

# CHRISTIANS ARE **BEING TRANSFORMED** INTO CHRIST'S LIKENESS WITH EVER INCREASING GLORY WHICH COMES FROM THE LORD

(Part #1 of 3)

## Notice:

Christians are **being transformed** into Christ's likeness with **ever increasing** glory.." 2 Corinthians 3:18

The initial process begins with a commitment on our part to surrender to God's invitation (Mark 16:15-16). The process continues as we follow God's instruction after conversion as Paul so clearly illustrates in Romans 12:1-2 (NIV) 1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 **Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.**

This transformation is a **process that takes time**. Just like the transformation of a baby into a young adult and finally into a full-grown person!

## CHRISTIANS ARE OFTEN DISCOURAGED WHEN THEY REPEAT A SIN THEY VOWED TO LEAVE BEHIND.

Christians, after experiencing their new birth into Christ (John 3:3,5), often become discouraged when, after committing to follow Christ, they find they commit some of the same sins they were committing before becoming a Christian. This should not be such a surprise when one thinks about it. It's not that we have decided to go back to the same old life-style we were in before we became Christians. It just takes time to discontinue some of the language, habits, and responses that had been a part of our lives for a long period of time. It is normal for some of the sinful thoughts we had before becoming a Christian to reoccur from time to time. It's like telling someone, "Don't think about a pink elephant!" What is the first image that comes to their mind? Satan encourages us to remember sinful things! On the other hand, we should not be flippant about committing sin! Sin is still sin! Commitment is still commitment.

It is right to despise sin because it is the old man that we decided to put off in order to put on Christ. The Christian must remember that God sent Jesus to save us from our sins, **while we were still sinners – (Romans 5:8 [NIV] 8 "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us")**, and if we obeyed His gospel, no matter who or what we were, God **forgave us our sins because of what Christ did for us!** Paul's explanation of this is found in 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV) 21 **"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God"**. A sinner, after being baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27), becomes the righteousness of God because Christ took on our sins and we receive His righteousness as seen in the above scripture.

**GOD, THROUGH CHRIST, FREED US FROM ALL SIN – MADE US RIGHTEOUS EVEN THOUGH WE ARE, OURSELVES, IMPERFECT.**

God is a just God and therefore He must punish sin (Romans 6:23 **"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."**). But God is also a loving and merciful God and because of this **He freely sent Jesus Christ as His sacrifice for our sins that we might be forgiven our sins** (John 3:16-18). This is the only way that God

could be righteous in forgiving our sins. He had to sacrifice Jesus on the cross to take our place and pay the price we could not pay. Paul explains this in **Romans 8:1-4 (NIV)** 1 “Therefore, **there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, 4 in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.**” There is no condemnation in verse one because of what God did in verses three and four. He allowed Christ to become our sin on the cross! Christ paid the debt in full! If we are Christians our sin debt is fully paid. When you fully pay a debt there is no debt left to pay! What we, or the Law could not do, God did (**Romans 8:3-4**)! Not only did Christ pay our debt with the shedding of His blood on the cross, **He continues to pay our debts with that same blood** (**1 John 1:7 (NIV)**) 7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin**”). The word purifies in this sentence in the Greek is καθαρίζω, a verb: Present Tense; Active Voice; Indicative Mood – Meaning – **Keeps on cleansing, keeps on purifying.** The blood that originally cleansed us in baptism (**Acts 2:36-38; 1 Peter 3:21**) **keeps on cleansing us as we walk in the light.** This doesn’t demand sinless perfection but it does demand that we continue walking in the light.

The price for our sin was condemnation. That condemnation is removed from all who have believed, repented, and been immersed into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins (**Acts 2:37-38; Romans 6:3-8; Galatians 3:26-27**). This was not because of any good that we have done but by our faith and obedience to the grace of God. (**Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)**) 8 “**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works.** so that no one can boast.10 **For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do**”). Grace does not depend on how well we do compared to someone else; Grace is grace, no matter how well or badly we do in living the Christian life.

**Since God is the one offended by sin and the creator of the universe, He gets to determine what will take away our sin.** We may feel that it is not right for God to forgive our sin by allowing Christ to take on our sin and free us from the bondage of sin, but if God says that is what He demands to cleanse us, then that is the end of the matter. This is why **grace is grace!** It is God’s free gift. We didn’t deserve being forgiven but God gave the free gift of His Son to all those who, by faith, believe, repent, and have the confidence that God will remove their sins when they, by faith, are immersed into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (**Acts 2:36-38, 41; 22:16**).

Whenever, we commit one of the sins we left behind to become a Christian (and John says we will **1 John 2:1-2**), just repent of it and continue to walk in the light as the inspired writer John instructed in **1 John 1:7-9 (NIV)**, 7 “But if we **walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.** 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness**”. If we, through our weakness, sin, it does not mean that we are **walking in sin** as we did before we became Christians. It just means that through our human weakness we slipped. When this happens, we just repent, ask God’s forgiveness and keep on walking in the light (**1 John 1:7,9; 2:1-2**).

Let the Christian remember that he or she (regardless of the sinful thought that comes through their mind), has been cleansed from **all sin** by Christ’s blood and this blood **continues to cleanse** us from our sins. The same blood that was powerful enough to cleanse us in the

baptistry, is powerful enough to cleanse us when we sin after baptism. As long as we do not willingly reject Christ and His blood and begin **walking** in darkness, *that blood continues to cleanse us minute by minute, day by day.*

**WATCH FOR CHRISTIANS ARE BEING TRANSFORMED INTO HIS  
LIKENESS PART 2**