

## BEING TRANSFORMED

The good news about Jesus means that if you have received Him, you are not what you once were, and you are not yet what you will become. You are being transformed.

This process progresses from the new birth through the rest of your earthly life, as you're being fitted for heaven, to live forever with the Lord in eternity to come.

The theological term is "sanctification" and that means "being made holy" and that means becoming more like Jesus. The Spirit of God works the word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God.

The letter of 1 Peter talks about this in chapter 1. In verse 13 he tells believers to "prepare your minds for action, be clear-headed, set your hope fully on the grace that will come to you when Jesus returns."

That's how athletes and soldiers steel their minds for the goal, regardless of the difficulties. Focus on the promise not the process, on what you become, not what you go through. Focus on Him, not the hurts.

In verse 14 Peter encourages you like a father guides his children. If you've been born again in Christ, you need to grow up in Christ. This means He is our life, our coach, our strength, and our goal.

So don't let the world squeeze you into its mold – instead, become more like Jesus. Do this by knowing and growing. Know what God's Word, the Bible, says about new life in Christ. Then live out that truth by His power within you, to grow more and more like Him.

Peter reminds us in verse 18 that the worldly way of doing things is not what saves us. Futile attempts of people trying to make themselves holy can never reach the perfection that is God's alone.

"Sin" is anything that misses the perfection of God. Our sins are so great there's nothing we can do about them. The penalty of sin is death. We can't buy our way out of it. Just "believing in God" doesn't save us – that's simply a rational human mind recognizing there's more to reality than temporal things.

Only something perfect can save us. Verse 19 says it cost the precious blood of Jesus, the "lamb of God," the perfect One promised from the beginning. Our loving Creator sent His Son to live a perfect life, die a perfect death, and raise up again to live forever, so we can be made perfect in Him.

When you trust in Christ, believing in Him as your Lord and Savior, you receive His resurrection life. You're born again, and you live in Him and He lives in you, and you grow in Him, through His Word.

Peter says that just like we're saved by the imperishable life of Jesus, by His blood shed for us, so we also live by the imperishable life of Jesus, by His living Word living through us.

People can't see God, but they can see Him living through Christians. That's why in verse 22 Peter urges us to truly love one another. That was a radical concept in his day just as it is in ours!

Draw a large dot on a piece of paper. Draw a line extending from that dot. The dot is our earthly life, our finite temporary existence. The line represents eternity. We should live, not for the dot, but for the line.

Believers in Christ receive a new life, which begins on earth and goes on forever in heaven. We are being transformed by God's Word to prepare us for eternity with Him. That's good news!

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