

The Transition

by John Joseph

Helpful reading: 2 Corinthians Ch. 4

Some teachers speak a lot about transformation; that we are in a process of transformation. This is very true, but the process within us is more than transformation. It is transition, which involves not just an inner change, but an inner movement.

To begin to understand transition we need first to consider that the outward man and the body, though intimately connected, are not precisely the same thing. The outward man is Paul's description of that 'man' who always looks outward. He is always turned that way. He is the one who uses the body, the senses, to perceive this world and he can never perceive anything else but this world. He is a receiver on the material level. The information he receives is processed by the natural man who processes only this sort of materialistic input. It is very important that we realise that these functionaries of old Adam are fallen and by nature hostile to the things outside their ambit and hostile therefore to spiritual things.

The natural man is incapable of understanding anything spiritual; such things are foolishness to him. When the Apostle says: "though our outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day", he speaks not primarily of the physical body disintegrating (though we know it takes a battering very often – see verses 8-12), but moreso of the perishing of the outward man's monopoly on consciousness whereby the outward is dimming, dimming, while the inner seeing with the eyes of the spirit is shining more and more - to behold the things of the spirit – to perceive and understand spiritual things. The direction of our gaze has changed from looking at the outward world to looking into the inner spiritual world. We have eyes that we didn't have before, and the Lord will anoint them to see His wonders. Greater seeing happens through growth, often through trials, as we look by faith to the Lord and grow in faith, and we lose faith in the outward man and the world to meet our need. Paul's words take on enlarged meaning: "we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen (of this world) are not lasting, but the things which are not (physically) seen are everlasting (spiritual).

The whole Christian Walk in this life is a transition from the Outer and Downward to the Inner and Upward – from the Old Earthy Creation that wants to draw us back down into the ground, to the New Heavenly Creation that beckons us to ‘come up hither’. And, it doesn’t always go in a straight line. There are ups and there are downs. But we don’t lose heart because of this, because by that Life and Nature of the Lord Jesus growing within us, we are progressively overcoming, we are changing and we are moving!! Looking unto (and seeing) Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.