

Transformed!

How God Renews the Lives of His People

Get Personal

Part 9: *Growth Takes Time* *How to Stay Encouraged*

A Note from Pastor Keith...

There are no shortcuts, no crash courses. Spiritual transformation takes time—a LOT of it! And along the way we will face obstacles and setbacks of all kinds that can discourage us and leave us feeling hopeless. How can we stay encouraged so that we'll keep moving forward? Let's find out!

Be Encouraged by the *Glory*.

1. Yes, life's tough. But it's *more than worth it!*

¹⁸I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18 (all references are NIV)

our present sufferings, frustration, bondage to decay, groaning, pains of childbirth, we...groan inwardly

Compare all of that to...

the glory that will be revealed in us, eager expectation, liberated, glorious freedom, adoption as sons, redemption of our bodies, hope (ὄξ)

2. Yes, life's tough. But *everything will change!*

¹⁹The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ^{24a}For in this hope we were saved.

Romans 8:19-24a

3. Yes, there's hope. But *hope* implies *patience*.

^{24b}But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Romans 8:24b-25

Be Encouraged by the *Certainty*.

1. The chaos is no match for *the Spirit's prayers*.

²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Romans 8:26-27

Get Personal!

How has God used the struggles and challenges of your past to develop you spiritually? Give several examples.

How can you use your personal stories of struggle and growth to give you encouragement and patience in the struggles of today?

Discuss a time when you were confused and felt defeated.

2. The chaos is no match for *the Father's purpose*.

²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also *predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son*, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Romans 8:28-29 (emphasis added)

3. The chaos cannot defeat my *destiny of Christ-like glory*.

³⁰And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Romans 8:30

Be Encouraged by *God's Love*.

1. God will NEVER stop *blessing me*.

³¹What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Romans 8:31-32

2. God will NEVER stop *forgiving me*.

³³Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Romans 8:33-34

3. Yes, life's tough. You can count on it.

³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

Romans 8:35-36 (quoting Psalm 44:22)

But...

4. God will NEVER stop *loving me*.

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:37-39

You may get confused, but the Holy Spirit doesn't, and He is praying for you! How will you remind yourself of this the next time you start feeling confused and overwhelmed?

You may feel defeated, but *nothing* can defeat the Father's purpose of transforming you into Christlikeness. How will you remind yourself of this the next time you need to dispel those feelings of defeat?

How does the FACT that God will *never* give up on you help you never to give up on Him?

Conclusion

You *will* be transformed. You *will* be victorious. God *guarantees* it!