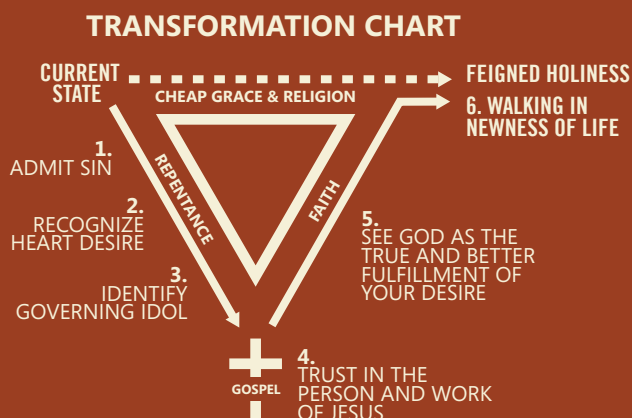


GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION

All of us see the need for change. The question is how that change takes place in our lives. God calls us to trust that His word is good and to walk in obedience in relationship with Him. At different times and in different ways, we all fail. Further, we are deeply broken and incapable of fixing ourselves. We need divine rescue. The good news of the Gospel is that God came to us in the person of Jesus Christ, who bore the penalty for our sin and has conquered sin and death so that we might experience true life. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection have accomplished our deliverance. But how does this get worked out in our lives?

The purpose of this card is to walk through that process. Personal transformation through the Gospel is real and it is possible. Sin is fundamentally more about misaligned desires than breaking rules. The heart is the seat of our desires. We must address what resides there in order to see genuine change. Use this card with others to pursue holiness together.



When we see sin in our lives, we often try to rearrange our behaviors and words so that we meet the right standard. While this may work to fool some for a while (including ourselves) this type of "holiness" is not real and is not sustainable. We need an approach that goes to the center and source of our lives—our hearts.

1. Be humble and honest. Admit that you have sinned and name what that sin is. (Psalm 51)
2. Thinking back on that moment (or one of the moments) in which you sinned, ask: "What did I really want right then that I was not receiving?" (James 4:1-2)
3. Recognizing the motivations of your heart, place those desires into a category of idolatry:
 - Control:** I wanted things to go or be a certain way.
 - Glory:** I wanted others to respect me or be impressed by me.
 - Comfort:** I wanted an absence of interruptions, demands, or annoyances.
 - Approval:** I wanted others to validate what I did or who I am.
4. Having identified the governing idol of your heart in that situation, turn to Jesus, who bore your sin on the cross and was raised to new life. Trust in Him for forgiveness. (Romans 8:1-4)

>>>**Continued on back**

5. Receiving forgiveness and trusting in Jesus for salvation, think about how God fulfills the desire you had better than the way you were otherwise trying to fulfill it. (II Peter 1:4-5)

He is the sovereign One: You do not need to be in control because God, the one who is perfectly wise, is already in control.

He is the glorious One: You do not need to be impressive because God, the one who is eternally glorious, is already impressive.

He is the satisfying One: You do not need to find ultimate comfort in created things because God, the one who is uncreated, satisfies entirely.

He is the gracious One: You do not need to find approval from those around you because God has already approved of you in Jesus Christ.

6. Trusting in Jesus' salvation and looking to God as the true and better fulfillment of your desire, walk in faithful obedience with God. (Romans 8:5-11)

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY:

We cannot fight sin and pursue rightly ordered joy on our own. God has designed humans to be in relationship. As the people of God, we are meant to care for another, listen to one another, bear one another's burdens, and ask hard questions of one another. Therefore, we need to be interacting with each other in a consistent and intentional way such that we know others and are known by others. This is where the true work of transformation takes place.

In order to do this well, we must ask three different types of questions of one another. This allows us to be drawn out, seeing more clearly our situations and our lives for what they are. The first level of questions is designed to expose what actually took place in a particular situation. The second level questions help us articulate the heart's desires in the moment of externalized sin. And the third level of questions categorizes those desires into idolatries that often functionally command our lives. Not all of these questions are directly applicable every time; simply use the questions as a guide in your conversations.

LEVEL ONE QUESTIONS: *What happened?*

1. Where have you experienced tension in your relationships recently?
2. Where have you seen ungodly thoughts, words, or behaviors in your life?
3. What was the situation? (If there is more than one, pick just one.)
4. What did you do/say?
5. Who else was involved in the situation?
6. What did others do/say?

LEVEL TWO QUESTIONS: *What did you want?*

1. Why were you angry, annoyed, hurt, or frustrated in this situation?
2. How did you want the situation to go instead of how it did?
3. What were you really wanting right then that you were not receiving?
4. What were you trying to get by responding the way that you did?
5. If you had _____ then everything would have been okay. How would you fill in that blank?

LEVEL THREE QUESTIONS: *What did you think would satisfy you in that moment?*

1. Would you have felt satisfied if you had been able to make things go your way? (**control**)
2. Would you have felt satisfied if you had received respect or recognition from others? (**glory**)
3. Would you have felt satisfied if you had no external demands or frustrations? (**comfort**)
4. Would you have felt satisfied if you had received validation from others? (**approval**)