

Mailing Address:
PO Box 797
Molalla, OR 97038

Pastor Dale Satrum



Phone: 503-829-5101
Fax: 503-829-9502

**God's Process For Life Change
"Transferring Ownership"
(Part 3)**

Intro: When Lisa and I bought the house / property we live in, it needed some work. It had been left vacant for months (grass / weeds / blackberries / garbage / water – iron / creek - debris / moles had invaded the yard – yard demons /

- The transformation didn't take place overnight. In fact, it has been continuing for the past 5 years. (We've added a new bridge / deck / pool / gazebo / killed many moles) Ownership = transformation. I don't try to transform your yard / house!
- It works this way in our relationship with God as well. God only transforms what He owns and this process is ongoing. If we don't give Him our lives, they remain unchanged. There must be a transfer of ownership before we experience God's power in our lives. If we don't give Him ownership, we just keep pushing our lives around. (Remember last week?)
- So, what does ownership mean? What does it mean to transfer ownership to God?

I. Ownership Requires A Personal Choice

A. A personal choice giving God authority

"I give my body (life) to God"

*Rom. 12:1 "...I plead with you to **give your bodies to God**. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind He will accept. When you think of what He has done for you, is this too much to ask?" (NLT)*

1. When we give our lives to God, we give up the authority to call the shots with our lives. We relinquish our authority and give that authority to God. He now has the final say about our life.
2. The rationale for this is what Jesus did for us on the cross. Since He paid the penalty for our sin / loves us unconditionally / offers us forgiveness / grants us eternal life / is this too much to ask. Bible says, "we were bought with a price." God has rights of ownership over our lives.
3. Most people just don't understand this. They live as if God is there to support their life / dreams / goals / desires / agendas / God exists to serve them.

4. Even though God has the right of authority over our lives He waits until we willingly give Him that authority. He waits until we make a personal choice to hand it over. He doesn't transform what He doesn't own.
5. Doesn't God still help me in life even if He doesn't have authority? Yes, but the help is limited...not by Him, but by you.
 - **Illustrate:** Let's say I wanted to restore a car. Now, I don't know a lot about mechanics / body and paint / etc... BUT, I know someone who is an expert at restoration, so I ask him to help. I get his advice / call him frequently / ask him how to do certain things, but I'm doing all the work. I make progress but it's slow / frustrating / not turning out like I hoped / discouraging. Finally I get so frustrated I call my friend and just offer Him the car. Take it! He takes it / does whatever He wants with it / invites me to help him / but he's doing most of the work / and the results are amazing.
6. This illustrates two perspectives on how people live. Some people just want God's advice and help with their lives, while others turn their lives over to Him. Only as we turn our lives over to Him do we give Him the authority to do whatever He wants. It's only as God has freedom to do what He wants with our lives do we experience real life change.
7. Are you asking for God's advice or have you given God authority?

B. A personal choice pledging God your loyalty

Josh. 24:15 "...choose today whom you will serve...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (NLT) (Explain context – Joshua – choose your loyalties!)

1. We all will serve something. Whatever or whoever we are loyal to determines what we end up serving. Some people are loyal to themselves, therefore, they serve themselves / their desires / goals / what's important to them / pursuit of happiness / they may even believe God exists to serve them.
2. Some people serve the values of this world (materialism / power / pleasure / positions of prestige /
3. Others may even serve religion thinking they can make themselves acceptable to God by their many good deeds. None transform!
4. Pledging our loyalty to God means we are choosing to fulfill the desires of our King. We are loyal to Him first; not ourselves / our culture / not other people, but Him. We renounce all other loyalties but to Him alone.
5. **America's Oath of Allegiance** – read. We understand how important loyalty is as an American citizen. Now we need to embrace a new citizenship. We are citizens of a new Kingdom / with a new King / and our loyalty is required.
6. God will not bring transformation to our lives unless we have chosen to give Him authority and we have pledged to Him our loyalty. We behave like illegal spiritual immigrants. We want all the benefits of the country without

- submitting to God's authority and giving Him our loyalty.
7. Last week I told you that we will talk about how to stop pushing the car around and how to get in it and experience the benefits / power / transformation. This is how!
 - Does God has authority over your life...have you pledged your loyalty?

II. Ownership Requires A Willingness To Change

“God, my will is Yours. Change my life however You want.”

*Rom. 12:2 “Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you** into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect His will really is.” (NLT)*

- We either become more like this world or more like the person God wants us to be. There's really no other option. Are will willing to be changed God's way?
- A. I allow God to change who I am - character
 1. I allow God to transform my character. This must happen first. Internal transformation takes place before external transformation. This is why our efforts at change usually fail. We focus on the external first. **Explain**
 2. This is why we are so resistant to God changing our behavior. We haven't allowed Him to change our minds and hearts first. Internal precedes external
 3. **For example**, this is why the issue of money / giving is difficult for so many people. It has nothing to do with money. It has everything to do with the heart and thinking. Giving is an internal issue. Jesus Himself said this. “Where your treasure is there your heart will be also.” The external behavior reveals the internal character.
 4. This is why it is so important to give God this area of your life. You will never see His power in your finances until He owns them! But to own them, He must transform your thinking about them. We as a church will never see His power until we corporately trust Him in this area.
 5. This isn't to lay any guilt on anyone. It's just allowing you to understand how God's kingdom works. His Kingdom and values are radically different than this world's. Too many people keep trying to relate to God from this world's perspective instead of embracing God's perspective.
 6. Genuine life change begins to happen as I allow God to change who I am. As I allow Him to change my thinking / motives / desires / dreams / He transforms my character and I start looking more like His Son.
 7. If we're very honest, many of us don't want to change. We're so convinced our thinking is right / motives / desires / and we fail to understand that it is our arrogance before God that limits His involvement in our lives.

8. Have you ever just humbled yourself before God and said, “God, I quit fighting what you say. Change my character however you want. Your ways are higher than my ways...your thoughts higher than mine.” My will is Yours!”

B. I allow God to change what I do (Now changed behavior can be a reality!)

1. I allow God to transform my behavior. Now that my thinking and motives are changed, I can allow God to transform what I do. Now God’s power is behind my attempts at life change.
2. Now that I’m internally aligned with Christ, I can be externally aligned with Him in my behavior. Remember Rom 12:2 tells us to “*let God transform you*”. This is His process. We just cooperate. Let Him!!! HOW?
3. Let me give you the ABC’s of behavioral change.
 - **Aligned** with Christ internally (authority / loyalty / character – give God your internal will) These choices internally align your life with Christ and connect you with His power.
 - **Believe** Christ will change you externally. You must accept that life change is His responsibility – Only He can change your behavior. Stop putting your trust in your efforts! Stop trusting yourself.
 - **Commit** yourself to following a new direction practically. *Eph. 5:10* “*Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord.*” (NLT) Discover God’s new direction for you in the practical routines of life and commit to it. (Your attitudes / relationships / serving / parenting /) God will change you as you follow it.
4. Life change is simply a byproduct of these ABC’s. What happens is as you continue following Christ in this way, you notice one day how much your life has changed. “Wow! I really am a different person!”

III. Ownership Requires A Commitment to Continue (Endurance)

“God, my life and future is Yours and I will continue in it”

A. I will continue cooperating with God’s work in me

Phil. 1:6 “*And I am sure that God who began a good work within you, **will continue His work** until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again.*” (NLT)

1. I’m not in this for the short term. I’m committed to the long haul. I recognize following Christ is NOT a sprint, it is a marathon. I realize transformation will not take place over night by throughout my entire life.
2. In some ways, it’s how I embrace home ownership. Even though there are many things Lisa and I have been able to accomplish on our property, there are many more things we still want to. Future projects – outside and inside
3. We need to embrace this mindset in our relationship with God. Since we’ve given God ownership, He still has more internal and external works left to do. The real issue is how do we continue cooperating over the long haul?

4. Stay committed to God's basics. Stay committed to core things that keep you on track over time. Just like our vehicles, there are basic maintenance items that we have to do to ensure they continue running well. Ignore them, and they fall apart. Our relationship with God and His work of life change is like this as well. **Acronym – BASICS** – Continue in the basics.

B: Bible – Stay committed to His truth and follow it – this is your final authority from God to you. Knowing God's word is essential to maintain the course. It's the road map of life!

A: Attitude of humility before God and others. Humility must be demonstrated in two directions...vertically and horizontally...Pride is like putting water in the fuel. Things start running rough.

S: Serve – Keep serving God's purposes. Serving keeps you spiritually fresh. As God pours into your life, we naturally give out. Without it, you get stagnant like a lake without an outlet.

I: Intercede – We keep praying – Our prayers matter. Yes, we pray for our own needs, but it's beyond this. We pray for others and their needs.

C: Confess your faults before God and others. Sin hinders the relational flow between us and God and between others. Confession simply removes the restrictions. Like changing the air filter in your car – it gets so plugged up, your car can't breathe. This is what sin does.

S: Support of others – You will never survive without the help and support of other people in your life. You start living the Christian life in isolation, you won't be living it very long! We choose to move into relationships.

5. If we stay committed to these things, we will make it and life change will be a reality.

B. I will continue cooperating with God no matter what

*Heb. 10:35-36 "Do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord, no matter what happens. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will **continue to do God's will**. Then you will receive all that He has promised."* (NLT)

1. I recognize that this life will be filled with many disappointments / discouraging circumstances and pain. Yet, I choose to follow Christ through it all. I will not be a fair-weather follower of Christ. My loyalty to Jesus is not based upon the circumstances of life.
2. I embrace the Biblical truth that the only way for me to experience all that Christ has promised me...the only way to experience His power...experience transformation, is to be committed to endurance no matter what. **BASICS**
3. Many people have situational obedience to Christ. How much they obey is based upon the situation. But, when we transfer ownership, the situation is irrelevant. We follow God's will regardless.

4. I'm short on money so I don't have to give / this person wounded me so I choose to hold a grudge / this person gossiped about me I will return the favor / The government wastes my money so I lie on my taxes / The only way to get ahead in this world is to be dishonest / I'm just too busy so I don't have to serve...
5. We need to understanding there is an accumulative effect for following Christ. The longer you follow, the more you experience. The longer you continue, the more of His promises become a reality in your life.
6. No circumstance in this life can cancel out or rob me of what God has promised. Therefore, I choose to continue doing what God wants no matter what. I remember the great reward it brings me. It's worth it!
 - Following God has been the hardest thing I ever attempted to do with my life. It has also been the most rewarding pursuit I have ever undertaken.

For Life Change to be a reality, we have to eventually decide to transfer ownership to God

- Ownership requires a personal choice
- Ownership requires a willingness to change
- Ownership requires a commitment to continue