

MOVING UP HIGHER

with Joyce Meyer



My father became a Christian when he was 83 years old. There were many times throughout the years when I thought, "He will never change!" But I kept praying for him. And thank God, eventually, he did change—he experienced the greatest transformation of all.

To be transformed means you are changed entirely from the inside out. When we become born-again Christians, 2 Corinthians 5:17 (AMPC) says we are "a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!"

The Holy Spirit comes to live in us, and He works in us—transforming our mind, will and emotions—so we become more like Jesus day by day. As we grow spiritually, the good work that's happening inside us can be seen through the way we live, and we become testimonies of what God has done.

Sadly, many times people don't believe they can be completely changed. And often they don't believe other people can change. But the only thing that never changes is God (Hebrews 13:8). And He wants us to dare to believe that He "is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]" (Ephesians 3:20 AMPC).

The question is what are you expecting God to do for you? May-

be you're having a hard time believing that your kids can change, your marriage can improve or that you can ever lose weight, get a better job or get completely out of debt.

But Jeremiah 29:11 says God's thoughts and plans for us are "for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome." He has a good plan for you, and you can dare to believe He can heal you anywhere you hurt and help you with every problem you face. It's time to start expecting more from God than you've ever believed He would do for you before.

The key to having what God wants you to have is learning to think like He thinks. And Romans 12:2 teaches that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds. I've discovered several ways we need to change our thinking so we can live with the mind of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:6).

We need to change our thinking about...

- God. It's so important for us to know who God really is. He's not an angry God, and He's not "harsh, hard, sharp, or pressing, but comfortable, gracious, and pleasant" (Matthew 11:30). God loves you, and if you know how much He loves you right now, then you'll have hope that the things in your life that need to change can be changed.
- Ourselves. If you don't like yourself, you're going to have difficulty in every area of your life. Don't demand perfection from yourself. No one is perfect, and no matter what we do, we usually don't think it's enough: we don't pray enough, work hard enough, study the Bible enough, etc. God spoke to my heart one day and told me, "Joyce, you're never enough, but I'm always more than enough." That's why Jesus came! Believe that, in Christ, there's more right than wrong with you, and you can do whatever you need to do in life through Him (2 Corinthians 5:21; John 15:5; Philippians 4:13).
- Trials, or the hard, painful things we go through in life. Habakkuk 3:19 says God is our strength and He will help us to

"walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make spiritual progress upon [our] high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility!]" James 1:2-4 encourages us to "consider it wholly joyful...whenever you are enveloped in or encounter trials," because "the trial and proving of your faith" are what God works through to make us "fully developed...lacking in nothing."

The level of importance we put on what others think about us. It's easy to let what others do and say affect us, and to feel like "If you don't like me, my day is ruined." But the truth is, if we're more concerned with being a people-pleaser than a God-pleaser, we won't become what God created us to be and do what He's calling us to do (Galatians 1:10).

I want to encourage you to study scriptures that reveal God's true character and His heart for you. And dare to believe that there's nothing in your life He can't change—including you!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-teaching CD series How to Survive Change. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

Ladies, join Joyce Meyer for the 35th Annual Love Life Women's Conference September 21-23 in Saint Louis, MO. For more information, go to www.joycemeyer.org/lovelife.

IN MEMORIAM

Vanetta Lynn Bennett 1946-2017



Vanetta Lynn Bennett, 70, of Cottage Grove died July 20, 2017 from complications from COPD.

She was born Dec. 15, 1946 in Concord, Calif. to Quenten and Pauline (Rainbolt) Whitford.

In 1965, Vanetta graduated from Ygnacio Valley High in Concord, Calif.

She worked as a CNA caregiver and also as a bartender at the Grove Tavern.

She enjoyed gardening, beach combing, painting and playing Bingo.

Survivors include her two children, Jay Plowright Jr. of Cottage Grove and Janelle Plowright of Eugene, twin brothers, Don Whitford of Vallejo, Calif. and Ron Whitford of Acampo, Calif., two sisters, Susan Goehner of Jamestown, N.D. and Arletta Fink of Norman, Okla., six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren with one due in November.

She was preceded in death by a grandchild, Bradford Plowright, on Aug. 1, 1996.

As per her request, no services will be held and the family will spread her ashes at the Oregon Coast.

Arrangements under the care of Alpha Cremation Service, Eugene.

Esther Gatewood 1924-2017

Esther was born on Sept. 22, 1924 to Charles and Louise Plummer in Monroe, Ore. She grew up in Cottage Grove and was the second oldest of six children. Esther met the love of her life, Bud Gatewood, at an ice cream parlor and they were wed on June 21, 1941. Their first home was in Leland, Ore. and consisted of two boxcars put together. Their son Butch was born in 1942 and daughter Linda in 1945.

In the 1950's, Esther worked as a cook for the school. She was a loving mother and spent her years with family boating, crabbing, racing powderpuff and standing up on the back of Buddy's motorcycle while riding. Every year, when school time came around, you would find Esther in the kitchen doing permanents on several loved ones. Buddy and Esther even had an airplane. One time she even took off in the plane, now knowing how to fly. Buddy was hanging onto the wing. Luckily, she realized how to shut it off before getting too far off the ground. One thing's for certain, she lived a fun-filled life. Esther was the type of person who never judged and who loved with her whole heart.

Esther is survived by her daughter Linda; daughter-in-law Ellen; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren, sisters-in-law Rosalee, Kay, Vera and Nadine.

She was preceded in death by her parents, son Butch, husband Buddy, siblings Skeeter, Jimmy, Jack, Marie and Charles, brother-in-law Chuck, sister-in-law Edith and son-in-law Barney.

Esther and Buddy will be reunited and put to rest in Leland, Ore.

DEATH NOTICE

Heath — Catherine Ann Heath, 87, of Cottage Grove, Or, died Aug. 5. A catholic memorial mass will be held at a later date. Arrangements by Smith-Lund-Mills Funeral Chapel in Cottage Grove.

BIRTHS

Kaitlyn and Daniel McMahan of Cottage Grove welcomed a baby girl on August 1 at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center-RiverBend.

Ashley and Joseph Rayburn of Cottage Grove welcomed a baby boy on July 28 at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center-River-Bend.



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