

Sunday 14th April

Collide Week 2 – be transformed.

Romans 12:1-2 & Psalm 1:1-2

Do you know why we worship on a Sunday? It is because it is the 8th day of creation. It does not replace the

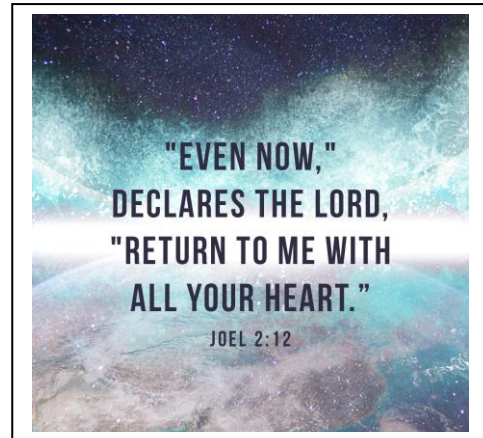
Jewish Sabbath. It is the first day of the 2nd week of creation and the 1st day of God's working week. The first 6 days of creation, God created the heaven and the earth first and the people last. He is now creating new people first, transformed people first, then the new heaven and earth last.

More people become a new creation in Christ on Sunday than any other day of the week. The Holy Spirit was poured out on a Sunday. Putting on Christ is like putting on a new set of clothes. God then sees us through Christ as we are hidden in Him.

It is not the strength of your faith but the object of your faith. God can make something of us if we cease striving in our own strength and surrender to God's purposes.

My question today is: who will you allow to define your identity – the world, yourself, other people or will you let God tell you who you really are?

Do you know much about how caterpillars transform into moths or butterflies? When I was growing up my brothers and I would collect Emperor Gum caterpillars. It was amazing to watch the process of metamorphosis – transforming from one creature into



another. They start out as a crawling, land-based insect, stop eating, hang upside down from a twig or leaf, spin a silky cocoon or moult into a chrysalis and transform its body into an airborne butterfly or moth. They have been created with the instinct to do this.

Unlike the caterpillar we don't actively transform ourselves. We control our thinking and, as we do, a transformation take place. Perhaps we can learn from this story and follow the process God has set out for us to be transformed into a new creature.

Paul tells us not to be conformed to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. It's like an equation – You minus the world plus God's will and obedience equals a transformed person who lives to serve God only.

We are not bystanders in our spiritual lives, we are active participants with God who is ever inviting us into a relationship with Him.

There are 3 points to this.

Point 1 Process. We must surrender our bodies as living sacrifices to God. The caterpillar surrenders the body it was birthed in, to a new process to become a beautiful new insect.

God wants us to live a life of abundance and He provides blessings for us every day. Therefore, we must give up our desires, ambitions and plans and submit ourselves to God's will. Live a life of self-denial, putting God's desires before our own. Unlike the caterpillar however who transforms just the once, ours is not a one-time event but a daily decision to make.

Point 2 Renewal. We must allow the Holy Spirit to change our mindset, attitudes, and perspectives. Allow the Spirit to replace our worldly thinking with Godly thinking, filled with God's word, prayer, and the Spirit's guiding. The land-based caterpillar had to change its view of the world for now they see the world differently – from the air. We need to see things from God's perspective, rooted in love, growth, and truth.

Point 3 Discern God's will. We must become more attuned to God's voice and His direction for our lives, becoming aware of what is good and what is God's will as opposed to what the world thinks is good for us.

C.S. Lewis said – God intends to give us what we need, not what we now think we want.

When we allow this transformation, we begin living a life that is pleasing to God; a life that is holy and acceptable to God, characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

For our Spiritual growth we must trust God more; surrender more; love more and allow our stronger faith to become more equipped to face the challenges of life with grace and courage.

Transformation and acceptance of our God given identity is one of those deep spiritual truths that takes time to drop from our heads into our hearts.

The principle might resonate in our minds but taking it in as a lived truth can be a slower process. We wonder how to embody the identity-defining words Jesus speaks about us. We yearn to unlock the secure, confident, abundant life He promises.

Do you relate to this tension? Living out God's truth is hard sometimes. Sometimes we find it easier to work better in our heads, than out in reality.

It is a Spirit-led journey of gradual but complete transformation, from head knowledge to heartfelt conviction. God is inviting you deeper. He wants to help unravel the lies and labels you have believed about yourself, and He wants you to see the truth.

Prayer: Dear God, as I meditate on my identity today, would You draw me deeper into relationship with You. I crave more than simply knowing the truth. I want to embody it. I want to step confidently into every day knowing who I am in Christ.

Guide me, illuminate my path, and quieten the self-doubt that lingers. Fill me with the strength of Your Holy Spirit so that I may walk boldly as the beloved child that I am.