that looks like. But let’s keep going in 2 Corinthians 3

**Therefore, [in light of everything he just said] since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 2 Corinthians 3:12-16**

Paul says that in light of this new covenant, we are very bold. We have this hope that we can enter into the presence of God, unlike Moses, who is a shadow of a deeper reality. He says, anytime you read that old covenant, that veil is there because that’s what’s transitory. It passed away to a new way to relate to God, a new way to be formed into the people that God desires for us.

I love that line in verse 15 where it says, but whenever anyone of us turn to the Lord, the veil’s torn and we’re in direct connection with God. No need for an intermediary, no need for some workaround, but rather that veil is removed, and we are in the presence of God. It’s beautiful. The question, though, is how. Because really what Paul has been describing is the what. But how do we actually enter into that?

**Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18**

In verse 18, Paul lays out a theology of formation into how we relate to God under this new covenant. He packs it all in like one little verse. So, let’s unpack it a little bit. There are two concepts that become important when you look at verse 18. The first is Paul says, “We who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory.”

The Greek word for contemplate is *katoptrizo*, which simply means to behold or to gaze at as in a mirror. It’s a really good translation, but I like this image of behold because you can’t contemplate or behold something quickly. You fix your attention on it. The imagery of mirror gazing is really good. It’s looking at yourself more and more in the mirror, looking to behold what you’re seeing.

There are two interpretations of what Paul has going on here because it can mean two things. It can mean you look at in a mirror to see God or the underneath in the Greek. It can also be translated as people look at us as though a mirror and they see the reflection of God. One of the brilliant parts of Paul’s mind is I actually think he intends both of those interpretations. That’s how sophisticated he is.

The first one is that as we contemplate the Lord’s glory and direct our inward attentiveness to him; the transformation begins to happen beneath the surface. We’ll get to that in a second. But the other interpretation is just as valid, that as we look, we reflect the glory like Moses. Moses went into the encounter with God, and everyone around him experienced that difference.

It could also mean that as believers, we are to reflect God out into the world around us, that we, as we are transformed, begin to transform the world around us through that reflection. Both interpretations are meant to be understood. Look at the way the New Living Translation translates this verse; they’re trying to hold that tension between the two.

2 Corinthians 3:18, just a different translation: “*So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image*” (NLT).

The Message says it this way. “*Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him*” (MSG).

This other word is also important because contemplation is the action we take. It ultimately results in transformation. The word is *metamorphoo*, which is where we get our word metamorphosis.

Metamorphosis is most associated with the process in which a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. It’s that level of transformation. If you think of a caterpillar and a butterfly, it is a radical change in the very essence, nature, and character of the organism. Now, catch what Paul just said. When you and I contemplate the Lord’s glory, that level of transformation is available. That level from a caterpillar to a butterfly is on offer as we apprentice under Jesus.

It is a stunning reality. If I were to summarize Paul’s argument, I’d say it this way. As we contemplate the glory, goodness, and presence of God, the Spirit of God transforms our inward being. As the inward being is transformed, it pushes out into our outward being. It transforms everything about us in such a way that our outward interactions with people inevitably change. A caterpillar associates with the world differently than a butterfly does because of its inward transformation.

So let’s push another layer deeper into the practicality because it’s one thing to talk about contemplation and transformation, but how do we enter into this? Paul is saying that we should relate as followers of Jesus to the new covenant, and he’s laying out a method for how we do this. Here are four key reflections for you.

### **Transformation is Possible**

Transformation is possible if we believe that we can be transformed from our inward being. Do you actually believe that the habits that you’re caught in, the patterns of thinking that draw you away from the way of Jesus, the brokenness, the sin, do you actually believe that you can be transformed? The New Testament makes it clear. I’ve been in the church long enough to know that there are certain theological bents,



often the downstream effect of taking our sin seriously, is that it's inevitable, we cannot change.

But I would argue that the New Testament, according to Paul right here says that as we contemplate the Lord's glory, we are being transformed. We are changing. It is an absolute reality that we can change. But most of us often take a fatalistic approach to transformation because we have such a low view of how we can actually change. We tend to settle for a low view of what's possible because our sin is immense. We tend to throw up our hands and say, "Well, I guess nothing will happen. I'll just lean on forgiveness until the Lord whisks me away."

Forgiveness is the cornerstone of our relationship with God. Without that, you don't have one, but we are also created for more than that. We are forgiven for a purpose. We are forgiven to be transformed, to join in that work in the Holy Spirit, transforming our inward being. Forgiveness is not the end, my friends; it's perpetual. You'll continually seek the forgiveness of God. We will always, always need that. But it is part of the process of our transformation, and transformation is possible.

I return to that question. Who are you becoming? Are you, if you were to map out your life over the next ten years, becoming more like Christ? Because that is possible. We have to come to accept that. We will never arrive. You'll see that in a moment. We will never be Christ, that's not our role, but we can change. There is a large gap between perfection and where we are. We often think of it in those polarities and think it's just one step. We're not ever going to arrive at perfection, but certainly, the Lord wants to mature and grow us along the way, which brings us to the second point.

### **Transformation is Passive-ish**

I'll explain that in a second, but transformation is passive. Paul makes that very point blank here. He says we are being transformed into his image. And then later he says, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. So, we don't do the transformation of our own souls. That's purely the work of God and the Holy Spirit. The verb there for being transformed is in the Greek verb tense that is passive, which means it is something that is received. Something that happens to you, which the English captures it quite well. We just tend to read it too quickly. We are being transformed, not we are transforming ourselves. We are the recipients of the transformation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the only thing that can do that deep transformative work.

The best way I've understood this was an illustration that my predecessor, Mark Mitchell, based on a Francois Fenelon quote, gave me one time as we were talking about this dynamic. He said it's like a sailboat out in the middle of the ocean. You can have the absolute most state-of-the-art, beautiful sailboat, but if the wind doesn't blow, the ship isn't moving. He said you can do everything you want to have that ship set up right, but ultimately, a sailboat needs the wind. The wind is the Holy Spirit; without it, nothing will happen. That ship will not sail. So, the Holy Spirit is the one who does the deep transformative work. But as I said, it was passive-ish.

### **Transformation is Active-ish**

That brings us to our third point, which is the inverse of that. Transformation is active-ish. You have a role, although you don't do the deep internal transformation. That's the work of the Spirit. But let's go back to the middle of the ocean with that sailboat. The wind could absolutely be howling. But according to Francois Fenelon, if you don't set that sail, you're not going to catch the wind. Therefore, the Spirit was moving and ready, but until you set that sail, the transformation will not take place.

Our effort in all of this is not to do the transformative work. You and I cannot do that, but you can create the openness within your life to yield to the movement of the Holy Spirit. We are active in our formation only so far as we open up our lives to the work of the Spirit. We talk a lot about the spiritual formation and what that means. We've set up this rule of life and all of these practices. Yet it's important at this point that we recognize that every one of those practices, whether it's silent solitude, Sabbath, fasting, and scripture, will not do the transformative work in your soul. Those are simply practical ways to open your life up to the work of the Holy Spirit.

A few weeks ago, when we were talking about Sabbath, I mentioned that I'm not all that into Sabbath. I'm really into Jesus, and Sabbath has been a way in which I can organize the way I spend my time to open it up to Jesus. The same is true of silence and solitude. Silence and solitude alone will not form you. It is a means to an end. It's a means that the church has figured out over centuries that are helpful ways in which you can encounter the Holy Spirit.

So we enter into all of these practices, all of these disciplines, everything that we talk about, which I so very much believe in, but we must never lose the forest for the trees. We are only active-ish, only active insofar that we are opening our life up to the work of the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit is the one who is doing that work.

We must be careful because there's a propensity for all the effort that we put in to turn into legalism. We assume we control our transformation, but we do not. The disciplines are merely ways to impact our behavior, which is important so that we can open our lives. It's setting the sails on the ship, allowing and yielding to the work of the Holy Spirit. The transformation of our souls, the deepest part of who we are, only comes through the work of the Holy Spirit. This brings us to the last point.

### **Transformation is Incremental**

When Paul says we are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, one can translate that "from one degree of glory to the next." Going back to the polarities that I talked about, we don't just jump all the way over here and wake up tomorrow and say that it doesn't work. Transformation is incremental. Slowly, one step at a time, the Lord works and partners with us. We must begin to see that we will never arrive. We will never wake up and be totally finished working on our souls with the Lord, but there is incremental change, and it will take a lifetime.

To follow Jesus is to commit to a lifetime of partnering with him to open up our life for the work of the Holy Spirit. It is an incremental change. We see this in almost any other means in which we see transformation take place.

One of the areas that I feel like the Lord really put on my heart to grow and mature in is empathy. It isn't my natural bent. You all experience the best version of my empathy at times, which is what makes this even more insidious. The ones who really see this the most are the ones closest to me. It's my daughters and wife who often I'm the least empathetic with. It's been a place of conviction that I've spent a lot of prayer and time on with the Lord. Whether they get sick or face a medical condition or whatever it is for whatever reason, my first instinct is to either grumble and complain about it, resist it, or dismiss it.

I don't know why. I have some ideas, and certainly, my therapist and I work through those. We talk about where that comes from, but the reality is I'm not an empathetic person. Something I really feel the Lord is calling me to grow in. So what that looks like for me is that it often looks like those times of prayer that I've spoken to you about before. I lay it before the Lord.

As I review my interactions with my wife and girls, I go before the Lord and say, "Lord, why am I like this? God, could you do a deep work in this?" I mean, go back to a few weeks ago when we talked about the layers of sin. I've built a trust structure on something other than the love and empathy of God. To which then, from that place, I seem dismissive when my girls need me the most. I have to fight that, and I have grown in that. I really do believe that I've taken some steps, but it still feels like a grind.

The Lord wants to work on that for me to mature increasingly into the image of Christ because Christ has been so empathetic towards me. What would it look like for me to open up that trust structure and say, "Spirit, would you transform that part for me? I don't want to be that way, but I am." Transformation is incremental. My prayer is that in 10 or 20 years, I will be a more empathetic person. It doesn't absolve the responsibility I have right now to deal with those actions, but the hope is that it becomes more natural over time as I open up more of my life to the Holy Spirit and allow him to do that deep work.

Because I can try to be empathetic, and at times I do that, and that's okay, but I want it to flow out of me. I want my first reaction to be empathetic, but I'm not there. So, I come before the Lord to look at who I am becoming. I hope I'm becoming a little more empathetic. That's just one example of many.

The question before us is what will our life look like over the next 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 years. What would it look like for us to map out the next 50 years ahead of us and wonder what would happen within us if we contemplated the Lord's glory? What would happen if I opened

up my life and let the Holy Spirit slowly, incrementally transform me, terraform the interworking of my soul more and more towards Jesus?

Transformation is possible, my friends, but it will take a lifetime. It will be difficult and painful. The process of a caterpillar becoming a butterfly is not a clean one. It's messy; it's violent; it's painful, but ultimately you arrive there.

One last note on the butterfly. Do you know what is the average lifespan of a butterfly? It's about one week. This means a butterfly spends the overwhelming amount of its life as a caterpillar, with just one week as a butterfly. My friends, we don't necessarily get that week, but we do get eternity with the Lord, in which we are renewed day by day. We will continue that life that will launch us into eternity with Jesus. But we must learn to grow contented and patient with the Holy Spirit in where we are in our transformation.

I'm certain that as I was talking about that slow incremental change, the Holy Spirit highlighted some areas of your life that you, too, would like transformed. I invite you to sit before the Holy Spirit and ask what is it that you would like transformed within your soul. Contemplate the Lord's glory, goodness, kindness, and power.

*This manuscript represents the bulk of what was preached at CPC. For further detail, please refer to the audio recording of this sermon.*

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