

habits.

Growing Closer To God

Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 2:1-3;

Hebrews 5:11-6:1a; 2 Peter 3:18

2 of 2

Significant human transformation always involves training, not just trying. Spiritual transformation is a long-term endeavor. It involves both God and us. I liken it to crossing an ocean. Some people try, day after day, to be good, to become spiritually mature. That's like taking a rowboat across the ocean. It's exhausting and usually unsuccessful.

Others have given up trying and throw themselves entirely on "relying on God's grace." They're like drifters on a raft. They do nothing but hang on and hope God gets them there.

Neither trying nor drifting are effective in bringing about spiritual transformation. A better image is the sailboat, which if it moves at all, it's a gift of the wind. We can't control the wind, but a good sailor discerns where the wind is blowing and adjusts the sails accordingly.

Working with the Holy Spirit, which Jesus likened to the wind in John 3, means we have a part in discerning the winds, in knowing the direction we need to go, and in training our sails to catch the breezes that God provides. That's true transformation.

[John Ortberg, "True (and False) Transformation," *Leadership Journal* (Summer 2002), p. 104]



northeast daily reading

September 11, 2011

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This week's Daily Bible Reading will challenge us to implement spiritual disciplines in our lives so that we may be transformed into the likeness of Jesus.

- DAY ONE – Luke 10:38-42
- DAY TWO – Mark 1:35, 6:45-46,14:32-34
- DAY THREE – Matthew 6:16-18
- DAY FOUR – Philippians 4:4-9
- DAY FIVE – Psalm 119:9-11

Memory Verse:

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." (Psalm 119:11)



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