

**COLLIDE**  
**Week 2 – “Be Transformed”**

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**1 Corinthians 12:7**

**2 Corinthians 3:18**

**Romans 12:2**

**Message      Collide Week 2 – “Be Transformed”**

**When Jesus rescues us, He begins a process within us that takes each of us from where we were to a life that is secure and centered on Him. It is true that Jesus loves us just the way we are, but it is equally true that He loves us too much to leave us that way.**

**Jesus gave His life so that I could have mine. Jesus gave life so you could have yours. Not just to have a mediocre life. Rather, His desire is that we live life fully with Him.**

**Transformation is not a quick or over-night process. It takes time, dedication, and commitment on my part. Am I willing to partake in it?**

**Point out the areas of your life God desires to transform, and prayerfully consider what needs to happen to allow God to do the work of transformation in those areas.**

**We are continuing our series we started last week called, “Collide.” We kicked things off by looking into the biblical principle of standing firm in our faith. The world attempts to offer us a different set of values, one that includes things that are initially seductive, but ultimately inconsistent and difficult to stand on.**

**So how do we pursue the things of Christ? We allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit into all truth. When we do, we will start to experience the abundant life Christ came to give us. But how do we keep that experience going day to day? I believe God desires three things from us as we move forward in life after we lay the foundation. The first one I want us to discuss today: being transformed.**

**How many of you have seen the popular movie series, “Transformers.” This series of movies were a huge hit and are still very popular. The reason these movies were so successful had much to do with the idea of a transformer. Ordinary cars would transform into super-heroes that had amazing abilities. The point being that once the ordinary vehicles transformed, they were truly extraordinary.**

**I believe God desires the same work to happen in our life. Many of us have been tempted to follow the patterns of the world. We get caught up in sinful behavior that doesn’t ultimately fulfill us. But God truly does know best. In fact, there’s a verse in the Bible that talks about all of this.**

**Romans 12:2 is Paul writing, and here is what he has to say...**

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*“Do not conform 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.”*

Within this one verse, I believe Paul gives us an equation. First, there is a subtraction, then an addition, and finally an outcome. I want us to break this down together to find the keys to transformation in our lives.

The first thing Paul invites us to do is simply say “no” to the patterns of this world. That is our subtraction or what we need to get rid of. I am a firm believer that in everyone’s life, there is a rhythm of some kind. Some of us have healthy rhythms. For instance, we wake up early each morning, drink our cup of coffee, spend some time in God’s Word and in prayer, and then complete a morning workout before work/school. Others of us, however, may find ourselves caught up in unhealthy rhythms.

Have you ever had a sinful habit that kept coming back over and over? Did you notice if it affected other areas of your life? Did it take more and more of your time?

When I’ve experienced this season, I allowed the things of this world to lead me astray. I was stuck in a rhythmic cycle and I didn’t know I could get out of it. However, I finally came to the conclusion that what God needed from me was a willingness to simply say “no.”

In your life right now, maybe the first step toward transformation for you is some internal dialogue between you and your sinful habit. “Sin, you have been creeping back into my life every time I convince myself you are gone. And even if you continue to present yourself to me as a temptation, I am telling you that the answer in advance is “no.”

Many of us may have an unhealthy rhythm in our life right now because we have been, as Paul says, trying to copy the behavior and customs of the world. When we have a rhythm in our life, we will be, in some form or fashion, mirroring something. Either we mirror the world and its values, or we mirror our God and His. So, we have received the initial subtraction that must take place. We say, “NO.”

But what do we add in its place?

Say Yes to the Way!

Once you are able to locate the worldly patterns you have been following, the space is then created for God’s transforming work to take place. Jesus desires that we live a life that is constantly seeking to grow.

Illustration Idea: Bring a plant and some water on stage. Pour the water over the plant, showing that the water helps it grow. However, for this plant to continue to grow, I have to continue to pour water. I can’t pour sweet tea, soda, or any other substance. It has to be the purest of them all: water.

In our Romans 12:2 verse, Paul seems to be concerned with how we think. Our thought process is important when it comes to growth potential in the kingdom of God. Oftentimes the temptation to follow worldly patterns and values begins with a thought.

But the same is true for the patterns Christ wants in our lives. Spending time reading and studying the word of God will give us the right type of thought processes, and help us respond well when we are confronted with worldly things. And just like the plant a moment ago, we can't simply “water” our minds and hearts every once in a while. It must be a healthy routine and rhythm we enter into. The Bible talks about this concept.

Psalm 1:1-2 says this:

*“Blessed is the one  
who does not walk in step with the wicked,  
or stand in the way that sinners take  
or sit in the company of mockers,  
but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and who meditates on his law, day and night.”*

David is a walking, talking example of the importance of meditating on God's Word, day and night. God desires that we not just have the Word near us, but actually in us. In our minds, in our hearts, and through our lives.

The work of transformation will only be done when we allow God to do it. Maybe something needs to change in your morning or evening routines to allow God to transform you from the inside out by spending time with Him. By doing this, you have moved worldly distractions out of the way. This allows God to come and do a transforming work. This transformation begins in your mind. Paul closes out Romans 12:2 with an outcome once we take these steps toward transformation. He says, “Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

It helps to discern our purpose.

We know even though Paul wrote this letter many years ago, it is amazing that God knew what we would need even now. There are many here today that have spent time searching tirelessly for their purpose in life. You've tried to find it in the things of the world, and figured out you couldn't. You've tried to find it in a relationship, and figured out you couldn't. You tried to find it by achieving a certain social media status, and figured out you couldn't.

Christ is the only one who can give you meaning and purpose in your life. He has called you to do great things for His kingdom here on earth. You have giftings and abilities that no one else has, for the building up of the Church. (1 Corinthians 12:7)

But I wonder how many of us have yet to sense a calling from God because we have allowed our unhealthy rhythms to distract us from relationship with Him. We haven't been able to

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sense God’s leading because we haven’t spent time with Him. The good news is this: there is still time, right now, it doesn’t matter how old you are to rewire your life. The Bible is full of instances where God makes it clear that there is still time to give Him your life. Even the thief hanging on a cross next to Christ had time to receive eternal life.

*Joel 2:12 says; "Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning."*

All the way back in Joel, the Lord invites us to give Him our lives. Run back to Him in repentance. Jesus Christ came to this very earth, was tempted by the same worldly things you are tempted by, yet He did not sin. Ultimately, He died on a cross for our sins so that we could be transformed into walking, talking, reflections of Him.

You are not too far-gone.

You are not out of the game.

Christ wants you back.

He has a seat for you at the table.

I met with a young man in the detention center in Sykesville a while back. This young man had committed arson and after speaking with him I could tell he was genuine and remorseful. He wishes he could go back and not have committed the bad things that he had. He was reaching out to say he was sorry, and he wanted to get back into reading Scripture from what he had grown up with. You see, even though he had committed these crimes, he wanted to get back on the right path.

I share this story to let you know it’s never too late. We may not have committed any heinous crimes, or we may just want to be transformed from sinning.

In fact, as long as you have breath in your lungs, it’s never too late to make a profession of faith.

For some of you today that will mean returning to a vibrant faith and relationship that you’ve allowed to grow cold. You’ve allowed the distractions of life to collide with your faith and you’ve felt distant from God for some time, but haven’t mustered up the energy to do anything about it... yet. Today is *your* day.

For some of you here this will be a new step of faith into a relationship that you’ve heard others talk about but you’re ready to make your own. Believe me when I say, a life of faith is one of the most exciting adventures you’ll ever take, and the eternal reward is worth every moment. Amen!