

Conversation Starter Week of October 12 to 18, 2008

This Week's Theme: The Promise Of Transformation

Reading #1: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Reading #2: Acts 9

The apostle Paul wrote: *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17) These are words that should bring Christians hope, increased faith, excitement, thankfulness and anticipation of new and wonderful things yet to come. These words boldly declare the promise of transformation for all those people who have committed their lives to Jesus Christ. In other words, if you have placed your trust in Jesus as Saviour and Lord, He **will** change you ... He **will** transform you ... He **will** help you become more like Him **if** you allow Him. And why was the apostle Paul able to hold out to others the promise of transformation that Jesus alone can bring? Because he experienced firsthand a powerful transforming work in his life by Jesus Himself which began one day while he was walking on a road to a place called Damascus. (See Acts 9.) It was while on this journey that Paul personally encountered the risen Lord Jesus. Prior to this personal encounter Paul actively persecuted Christians. However after this personal encounter he actively proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ. Right now God is holding out to you the promise of transformation. If you struggle with anger, He wants to transform you. If you are overwhelmed with fear, He wants to transform you. If you are in the valley of depression, He wants to transform you. If you feel like giving up, He wants to transform you. The promise of transformation is being offered to you ... are you willing to accept it?

1. In what ways have you experienced the promise of transformation in your life? How has Jesus changed you?
2. Why is it that some changes within us made by Jesus happen quickly while other changes take much, much longer?
3. What are some things that can get in the way of our experiencing the promise of transformation in our lives?
4. Why does Jesus want to change and transform us?
5. Who are some other people mentioned in the Bible that experienced the transforming power of God?