

THE POTENTIAL FOR SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Ephesians 4:11-15, Micah 6:8

April 15, 2021

Twelfth Street M.B.C.

As President of the Metropolitan District Congress under the parent organization of the Metropolitan Missionary Baptist District Association I am honored to present my thoughts and vision for the future expansion of our work to advance the kingdom through partnerships.

We are up against the intensity, fervor and demonic strength of the old Dragon, Apollyon, Abaddon, the Devil, the old serpent, our adversary Satan. He has stepped up his game in these last days to attack the three "I"s of human development, Ignorance, Intimidation and Influence. To combat this insurgency I would like to recommend our renewed activity in these three areas of concern.

1. To fight ignorance I would like to have us resume our courses and schools on the second Saturday of every month starting at 8:00 AM. The possibility of that means that we can end by 10:30 AM which would allow for study and not interfere with the media setup of Tabernacle. Additionally, we can provide more Schools and classes in a eight month period of time.
2. To fight intimidation particularly in the virtual and digital technology, we should conduct a series of technology seminars or classes that would be open to all persons to learn how to use this ZOOM and Google platform to advance the knowledge of our seniors, the infirmed, and homebound through partnerships.
3. To fight the negative and positive influences, misinformation, untruths of the pandemic I would like to propose conducting additional seminars in the following areas, **mental health** because of the stress of the pandemic and uncertainty of when will be get back to whatever normal is, to give folks help in overcoming stress, tension and anxiety. **Leadership Principles and Development** we need to provide courses and instruction on management, leadership and practical how to biblical examples from the narrative stories in the bible. Provide **Counseling** to help remove the stigma of why and when you should ask for help, in areas of life changing dementia, hospice, and the advent of cancer.

The potential for our spiritual transformation began with the born again experience taught by Jesus in John 3:3. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is physical and spiritual proof that God has the power to raise an innocent, sinless person from the physical plane of death and raise them to everlasting life. For the believer it means that if we willingly give our sin nature to Jesus Christ, then God's perfect will is that the innocent, righteous nature of Jesus Christ is freely given to every believer if they will receive the righteousness of God by faith in the blood atonement of Christ. God gives us the power of his spirit to become transformed into his image and likeness by our worship and study of his Word.

One of the purposes of the resurrection of Jesus is to give each believer physical proof that the sin nature that is inherent in humankind can be forgiven, wiped out and the person become transformed into the image of the son of God. Let me deviate a bit, in the movie bumblebee, which depicts Marvel comic books transformers, a machine is able to take the shape and form of another machine by looking at it. So when you spiritually look unto Jesus who is the author and perfecter of our faith then we too can be transformed into his image by looking unto him! God wants us to become spiritual transformers of the light and love of Jesus Christ when we let our light shine into the hearts of people we meet and associate with.

When we look unto Jesus on a constant, continual basis, then the ultimate plan of God that is expressed in Ephesians 4:11-15, which says, "11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the

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Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: KJV will be a reality, not merely a scriptural reference.

Because of Jesus, God, is recreating and developing in each of us here, leaders and disciples who are being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. All of you here have the potential to become God's next disciple and leader who makes the kingdom of God come alive in the hearts and minds of folks you meet and greet. Besides this passage of scripture that I read in your hearing, the proof of God's transforming power is shown in the people that we have met whose walk in this life was close to the image of Jesus Christ.

Let me share a few examples, Mother Johnson, Pastor Johnson's mom was a wonderful woman of God, she did not have a title, or a position in the congress, but she was a wonderful, spirit filled servant of God whom many of us adopted for our mom. Her kind hearted spirit and words of wisdom were inviting and infectious and when Pastor Johnson caught wind of what was going on he reminded us that that WAS HIS mother not ours. So when that wonderful transforming and inviting calm spirit of Mother Johnson performed in the world she has given us Pastor Johnson whose calm, transforming, steady leadership has kept us whole during this difficult season of anxiety and stress.

My former Pastor Sampson used to tap me and others on the forehead and when he did that it made me feel like our father in heaven was working through him to say hello my child. Those tender moments of his transforming touch have enabled me to be a better person by responding to others in a more comforting manner.

I am simply pointing out through these examples that each one of you have this loving, transforming power of God that indwells each of you. You have the power to use your spirituality in every situation where you can be the emissary of heaven and spread and share heaven's gifts to people in an unbelievable and miraculous manner.

Dean Kimberly Elyse said the other day said in our meeting that when stress comes and it has, be calm, breathe, because it will be alright. Well, the calmness and coolness that she showed in that meeting, demonstrates the compassionate concern of God for his people and that has transforming spiritual power to aid others in their walk with Jesus. That powerful invigorating Word she gave last night fanned the flames of our passion and transformed us to do more for the master, once again it's due to the transforming power of God that each of us has within.

I know I hear you all saying what are the obstacles to my leadership development and expansion, and why aren't I being transformed into the image of Jesus like these examples? First of all, **EVERY ONE OF YOU ALL** are being transformed, you must simply believe and acknowledge it!

Three aspects of your potential for transformation as a disciple of Jesus Christ God that you should pay some attention to are:

1. The reading and comprehension of the word of God

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2. Train your mind to remember the promises of God
3. Reject negative thoughts, images and meditate on what is good, pure and wholesome.

The obstacles to our spiritual transformation comes about because Satan knows that ignorance, Intimidation, and influence are factors in our spiritual growth and development. Satan therefore uses busyness, procrastination, and over commitment to keep us from reading and studying the word of God.

Then when you are trying to remember the promises of God to fortify and secure your faith belief, Satan uses distractions, deceit, and demonic thought bombs to cause us to forget or ignore God's promises.

Another obstacle the enemy constructs is to flood us with negative thoughts, opinions, images, and bad news that seeks to discourage our ideas and efforts, disappoint us in our beliefs and cause apathy and indifference to be created in our spirit to stop us from doing God's work.

These obstacles in the battlefield of the spiritual mind has been going on for several thousand years, who will we serve, ourselves, our flesh and our inner desires or put away those negative selfish, self-serving thoughts and focus our attention on loving and serving our God, you remember what Joshua told his people back in their day. Joshua 24:14-20 says,

14 "Fear the Lord and serve him with integrity and faithfulness. Get rid of the gods your ancestors served on the other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt and serve only the Lord. 15 But if you do not want to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve.

Those words presented by Joshua were done and were given in a time of great need. Those words need repeating today because new gods have been constructed that draws us away from our potential for spiritual transformation. We were comfortable with the way things were and we want so badly to get back to that some will not wear masks, some refuse to learn how to get vital and necessary information in this digital, virtual environment. In this environment MEDCCE is controlling our information sources by getting our schools and instructors certified so you get a clear, biblically correct image of Jesus.

Will we give in to the conveniences of cooking, eating, entertainment pleasures, ease of living and moving about, or will we love the Lord our God, learn his ways and commandments, and serve him? That is the decision that faces us today in our world of convenience and me first attitude. However, I point out that we are facing many many more spiritual and physical challenges because of the access we have to information and misinformation that comes from our news media sources, false teachers and prophets, and political leadership that is supposed to serve and protect us, but instead serve themselves.

One of the hardest exercises for the Christian to do in this sin sick world is to train and develop our spiritual mind. The word of God reminds us to let this mind be in us that was also in Christ Jesus, the word exhorts us that whatever we think in our hearts, that is what we will become. There is a quote by Lao Tsu that encapsulates the mental and spiritual challenge we face.

"Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny."

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God has given us a spiritual gift of the Holy Spirit that we can receive by faith to help us in the decision process so we can correctly serve God and be blessed by His guiding presence. It is by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that brings information to the spiritual mind in us to lead, guide and re-direct our lives for God. Paul gives us some ideas of what is required to train and develop our spiritual mind in

Those thoughts by brother Paul suggests that **our minds are a spiritual battlefield for Growth and Development that Requires Discipline, Supervision and Mastery of our Human Free Will**

When we received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, it was the exercise of our Free Will that caused us to say, I am a sinner, Lord come into my heart to save and transform me into the image of God. It is that same free will that we must exercise each day to keep ourselves on the right path and moving toward the Grace and Love of God.

Even before we received Christ it was our free will that enabled us to choose what, when, why and the how of life. In some cases, we listened to the voice of God and in some cases, we did what we felt like doing. Over the course of time, we learned that when we listened and followed the directions and teachings of the commandments of God given through the Holy Spirit, Life was easier, and we enjoyed better relationships and less stress and anxieties. Of course, as we learned what to do and what not to do, we were training our spiritual mind to take charge and to disregard some of the emotional urgings of the carnal or natural mind and our flesh. The process of training and equipping ourselves to choose the right path, choose the right people to become our friends, choose the right steps to take to move toward God and not away from him requires daily prayer and counsel from God.

Our spiritual thinking and reflection can take us deeper into the purpose and plans of God for our lives or it can take us out of and away from the purposes and plans of God, it is our daily choice. As Satan moves about seeking whom he may devour, the outward action of the person moves the enemy to attack or seek to influence the person on the carnal or natural level of their mind. We know that we walk by faith and not by sight, but when situations and difficulties come, we might revert to old habits, old beliefs and experiences that worked in the past. We might abandon the ways of faith; we might not listen to the spiritual mind as it was instructed by the Holy Spirit. Brethren we must learn how to discipline and develop our spiritual minds to reject fear, reject doubt, reject discouragement and other negative ungodly influences.

When Samson was influenced by Delilah to give up the source of his strength, Satan was using the flesh attraction of his mind to Delilah to get him to abandon God's purpose for his life and he temporarily did, but repentance of his foolishness and God's divine favor enabled him to complete God's plan.

When Joseph was influenced by Potiphar's wife to have intimate relations, Satan was using sexual temptation to get him to abandon the ways of righteousness and the plans of God. Ultimately, he did not succumb, and he fulfilled the prophetic dream that God gave Him many years ago.

When Jesus was in the garden of gethsemane, the abandonment of the disciples going to sleep, when he needed their prayers had Jesus thinking about letting the cup of pain and his death pass by him. However, Jesus' discipline of prayer and supplication before the Father had secured in his spiritual mind what he needed to do, complete the fathers will for his life. Jesus refused to revert to the carnal ways of thinking and

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behaving instead he continued in the spiritual thought process of the Holy Spirit when he said, “nevertheless, thy will be done”.

We are used to working, thinking, and operating in the natural mind so much that when the schemes and influences of Satan begin to challenge the thoughts and plans of God for our lives, we mistakenly revert to carnal ways of thinking and behaving instead of continuing in the spiritual thought process of the Holy Spirit. It is not easy to reverse this trend because when trouble and difficulties arise, we look for easy answers and quick solutions, we may not get on our knees and pray, we may not seek the Lord while he may be found. In a moment of weakness, we might seek the counsel of our friends by a phone call, in a moment of weakness when money gets tight, we might seek the opportunity of the casino.

I submit that whenever we encounter situations, and challenges to the purposes and plans of God for our lives, we should look to and employ the suggestions found in Micah 6:8.

Act right

We need to focus our spiritual mind on the promises that God has given to us.

God's promises cannot be changed, altered, or removed by anyone, but God and we know from scripture that God is unchangeable, he is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, we can totally depend on God.

Love mercy

A positive good will evolve out of every situation that we encounter in our lives.

The stories, narratives and characters of the bible show us that God is concerned about human welfare, and wants all humanity to voluntarily live with him in heaven both now and in the future. Therefore, God continually seeks to encourage, enlighten, equip and educate us to make decisions based on the spiritual mind and guidance from the Holy Spirit. When that is done by mediation, prayer, and conversations with God all situations will work for our good.

Be humble

We need to discipline our spiritual thinking to maintain God's adaptive change process.

When situations and people challenge us, it is much easier to fall back to our old habits and ways and overlook the guidance and our new learning from God. It is easier because we feel more comfortable in those old ways, they produce results that we have known and have become accustomed to, the new ways of God are unknown and the results can be uncertain, but at that point don't allow doubt, uncertainty, and your concern over whether you will lose control affect your decisions, trust in the Lord and adhere to his promises, when He said I will never leave nor forsake you.

Respectfully submitted

President Floyd A. Davis