



Dear Friends,

October 2018

Growing As A Christian

Christian Transformation or Christian Maturity or Spiritual Growth...Or put in today's language; *"How to become more like Christ..how do we follow Him more closely, more deeply, more regularly."*

The question of Christian Transformation or Christian Maturity or Spiritual Growth is not new in the Christian faith. It has been a major issue, though perhaps given different labels, throughout church history.

From the time the Spirit of God descended upon the believers in Jerusalem, God has been transforming - changing the souls and lives of individual believers ever since...Although, God has been doing that way back in the Old Testament - through various ways...his voice, his prophets, his kings, his mighty acts...

Preaching God's word has never been and never will be the only elements needed for the transformation of Christians into Christ's image. Nor are Life Groups, personal Bible study, personal prayer, Sunday school classes, discipleship courses...or even Christian communities - every one of these necessary, but not on their own... but as a whole and together.

There are two ways to grow, to change - to be transformed...

1. Intentionally - that means, we choose to do it...and we choose to do it God's way.

Without Him, we can't: without us He won't.

2. Or; Preferentially - that means, as and when I want...with and through whom I chose and how and why I like.

We must intentionally want to be more like Jesus...for it is God's plan and desire for His children - His people - the Christian - the Church, to become like his son, Jesus Christ...

To Be Like Jesus, means that we must then live as he did.

TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS

The Progression of Spiritual Growth - Spiritual Transformation - Christian Maturity is well laid down by the Apostle John.

1John 2:12-14 lists three basic levels of spiritual growth. John used an analogy of physical human growth.

In verse 12 John said, "I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name." At first, John referred to all Christians with one term, "dear children," which simply means "offspring."

It has nothing to do with age and could refer to someone who is eighty-five years old.

However, in verses 13-14 John uses different terms, dividing the children of God into three categories - three levels of spiritual growth: **children, men (women) and fathers (mothers)**

1. The first level of spiritual growth is as children. In verse 13 John said, "I write to you, dear children [literally, "babies," a different Greek word than in verse 12], because you have known the Father."

What is the first thing a child recognizes? Their parents. A brand-new Christian realizes that they are a child of God—and not much else.

2. The next level of spiritual growth is as young men...this is termed as youth.... John then said, "I write to you, because you have overcome the evil one" (v. 13). Satan is the evil one. How do you overcome Satan? Verse 14: "Because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one."

Spiritual children do not have the word of God abiding in them strongly—they know only the basics. Consequently, they can be "blown here and there by every wind of teaching" (Ephesians 4:14).

That is why when you lead someone to Christ, the first thing you need to do is get them grounded in the word of God - discipleship...so they don't get confused by false teaching.

A spiritual young man/woman is strong in the word of God and has overcome the evil one. Because Satan is a liar (John 8:44) and appears as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), he is the master of false teaching. But a spiritual young person understands biblical teaching and is not victimized by false teaching.

3. The last level of spiritual growth is as fathers/mothers...this is termed as mature people..long in the faith. John describes an even deeper level of spiritual growth in verse 13: "I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning."

It's one thing to know that you belong to the family of God and to know the word of God, but it's another thing to know God intimately. Spiritual fathers not only know the Bible, but they also deeply know the God who wrote it and have a life changing relationship with Him.

In closing, the apostle John make a very telling point about becoming more like Jesus...In fact he both questions us and then challenges us...Read **1 John 2:6**: "he who says he abides in Christ ought to walk in the same way as he walked." In other words, if we claim to be a Christian, we must be Christ like.

Find out as much as we can about Jesus...His origin, His purpose, His life, His death, His resurrection, His coming again and finally; His new world in and among us...Then live Him out...It's that simple..but simplicity comes with commitment and desire..and that is only by choice..

While I was listening to Dhenis' sermon on Sunday, this poem came to mind. It needs no further comment from me. Peter Jeffery

The World's Bible

by Annie Johnson Flint

Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongues but our tongues
To tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side.

We are the only Bible
The careless world will read;
We are the sinner's Gospel,
We are the scoffer's creed;
We are the Lord's last message,
Given in deed and word;
What if the type is crooked?
What if the print is blurred?

What if our hands are busy
With work other than His?
What if our feet are walking
Where sin's allurements is?
What if our tongues are speaking
Of things His lips would spurn?
How can we hope to help Him
And hasten His return?

Church Meeting 10th October at 8pm

If you are a regular attendee of SFC you are welcome to attend our quarterly business meetings, the next one is on Wednesday 10th October at 8pm

Street Pastors

Street Pastors in Maidstone will in October, have been operating for 10 years. To celebrate this they are holding a celebration event on Sunday 14th October at 4pm at the Vine Church, Boughton Lane, Maidstone. All are welcome to join them in this celebration. If you would like to attend, it would be helpful to them if you could let them know in advance that you are coming by emailing maidstone@streetpastors.org.uk

Copy deadline for October Surface: Thursday 25th October

Quiz Evening

An opportunity to have fun as a family, get those “little grey cells working” and help us ensure we reach our Building Fund year end target!

Saturday 6th October starting at 7pm

Please aim to arrive by 6:45pm
Our quiz master will be Malcolm Buller.

Tickets are £5 for adults and include a ham or cheese Ploughman's, accompanied children can come for free. Please aim to be in tables of six.
All proceeds are for the Building Fund.

It's nearly that time of year again when a simple act of kindness and love, fueled by prayer can touch a heart and become the start of a very special journey...

If you are hoping to pack a Christmas shoebox full of goodies for a special child again this year you'll be pleased to know that plans are afoot to do just that!

If you already have a shoe box then you are all set.

If you have extra empty ones to donate please let Maggie or Mary know.

The deadline for boxes to be brought in, will be between 1st and 18th November.

If you would like more information please speak to Maggie or check out the website samaritans-purse.org.uk



Community Event

Defibrillator Training

On **Wednesday 10th October** we will also be hosting a defibrillator training session being organised by Poppy's Nursery at **7pm**. This is a free session being provided by Poppy's for the benefit of the village but places do need to be pre-booked with them

Please note the next quarterly church meeting will also be happening on the same evening but starting at 8pm so the car park maybe a little fuller than normal!

What's on in October? Dates for your Diary

Monday 1st	10.00am 8.00pm	Men's walking group Choir
Wednesday 3rd	10.30am 3.30pm	Prayer Fellowship Service at Sobell Lodge
Thursday 4th	10.00am 2.00pm 6.30pm 8.00pm	Free Bees toddler group Sing along Club Junior Badminton Adult Badminton Club
Friday 5th	9.00am 10.00am 11.30am	Leaders Meeting Ladies Badminton Club Service at Staplehurst Manor
Saturday 6th	7.00pm	Quiz Night
Monday 8th	10.00am 8.00pm	Men's walking group Choir
Wednesday 10th	10.30am 3.30pm 6.30pm 8.00pm	Prayer Fellowship Service at Sobell Lodge Defibrillator training in the Upper Room Church Meeting
Thursday 11th	10.00am 6.30pm 8.00pm	Free Bees toddler group Junior Badminton Adult Badminton Club
Friday 12th	10.00am 4.00pm	Ladies Badminton Club Service at Iden Manor
Monday 15th	10.00am 10.00am 8.00pm	Leaders Away Day 2 Men's walking group Choir
Wednesday 17th	10.30am 3.30pm	Prayer Fellowship Service at Sobell Lodge
Thursday 18th	10.00am 6.30pm 8.00pm	Free Bees toddler group Junior Badminton Adult Badminton Club
Friday 19th	10.00am 11.00am	Ladies Badminton Club Service at Abbotsleigh
Monday 22nd	10.00am 8.00pm	Men's walking group Choir
Wednesday 24th	10.30am 3.30pm	Prayer Fellowship Service at Sobell Lodge
Thursday 25th	8.00pm	Adult Badminton Club
Friday 26th	9.00am 10.00am	Leaders Prayer meeting Ladies Badminton Club
Monday 29th	10.00am 8.00pm	Men's walking group Choir
Wednesday 31st	10.30am 3.30pm	Prayer Fellowship Service at Sobell Lodge

Welcome Rota

7th October - Nicola and David

14th October - Linda and Clive

21st October - Amanda and Don

28th October - Hazel and Peter

Thank You!

A big thank you to all those who attended my garden party last month or who made a donation to Pancreatic Cancer UK. Over £500 was raised which was absolutely amazing!

Final call for anyone who would like to attend the Dinner Dance on 3rd November, there are still a few tickets left and it would be great to have all the seats full! Kate

The Leadership Team at the Staplehurst Free Church

Pastoral Elder: Rev. Dhenis Stafford
Email: dhenis@staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk

Terence Hawgood	Elder
Roger Bashford	Elder
Steve Parsons	Elder
Bob Howse	Deacon
Maggie Martin	Deacon
Paul Davey	Deacon
Sophie Hawkes	Deacon

Staplehurst Free Church - office - 01580 893993 Email info@staplehurstfreechurch.org.uk

Services in October

Sunday 7th	10.30am	All Age Worship Theme: Why we must grow as Christians
	6.30pm	Evening Worship, Communion & Teaching Theme: A teachable Church part 1
Sunday 14th	10.30am	Worship, Communion & Teaching Theme: Characteristics of the Acts 2 Church
	6.30pm	Evening Worship & Teaching Theme: What was the New Testament Church like?
Sunday 21st	10.30am	All Age Worship Theme: The good life by Faith
	6.30pm	Evening Worship, Communion & Teaching Theme: A teachable Church part 2
Sunday 28th	10.30am	Worship, Communion & Teaching Theme: A teachable Church again
	6.30pm	Evening Worship & Teaching Theme: God's intended Church

Enabling everyone to know Jesus
and grow in a personal relationship with Him

**STAPLEHURST
FREE CHURCH**