

It's Morphin Time
Message for June 16, 2019
Father's Day
North East United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. Drew M. Christian

Video clip - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyDVj4wFArs\](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyDVj4wFArs)

Years ago my wife and I would visit her best friend, Gretchen, in North Carolina. Gretchen and her husband Chip had three boys – Jordan, Ben, and Matthew. The thing that the boys were really into at that time was the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers. I would bring them Power Ranger action figures. I even drove over to the Salisbury Mall one day to get my picture taken with the Green Power Ranger so I could take it down to North Carolina and tell the boys he was a personal friend of mine. As you might have guessed, I was “cool.”

The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers is a kid's show out of Japan about a group of teenage superheroes who had the ability to “morph” from ordinary adolescents...



...into martial arts heroes for justice.



Their rallying cry in moments of crisis was... **“It's Morphin Time!”** and they would be transformed with the ability to do extraordinary things.

Paul challenges us to “morph”...to become the person God created us to be...

Ephesians 4: 22-24 (NLT) – ***“Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit RENEW your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.”***

Paul calls us to spiritual metamorphosis...and spiritual metamorphosis is accomplished “*by the renewing of your mind.*” The word “*renewing*” also means renovation. Think of a house.

You can make repairs. You know, the cosmetic kind – some paint and carpet – and it looks better, perhaps increases the resale value.

But Paul isn’t talking about *repairing* our minds. That may cover up some ugly defects for awhile, but it isn’t going to lead to transformation.

You can restore a house to its original historic condition. You take out carpet and refinish the original wood floors. You find windows, doors, woodwork and hardware in good condition from the period the house was built and install those to reverse someone else’s “modernizations”.

But Paul isn’t talking about *restoring* our minds to their original condition. We were born sinners so what is there to restore?

Paul is talking about a complete renovation.



This is not about cosmetic repairs or restoration. It’s like taking a house and completely gutting it.



Walls, floors, wiring, plumbing, cabinets, bath and kitchen fixtures, roof – it’s all completely new. Anyone who’d seen the house in its previous condition wouldn’t recognize it now.

The Message translation puts it this way – “***everything—and I do mean everything—connected with that old way of life has to go. It’s rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life—a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you.***”

Jordan, Ben & Matthew loved Power Rangers...they would all sit glued to the television for hours watching these transformed teenagers battle evil and save the world...These boys found the idea of “morphing” exciting...tapping into a power beyond themselves...becoming more...

“Put on your NEW nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.”

At times, as adults, we don’t seem as excited about “morphing” – about “complete renovation” – yet God, not only calls us to such change, but if we look deeply and honestly at ourselves....



...we will realize God has placed deep within us a His desire for us to be more...to be like His Son, Jesus Christ...

God has placed deep within us a yearning to “morph”...

This Father’s Day each of us men here this morning need to recognize that God has placed this desire deeply in our hearts...deep within us is the desire to be the hero...it is why we love when Clint Eastwood rides into town and brings justice...



It is why we love when Tom Cruise defeats the villain and saves the girl in Mission Impossible...



It is why we are inspired and moved so deeply when Mel Gibson in Braveheart cries out in the face of death, “Freedom.”



...we want to make the difference...as fathers, as husbands, as leaders in our community...the desire is there...put there by God who created all of us, men and women, in His image...

Unfortunately, so many men falter...they quit...they fail to be the men they were created to be...men of purpose, commitment, perseverance... We were created to be heroes...yet so often we settle for something much less...sometimes we even allow ourselves to become the villain...

The only way we will become that hero for our children, for our spouse, for the world in which we live, is to allow God to transform us...to morph...to be intentional in allowing God to help us become all we were created to be...to stay focused in the midst of a world gone crazy, everyday stress and trials...to stay focused on our Heavenly Father and let Him do His work without interruption...

God hasn't only placed this desire to be more in men, but as John Ortberg, in his book, The Life You've Always Wanted, writes, *“The desire for transformation lies deep in every human heart. This is why people enter therapy, join health clubs, get into recovery groups, read self-help books, attend motivational seminars, and make New Year's resolutions. The possibility of transformation is the essence of hope.”*

We all desire to be more than we are. Many times we are disappointed with our ordinariness, with our parenting, with our work, with our self...we are disappointed that we still, after many years, love God so little and sin so much...we are disappointed in our failure to be the person God had in mind when He created us.

Most of us want to go deeper with God...To be who God created us to become.

BUT just like with the renovation of a house...we must have a plan...we must be very intentional with our goals...if we are to see the project come to fruition.

As Ortberg writes, **“It is unlikely that we will deepen our relationship with God in a casual or haphazard manner. There will be a need for some intentional commitment and some reorganization of our own lives.”**

We must make a plan. And that is the very thing that many of us do not do...

Colossians 3: 1-17 (NKJV) – ***“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.***

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

In this scripture we find three steps to going deeper with God...to being all who God created us to become.

First, we must focus our thoughts on God. Verses 1 & 2 – ***“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”***

How do we focus our thoughts on God? The place to begin is in prayer and reading God’s Word. These are what Bill Hybels calls “*heart building habits.*” Hybels goes on to say, “*When we get serious about learning to pray, it’s time to make a decision: I will learn what disciplines are necessary to my prayer life, and I will practice these disciplines regularly, without fail.*”

Take time to reflect, pray, answer the following question...

What Is One Thing I Can Do To Focus My Thoughts More On God Each Day?

This is the first step...

...focusing your thoughts on God...how will you remind yourself of God throughout the day? When will you pray? When will you read the Bible? Will you start carrying a small Bible around with you, to open between appointments? Will you set your alarm on your watch to remind you to pray? What is one thing you can do to place your thoughts more on God each day? Write it down and every day...for the next month...build a new habit...focus your thoughts on God...pray, read, seek...

Remember, it's Morphin time!

Second, we must put an end to certain behaviors and thoughts that are part of us.

Verse 5 - *“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”*

Then in Verse 10 – *“and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.”*

There are things in every one of our lives that pull us away from God. The Bible says that we have all fallen short...we all make mistakes...we all sin. There are things in each of our lives that we must give up, put to death, allow to fall away.

We need to face-up to one thing, not everything at once...just one thing, right now, that we need to deal with...that we need to face head-on in our lives...that we need to get rid of AND in its place clothe ourselves with Christ.

Take time to reflect, pray, answer the following question...

What Is One Current Behavior Or Attitude In Your Life That You Need To Get Rid Of To Draw Closer To Christ?

This is the second step...

...what behavior or thought do you need to get rid of? Is it smoking or alcohol? Is it the internet late at night? Is it television...images and shows Jesus would not watch...allowing the box in the living room to steal you away from time with your

children? Is it gossip...always sharing everyone's life stories? Is it materialism...one more DVD, a nicer car, one more longerberger basket? Is it selfishness or control? Is it lust, finding yourself lost on the internet late at night? Is it mixed-up priorities, focusing more on work or your personal recreation than your family? Is it pride, always having to be right? Is it committing to remain pure as long as you are living outside of marriage? Write it down...Write it down...and every day...for the next month...fight to rid yourself of it...to build a new habit...

Remember, it's Morphin time!

Thirdly, we must take on those behaviors, attitudes, and practices that are Christ-like.

Verses 12-15 – *“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”*

Clothe ourselves with the things of God. What are we lacking that God wants us to take on...to add to our lives, to become part of who we are...

...how can we love more? Is there someone we are being called to forgive? To reach out to? Have we got involved in a small group of Christian brothers and sisters? How are we reaching out to the oppressed and needy...thinking of others? Are we showing humility? Kindness? Grace to others? Do you have a date night with your spouse each week, praying together before going to bed that night?

Take time to reflect, pray, answer the following question...

What Is One Behavior, Attitude, or Practice I Need To Take On In My Life So Christ Is At The Center Of Everything?

This is the third step...

Remember, it's Morphin time!

These three steps....

1. **Focus** your thoughts on God
2. **End** certain behaviors or attitudes that do not bring you closer to God

3. **Commit** to taking on or adding certain behaviors, attitudes, or practices that are Christ-like and will allow you to go deeper with God and with others, placing Christ at the center of your lives

“Put on your NEW nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.”

Complete renovation...

This month...be intentional...Develop your plan...write it down...Ask God to help you stick to it over the next month...it only takes 21 days to build a habit...

And when you mess up...don't quit...don't give up...seek God's forgiveness and grace...ask Him for strength to get back up...to continue the steps you know you need to take, the steps you commit to this day, to be the man or woman God has called you to be...

Take the next step toward “complete renovation,” toward the “renewing of your mind”...Pray that God will walk with you and help bring transformation to your life...



It's Morphin Time!!!