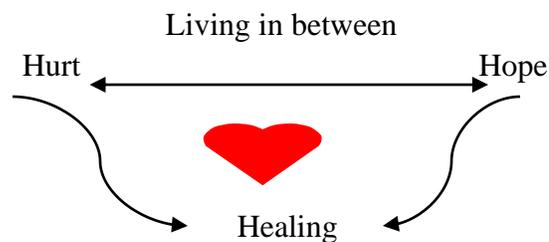


Grounded in Grace

LIVING IN-BETWEEN HURT, HOPE, AND HEALING PT 4 Living in Transformation

Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. John 5:8-9 (NIV)



What an incredible Savior we have in Jesus! After hearing the man’s excuses and reliance, Jesus speaks healing words of transformation. It is interesting to note that when Jesus healed people, he used many methods. Sometimes he touched them and other times he let them touch him. Once he spat in the dirt and used that to open the blind eyes of a beggar. Other times he just spoke and they were healed. Jesus is the approachable Savior, the touching Savior, the compassionate Savior, and the listening Savior. Here, Jesus simply spoke a few words. But his words were commands. He commanded him to get up and walk. In other words, when Jesus speaks he speaks words of transformation.

The “At Once” of Transformation

Notice the words “at once” or in other versions “immediately” the man was cured. The healing was instantaneous. Jesus spoke with authority and he healed with authority. If you are a believer in Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, then that is exactly what Jesus did for you. Jesus speaks to the Father on our behalf and declares us not guilty.

The theological word for this is justification. Justification is an instantaneous work in which God declares you not guilty because Jesus took your debt on the cross. It is nothing you do, but it is something done for you. You can not earn it or work for it. You can not make it happen. God is the one who transforms your heart. He is the one who speaks. He has spoken to the Father on your behalf, and the Father has found you righteous in his sight.

When Jesus spoke those words, “It is finished,” he had completed or accomplished redemption by his blood. He spoke words of victory even when it appeared that he was going to be defeated by death. The final victory was his resurrection. Jesus defeated sin, conquered death, satisfied the wrath of God, and made the payment for our debt through his death and his resurrection. In addition to all of this, for those who have accepted Christ’s work, when he spoke into our hearts he spoke words of transformation. He not only made us alive but he made us new. He not only made us wanting to seek him but willing to surrender. When Jesus speaks his people listen.

The Ongoing Affects of Transformation

And so did the paralytic. Notice again what happens after Jesus speaks the words of healing to the paralyzed man, “At once he picked up his mat and walked.” Jesus speaks words of transformation and the man’s life is changed forever. He gets up and goes home. The man doesn’t just sit there on his mat. He doesn’t wait for the sunset or say something like, “Thank you, Sir, for transforming my life. Thank you for giving me back mobility in my legs, but I think I am going to sit here for a while and enjoy my former life. I think I am going to watch the sunset and see who gets in the healing pool next.”

The man immediately gets up and goes. He leaves his life of paralyzing excuses behind him. He leaves the life of attention seeking, hand outs, and pity for a life that is new, unknown, and full of hard work and risks. Jesus spoke transformation and now is living a transformed life. He doesn’t wait for tomorrow to start his new life but understands that today is his opportunity for a new tomorrow.

The Power of Living in Transformation

What about you? Maybe Jesus spoke transformation a long time ago. You have been a Christian for most of your life, but you still find yourself lying on the mat waiting to be healed. There are certain roads in your soul which you have not wanted to venture down because the journey may be too painful. There are certain places where you have hidden, and you really don’t know if you can lie there anymore. Maybe you have just become a Christian and you are on the journey toward discovering God’s healing, transforming power. Whatever the case may be, God is calling you to be transformed. God has been calling me to be transformed. God has been calling your name and asking you to look where you tend to lie and where you tend to hide.

He has been making you look at your scars and at your open, bleeding wounds saying, “My wounds are big enough to heal. My scars are here for you to find hope. My life is here to give you power as you live in the in-between. Take my scars and live with a power that has been given to you through my empty tomb. Death has ended! You no longer need to live in the paralyzing state of fear, pain or immobility. Get up and go! For your life is now lived in the promise of eternity.” As a James Ward chorus to his song “Death has Ended” states, “Death has ended and has been swallowed up in victory!”

**Death has ended and has been swallowed up in
victory!**

By Dr. Steve Benson

(From devotional series called: Living In-Between- © 2009/2024 Dr. Steve Benson

www.groundedingrace.net)