

# Change Happen Inside and Out

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Scripture Reading: Romans 12:1-2

Introduction:

- Are you all familiar with caterpillars that eat tomato vines?
  - I doubt there's actually one called a "tomato caterpillar" but that's what we called it when I was younger because it liked to eat the leaves on a tomato plant
  - When you went to a row of tomato's and saw a bunch of the leaves eaten off you immediately looked for the "tomato caterpillar"
  - He was a pretty hard thing to find because he was the same color as the vine
  
- The caterpillar
  - It's about as big as my little finger and is pretty soft and flexible on the outside and gooey on the inside
  - He makes great fish bait
  - But if you do it just right...
    - You can step on him and slide your foot and stretch the goo for about three feet
    - YUCK—RIGHT?
  
- The amazing fact is:
  - That ugly, gooey filled caterpillar will turn into a beautiful butterfly
  - Have you ever stepped on a butterfly?
    - Well, if you do all it leaves is a splotch of color on the ground
    - Why? Because the butterfly is very different than the caterpillar—EVEN ON THE INSIDE
  
- While the incredible change from caterpillar to butterfly is obvious from the outward appearance ...
  - Never forget the striking outward change that produces that beauty happens because there was a more incredible change on the inside

## DISCUSSION

### I. OUR GOD IS THE CREATOR WHO BROUGHT ALL THINGS INTO EXISTENCE

- A. Everything has its origin in God, and everything was good when God created it.
- a. Evil totally corrupted everything God made
    - i. It distorted everything God created including us
    - ii. B/c of evil—the physical world God created was no longer good
  - b. If you have not considered how totally evil corrupted what God created—  
FOCUS ON THIS ILLUSTRATION FOR A MOMENT
    - i. Before sin—Adam and Eve lived totally naked
    - ii. Until they rebelled against God—They wore no clothing
    - iii. And that was not vulgar
    - iv. It was not shocking
    - v. It was not crude
    - vi. It was not impure
    - vii. And it produced no shame, no guilt, and no embarrassment
  - c. Be honest church, can you grasp that?
    - i. Can you imagine public nakedness as the common reality without evil?
    - ii. No vulgar words or actions or thoughts?
    - iii. No shocking words, actions, or thoughts?
    - iv. No crude words, actions, or thoughts?
    - v. No impure words, actions, or thoughts?
    - vi. No shame, no guilt, no embarrassment, no danger?
    - vii. Does this give you just a hint of what evil has done to us?
  - d. God created and evil destroyed—AND IN CHRIST GOD RECREATES
    - i. What God does on the act of recreating us is just as real as what God did when He created
- B. “Is it really that important that I understand this?”
- a. No—IT GOES BEYOND BEING “REALLY IMPORTANT”
  - b. It is essential that we understand this!
- C. Paul stressed the importance the understanding of this in two letters:
- a. He stressed it to the church at Ephesus when he wrote **Ephesians 4:17-24**  
**(READ)**
    - i. He said...

1. B/c you are Christians you do not live and act like people who don't know God
  2. They do not understand; they do not know and their hearts are hard
  3. The calluses on their hearts allow physical appetites and greed to control their lives
  4. That is not what you learned when you were taught about Christ
- ii. He said...
1. You learned you were no longer to live that way
  2. You learned an entirely new way to see the world and an entirely new way to think
  3. You learned that you must put off your old existence and out on your new existence in Christ
  4. This new existence was created by God Himself in the righteousness and holiness of truth
- b. Paul emphasized the same thing to the congregation at Colossae in **Colossians 3:5-10 (READ)**
- i. He said...
1. Don't use your bodies for immoral sexual purposes, or evil desires, or greed
  2. You need to respond to God's love and these worldly things invite God's wrath
  3. That is the kind of life you use to live—but you don't need that life anymore
  4. You don't let anger, wrath, malice, abusive language, or lying be a part of your new existence
  5. Those were a part of your old self that died
  6. You put on the new self fashioned in the image of Christ who has created you again

D. Notice something the scriptures plainly emphasize

- a. We do not use our bodies for ungodly purposes
- b. We do not live out lives in ungodly ways b/c we have been recreated on the inside
- c. Both sets of scriptures we looked at this morning stress the fact that Christians are a spiritual creation of God!
- d. THIS CREATION MAKES US A NEW SELF—SOMEONE DIFFERENT FROM OUR FORMER SELVES
- e. We behave differently and live differently in our daily lives because – WE HAVE CHANGED ON THE INSIDE

- f. God recreated the inside and the outside makes that new creation obvious

## II. AS CHRISTIANS WE HAVE LONG STRESSED THE WAY THINGS LOOKED

- A. We place an enormous emphasis on what we do with our bodies
  - a. We stressed restrictions on how we dress
  - b. We stressed restrictions on where we go
  - c. We stressed activities that Christians should avoid
  - d. One of our big questions is, “How will this look to other people?”
  
- B. It's legitimate to emphasize that a Christian must be concerned about how they use their bodies
  - a. Both the Ephesian and the Colossian scriptures stressed that our bodies & our lives are not to be used for evil purposes
  - b. Paul urged Christians to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God in **Romans 12:1**, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.”
  - c. Paul urged Christians to realize their bodies must not be used for sexual sin in **I Corinthians 6:19-20**, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”
  
- C. But our outward appearance is meaningless if the outside doesn't reflect the inside
  - a. When we brought our sins to God for forgiveness
    - i. And allowed God to place us in Christ
    - ii. We allowed His creative power into our lives
    - iii. And God recreated us all over again on the inside
  
- D. What happens when God recreates me on the inside?
  - a. A lot of things...
  - b. But the one major change is that it brings into existence my godly conscience
    - i. I begin to make choices based on my relationship with God through Jesus Christ

- ii. I begin to see the beauty of God that surrounds me each day
- iii. I begin to be more prayerful and give things over to God realizing He is my true strength
- iv. I begin to feel my calloused heart begin to soften and take in God's Word and His ways
- v. I begin to show compassion, love, mercy
- vi. I CHANGE—INSIDE AND OUT

**CLOSING:**

- Caterpillars are really kinda creepy
  - But butterflies are beautiful
  
- The primary difference between a caterpillar and a butterfly is not what you see—BUT WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE
  - The incredible change you see on the outside is the result of the incredible change that has taken place on the inside
  
- Christ died for us to change—outwardly and inwardly
  - It's inevitable church—
    - Once we are recreated on the inside...
    - The outside changes as well

**INVITATION:**

- Will you allow God into your lives?
  - Will you allow God to change your heart and your lives?