

APRIL 2004

TRANSITIONS

“The world and its lusts are passing away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.” 1 John 2:17

One thing that is certain about life is change. People and the planet we live on are changing every second of the day. Sometimes the change is growth; sometimes the change is decay; sometimes the change is for good, sometimes the change is toward evil.

As we observe America, its people, laws and institutions, as we observe Christianity in America, we can see that a change is taking place, but it's not just change but something else. The word that comes to mind is transition. **Transition is the passing from one state into the next; it speaks of an event that results in transformation.** It would describe something that has so changed that it is no longer the thing that it was before. It may be external and observable, and it can be internal where something has changed inside, but looks the same on the outside.

Physical life can be marked by transition: birth to infancy, then somewhere along the line a transition takes place and they become toddlers; and then another transition and they become boys and girls; and another transition and they become adolescents, then still another transition and they're young men and women, then another one and they're, hopefully, productive middle aged men and women, then they change into senior citizens, then the elderly, then, because of the curse, they die. Going from being single to being married is a transition; becoming a parent is another transition, and so is becoming a grandparent.

A major transition is going from being an unbeliever to becoming a believer in Jesus Christ! One has now passed from death into life, from Hell to Heaven, from an enemy of God to a child of God, from being under God's wrath to now being under God's grace!

Presently the world is in transition, America included, as it has left the Biblical position of sovereign nations answerable only to God, to international rule answerable to the UN and the world ruler. Christianity has also gone through a transition. It has passed from its position in prophecy as the Philadelphian Church to its new existence as the Laodicean Church!

One of the things about a transition is that there is basically a total change where the thing or person is no longer like it was and **that there is no going back!** And that's the one thing I think that needs to settle down into our thinking as God's people who are still staying with the Word- there's no going back! America has changed having evolved into its present form and there is no going back to the country that it once was. The same can be said of Christianity and its churches in America; they have become Laodicean, arrogant and negative to Bible doctrine and there's no going back for them.

So what do the remnant elect do? How do we handle this? What are we to make of all this? Do we keep fighting a losing battle, sort of like “kicking a dead horse”, or do we channel our efforts and faith into more constructive and productive areas?

The one thing that we need is perspective and 1 John 2:17 gives us that. It says that the world and its lusts are passing away, the present passive indicative of *parago*. *Parago* had more the idea of passing by rather than passing away. It was used of someone standing alongside a road watching the processional of the mother goddess religion as it went by, similar to the idea of standing on the sidewalk as one watched a parade go by.

This describes the Christian in this present life on earth and gives us perspective. We are here watching the parade of life go by; we see the floats, the themes, the people of the 40's go by, followed by the floats, themes and people of the 50's, then the 60's, the 70's, 80's, 90's and now in the new millennium. We watched as the floats of the Constitution and the Republic went by being replaced by all the hoopla of the New World Order; and one day soon we will be watching the anti-christ and the false prophet go by on their floats with all the people cheering and dancing in the street. And we will be standing there watching them go by and after the parade is over we will be there with the Lord. **The parade of the people of this earth passing by us and then they're gone, and all we will hear is the quietness of the wind blowing leaves down the street.**

Each float or theme in the parade marks a transition in the life of the country, in the lives of people and in the chorology of the world as a whole, but it also marks a transition in our lives because as the world changes we will change too! There will be a transition in our life, but it will not be like the one they are undergoing. For us it will be more like saying, “Goodbye”, to all of it as it passes by, and at the same time, we will be looking for and to the world to come with Christ in eternity.

The believer is to change; he is not to conform to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of his mind through Bible doctrine metabolized by faith, and usually external circumstances work on us in such a way to bring about internal change. And we will not just change, but go through transitions ourselves where we are no longer the same persons we were before, and sometimes the transitions are painful.

The Apostle John wrote, *“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”* 1 John 3:2 John tells us that we do not know what our final transition will be into our new bodies, but that it will be OK because they will be like Christ's body. Our fears need to be comforted and change is one of the things that threaten our security. So that by knowing that our future bodies will be like Christ's body, then we will be OK.

Changing our inner essence to be like Christ's inner essence is also change and a transition is a major change, but if we know that we're becoming like Christ, that a metamorphosis is taking place inside of us and that we will end up being like Jesus Christ the God-Man, then that's OK too!

People may say that they like change, but they really don't. Oh they like a little change for variety, but most of the things in life they like to stay pretty much the same so they can have emotional stability. We truly are creatures of habit. Do they really want to live in a different house each day, and drive a different car each day, to have our furniture rearranged everyday, or their clothes in different places each day, or their tools in different areas, or to have to change friends every day, or eat totally different food everyday? You get the point.

So when we're standing at the side of the road watching the world pass by us seeing it in transition we can get quite fearful because it's changing so much and we wonder why we're not changing with it! The change is disconcerting because we wonder where will it all lead and what will become of us?

That's when there needs to be self-awareness and perception; we need to be more aware of who we are and where we are. Where are we? We are the one's standing alongside the road watching the world and its people pass by us. We are not in the parade, but are merely onlookers.

The Word of God gives us spiritual awareness. Believers stand there in this life watching the people of the world in their own generation, with their floats and themes marching by with their costumes, their accomplishments, blowing their horns, making their noise in their day, to be followed by the next generation, etc.

They pass by in the parade in life and then they go away, to be followed by others who do the same thing, and then one day they're gone too! Then one day the antichrist and the false prophet will be in the parade with their float, costumes, pomp and ceremony, and they too will be gone forever. And there we will be with the other believers listening to the quiet, like the quiet of an autumn day when all the workers have gone home after work and all that you have left are the sounds of nature and the rustling of leaves as they go down the street.

We need perspective. We need to see that not only is the world in transition, but so are we. We need to see that we are no longer a part of this world; it is not just that we are on separate paths, but that the world is going away and we will remain. And as the world is changing into something different, so are we! The external changes going on around us, with doctrine and faith, are creating for us and in us an internal transition where we are becoming like Christ. Let the world pass by; we do not belong to it! And when it is all gone it will be us with the Lord in the quietness as we reflect on what we have seen and go on into the eternal state.

Pastor Mike