

# Forty Days of Purpose Devotional

## Day 24 "The truth transforms me."

Imagine a large group of people indulging in sinful behavior (e.g. mob violence). Imagine that the people involved are former friends of yours, and that you used to think and act as they do. However, your attitude toward such behavior had been "transformed" – you now understand that such violence is totally wicked, and you want nothing to do with it. Somehow you find yourself in the middle of the riot, but you are determined not to stay there. With all your energy you focus your efforts on getting out of the situation – separating yourself from it and them. This scenario is not a flight of fancy, but is the usual lot of the Christian (although not necessarily as dramatic). The process of salvation and maturation as a Christian may be defined as the replacement of false beliefs with true ones, along with the consequent changes in behavior, feelings and desires. We live in a wicked, fallen world, and the life of the Christian is a process of separation (this is what "sanctification" means). This separation is not physical, since we much associate with sinners just as Jesus did, but is of the heart. Scripture exhorts and molds us, so that our beliefs, thoughts, desires, feelings and actions become different than (separate from) theirs.

*"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Rom 12:2) *"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."* (John 17:17-18 [NIV])

How does the Word transform our minds and lead us to increasing sanctification? The nourishment found in the Bible is able to do its work in a manner that is very analogous to the process by which food gives life to our bodies. The steps involved are as follows:

- Ingestion (we must read and focus on the Word to take it in);
- Digestion (in order to understand the Word we must break it down in terms that are meaningful to us);
- Absorption (the truths that we have understood must enter into our belief system);
- Cellular uptake and utilization (that which we have understood and believed must be applied in everything we do in life).

Focus for a moment on the first step listed above. Ask yourself what characterizes the foods you usually eat – isn't one of their principal characteristics the fact that you LIKE them? Now ask yourself how much you LIKE the Bible (be honest). If you don't regularly "eat" the Word of God it is quite likely that you just don't enjoy it. Read as much as you comfortably can, but don't force-feed yourself and thereby create a massive aversion. Rather, ask God to help you change your tastes. Don't settle for "that's just the way I am" – only God gets to say "I AM". He wants to remake you and is well able to do so – if you let Him. Since life is in the Word, ask Him to help you absolutely LOVE it!

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