

# *Transforming Life*

**Small Group Leader, thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to make this event a success. You may have been nervous at times, and that is cool; you may have had nothing to say at time, and that's cool! I fully believe in the power of Christ placing us in places for a reason. I have no doubt you were suppose to be your small groups leader this weekend.**

**Blessings on your journey,**

Small Group Material

Theme: Transform

Created: March, 2013

Lesson 1: Transforming Self

Sub Topic: 3 Graces & How God Transforms us!

**Opening Prayer: God of transformations, you have called each us here to this small group this weekend. Allow your grace and Transforming love to join us now. Please bless this time we have together, and make it honor and glorify your name. Amen.**

**Welcome Get to know you Games:**

1. Go around the room and Tell your name, where you are from, & 3 things you like to do!
2. 2 truths and a Lie: tell us three facts about you two of them are real and one is fake. then we have to guess which one fake.
3. If you were stranded on a remote desert island and go only take three things what would you take. you already have food, water and air.

**\*NOTE:** Make Sure that you mention that what you talk about in Small Group is not an opportunity to gossip about people outside of small group. Basically, what people share in small groups about their lives, needs to stay between those people.

**The Word: Romans 12:2(Good News):** Do Not Conform Yourself to the standards of this world, but let God TRANSFORM you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God, what is good and pleasing to him and is perfect.

**Getting To The Meat:**

Tell Students that this entire weekend is about the idea that we can look at Jesus and the Early Christians as a way to see how God uses people to change the world. Right now we are going to look at how God transformed one man, John Wesley (Founder of Methodism).

**The Story:** So God used this Guy John Wesley to make some major changes in the way "The CHURCH" worked back in the day. In fact John Wesley didn't plan to create a church. he wanted to create an accountability group for he and his friends. But God decided to use this incredibly short person(at full height as a grown man he was 5 foot 3 inches tall) to change the world. He and his friends had this little group called "The Holiness Club" and their goal was to make themselves closer to God by being more holy. Not one of those "holier-than-thou" situations... just to be better people and Christians. SOOO, John Wesley began trying to figure stuff out and after much prayer and struggling with God, he finally figured it out. HE began to allow this new idea to stir up his heart and become his own personal quiet time first.

**3 Graces:** Whether it takes place quickly—as in a sudden conversion experience— or gradually—as

people find nurture in the church—God’s grace is the key to understanding transformation. John Wesley helped us to understand grace by naming three aspects of grace.

### **First Off What is Grace???**

Understanding sin is essential to understanding justification. One biblical word for sin means “missing the mark.” Grace means that in spite of missing the mark, we are made one with God through grace. Our broken relationship with God is restored. Stressing that God’s love can overcome any sin is important.

### **Prevenient Grace**

Prevenient grace is the grace that comes to us before we know God. In prevenient grace, God takes the initiative. The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 1996 defines this grace as “the divine love that surrounds all humanity and precedes any and all of our conscious impulses” (Section 60). Even while we were yet sinners, separated from Christ, God’s grace was already active in us, perhaps in ways we could not identify. Younger children can most easily grasp the concept of prevenient grace. Though they may not yet be able to verbalize the concept, they can understand the idea that their parents loved them before they were born, and in that way, God has always loved and cared for us.

### **What do you think about Prevenient Grace???**

### **Justifying Grace**

Through justifying grace, we find pardon for our sin. The Discipline says of this, “God reaches out to the repentant believer in justifying grace with accepting and pardoning love. Wesleyan theology stresses that a decisive change in the human heart can and does occur under the prompting of grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (Section 60). Jesus Christ has made possible this forgiveness of sin, and so we bind ourselves to him. In justifying grace, we also find freedom from guilt, opportunities to develop new relationships with God and other people, and areas of ministry in which we can live out our discipleship.

### **What do you think about Justifying Grace???**

### **Sanctifying Grace**

Sanctifying Grace is a purifying and cleansing process that continues throughout our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. Sanctifying grace is the “bearing fruit” part of God’s grace. Through sanctification, according to the Discipline, “we are enabled to increase in the knowledge and love of God and in love for our neighbor” (Section 60). For Wesley sanctifying grace is the power that leads us on toward becoming more Christ-like.

### **What do you think about Sanctifying Grace???**

### **SOOO THIS ALL MATTERS WHY???**

***These understandings of grace do not exist in isolation. Together, they form a way of seeing and experiencing the Christian life as an ongoing, dynamic process. John Wesley used the metaphor of the house to explain this concept. He saw prevenient grace as the porch of the house, an entryway, that invites us to come further. Justifying grace is the door into the house. We must open it and come***

**inside if we truly are to experience and know the whole house. Sanctifying grace is learning to live in and grow in the whole house.**

Teaching and learning are important ways through which we allow the Holy Spirit access to our heart, mind, and will. As the Holy Spirit works in us, we are transformed into the image of Christ. The intent of our teaching is to inform and to form, to create conditions in which persons can open themselves to God and where the ongoing work of transformation can begin. This process may happen as we study the Scriptures individually. It can take place as we learn and experience biblical truths through Christian community in a Sunday school class or small group. Teachers are sometimes granted the great gift of watching God's grace at work in the life of a learner. As they build a mature faith, the small seeds we plant through the ministry of teaching take root and bring forth the fruit in God's good time.

### **OVER TIME**

Do you have a personal quiet time? If you do what do you do for your quiet time with God?

If you don't how do you expect to Transform into a tool that God can use, if you are not listening to what he has to say?

**Pray out:** Pray for the weekend here, and that students will have an opportunity to see the Transforming Love of God!

***SPPP... its time for some YSF and Hang Time!***

Small Group Material

Theme: Transform

Created: March, 2013

Lesson 2: Transforming Those Around Us

Sub Topic: How we are directly being used by God to Transform the People around us

**Opening Prayer: God of transformation, you have been working on me, teach me how to use what you have done to help those around me. Please bless this time we have together, and make it honor and glorify your name. Amen.**

**Welcome Get to know you Games:**

1. You're on the same island from earlier and you can only bring three things to eat for the rest of your life.. what are they
2. What do you want to do when you grow up? like for your career.

**\*NOTE:** Make Sure that you again mention that what you talk about in Small Group is not an opportunity to gossip about people outside of small group. Basically, what people share in small groups about their lives, needs to stay between those people.

**The Word:** 1 Corinthians 12:4-11: **4**There are different spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; **5**and there are different ministries and the same Lord; **6**and there are different activities but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. **7**A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good. **8**A word of wisdom is given by the Spirit to one person, a word of knowledge to another according to the same Spirit, **9**faith to still another by the same Spirit, gifts of healing to another in the one Spirit, **10**performance of miracles to another, prophecy to another, the ability to tell spirits apart to another, different kinds of tongues to another, and the interpretation of the tongues to another. **11**All these things are produced by the one and same Spirit who gives what he wants to each person.

**Getting To The Meat:**

Tell Students that this entire weekend is about the idea that we can look at Jesus and the Early Christians as a way to see how God uses people to change the world. Right now we are going to look at how God Used one man(John Wesley ) to change a group of people.

**The Story:** God used John Wesley to Help This Group of people known as "The Method-ists" to find deeper spirituality. In fact, this group included many people who went out and spread the name of Christ and how to be faithful Christians. One of those included John's brother Charles Wesley. Charles wrote a good majority of the hymns you find in the hymnal today and did a lot of work with the church we see today.

**God uses different people to different things. We are not all the same.. Thank Goodness..**

**So... What are you good at?**(Leader be open minded here, you might not get all "Spiritual gifts answers, but roll with it... Cheerleading is probably not a spiritual gift, but maybe that person can be a support person for a kid with a disability or for a race for a cure. )

**So.. What do you feel your spiritual Gifts might be?**

**What can you do with the spiritual gifts that you have?**

**Why don't you do these things now?**

We are called to do good for people. In fact John Wesley left us one more thing to help us in life. It is called "The Three Simple Rules." And it goes like this... Do no Harm, Do Good, Stay in Love with God.

**What do you think it means to Do no harm?**

**What do you think it means to do Good?**

**What do you think it means to Stay in Love with God?**

If we would all spend our lives fulfilling those 3 items, The World would be in a great place.

**Closing Story:** Jason and Tommy

Jason and Tommy didn't have a typical relationship as brothers. Jason was 14 and Tommy was 10. Jason wasn't just Tommy's older brother, though; he was his best friend in the whole world. While most older brothers wanted nothing to do with their younger brothers, Jason would always try to invite Tommy to participate in his activities. Tommy loved his big brother. They were true pals.

Besides his brother Jason, Tommy didn't have many friends. Tommy often wondered what he would do without his older brother. You see, little Tommy had been born with a cardiopulmonary disease. This had stunted Tommy's growth and had robbed him of his youthful energy. It wasn't that he didn't want to play basketball, tag and all the games that other boys his age played, it's just that he got tired real quick when he did. Knowing this, the other boys never wanted Tommy to be on their team. They would fight over whose team Tommy would have to be on, and he was often labeled as a wimp or sissy by the healthier boys.

But things were different around his older brother Jason. Sometimes Tommy and Jason would play their own game of baseball. Jason was a good athlete and everyone wanted Jason on their team. However, Jason would only consent to play if they would also let Tommy be on his team. If the other boys said no, then Jason and Tommy would both leave and do something together.

School had just ended and it was summer now. Curt, Nathan and Ron wanted to go on an overnighiter in the mountains. Naturally, they wanted Jason to come along also.

"Let's go ask him if he can go tomorrow," Ron spoke up.

Curt was quick to respond. "What if he wants Tommy to tag along? It will slow us all down, and we don't want to spend the whole time hiking to the campsite."

Nathan was the first to speak to Jason at his house. "Hey, Jason, the three of us are going on an overnighter up Adam's Canyon. Are you with us?"

"Sure I am!" Jason was excited. "I'll have Tommy's pack and my own ready to go tonight," he said.

The three boys looked at each other, wondering who would tell Jason that Tommy wasn't welcome to come. Finally, Curt spoke up. "Hey, ah, Jason... this hike is just for the four of us. Tommy would slow us all down. Nothing against Tommy, but why don't you leave him home this time?"

Jason saw Tommy through the corner of his eye. Tommy was standing by his bedroom door, listening intently to the whole conversation. He was bravely trying to hold back the tears of rejection.

Jason stood up and said, "I'm sorry, guys, but if Tommy isn't welcome, then I'm not going either. You guys have fun."

"Hey, wait a minute," said Ron. "It's okay with me if Tommy comes. We can leave a little bit earlier to give us more time."

The guys agreed on a departing time for the next morning, and left.

Six o'clock came early the next morning. Tommy was ready by 5:30 a.m. This was to be his first real hike.

Within the first quarter mile, it was obvious that Tommy's progress would be slow. He wanted so much to please Jason by walking fast, but the faster he walked, the sooner he would have to rest. The other boys were anxious to get to the campsite, and often found themselves leaving Jason and Tommy behind.

"Here, Tommy, my pack is light. Let me carry yours, too," Jason said, with concern for his brother.

Embarrassed, Tommy gave Jason his heavy burden. "I'm sorry, said Tommy. "I'm doing the best I can."

"I know, Tommy," Jason said as he rustled Tommy's hair.

After two miles, Tommy was struggling with fatigue. He was sweating profusely and fighting for air. His chest felt tight, too. I'll go a long way before I stop to rest this time, thought Tommy.

The other boys were out of sight now.

After five more minutes of walking, Tommy fell to his knees. "I gotta stop," whimpered Tommy, with tears of frustration cutting clear streams through the dust on his face.

"That's okay," said Jason. "Take all the time you need." Jason was obviously worried as he saw Tommy struggling for breath.

"Jason! Something is happening inside my chest! It hurts awful bad." Tommy was slumping over on the ground in pain. Jason slipped the packs off his back and rolled Tommy over. Tommy's tense body relaxed suddenly as he looked up into Jason's eyes that had tears now, too.

"I love you an awful lot, Jason." The struggle was over now. Tommy's body had given up. The tears came freely from Jason's eyes as he tightly hugged his brother.

"I'll miss you, Tommy," Jason softly whispered.

Forty-five minutes later, the tears were still trickling from Jason's eyes when the other boys returned.

"Hey, Jason, we thought you guys got-" Ron stopped short in the middle of his comment. A chill ran down the boys' backs. Jason was supporting Tommy's silent head in his lap, caressing the tear-stained face of his little brother.

"Is he...is he dead, Jason?" Ron asked tenderly.

"Yeah," Jason said, as another tear fell quietly from his eyes to Tommy's face. "He was doing his very best for me." Two more minutes passed in silence. "I'll carry him down now," Jason said, as he gently lifted the lifeless body in the cradle of his arms.

Nothing was said for 20 minutes down the mountain trail. Finally, Curt tapped Jason on the shoulder, "I'll spell ya and carry Tommy for a while. You must be getting tired now."

"No," Jason kept walking. "He ain't heavy...he's my brother."

*Author Unknown*

*Chicken Soup for the Christian Soul*

**You See God, used Jason to be a light a becon of Hope for Tommy. It wasnt anything big to us, but it was HUGE for Tommy. God doesnt also need us to lead our society from bondage, or bring the 10 commandments down a mountain, or die on a cross. Many times he needs us to be like "Jason" to a "tommy" in our lives.**

### **OVER TIME**

Do you pray? If you do, how do you pray?

If you don't pray how do you talk to God?

**Pray out:** Pray for the weekend here, and that students will have an opportunity to see the Transforming Love of God!

***SPPP... its time for Worship!***



Small Group Material

Theme: Transform

Created: March, 2013

Lesson 3: Taking our Transformation to the World

Sub topic: How God uses those who we have changed to transform the World

**Opening Prayer: God of transformation, you have been working on me, teach me how to use what you have done to transform not only those around me, but also the world. Please bless this time we have together, and make it honor and glorify your name. Amen.**

**Welcome Get to know you Games:**

1. IF you were forced to go onto The Voice and sing a song... what would it be?

**\*NOTE:** Make Sure that you again mention that what you talk about in Small Group is not an opportunity to gossip about people outside of small group. Basically, what people share in small groups about their lives, needs to stay between those people.

**The Word: Matthew 28: 16-20:** **16**Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. **17**When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. **18**Jesus came near and spoke to them, "I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. **19** Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."

**Getting To The Meat:**

Tell Students that this entire weekend is about the idea that we can look at Jesus and the Early Christians as a way to see how God uses people to change the world. Right now we are going to look at how God Used a group of people known as Methodists to change the world we live in.

**The Story:** So As you can guess These people that John Wesley helped become more holier started a movement to help others become holier. This movement very quickly grew into a big thing called the Methodist Church. The key to this entire process is the fact that God took people who were willing to be faithful to HIS call. He did not give everyone of them huge tasks, but small things that made the entire process work.

**Have you ever transformed a person.. like really helped them make changes in their life? What did you do?**

**What is something that you can do to help transform people around you?**

If you noticed the scripture said that the Disciples worshipped him, but some still doubted... and HE still used them. If the people who were there still doubted that they could what he wanted, even after they saw him there and saw him die and rise again. It only seems normal that we should also have some

doubt, but Its totally cool. We can doubt, but we also have to be faithful to the fact that if we are willing to do what has been asked, we can still be used to "Go into the world and make disciples."

**How does this make you feel???**

**What is something that you can do once you leave this place to help transform the world?**

**You might consider taking a few moments and asking for prayer requests or exchanging contact information if desired. You might also have some things that you need to wrap up if you have also talked about other things this weekend. When you are finished feel free to pray for your prayer requests and pray out.**

### **OVER TIME**

Do you do harm? Harm may include things like Gossiping, not helping people, when they need it, lying, being greedy, etc.

I want to invite you to consider what changes you might need to make in your life to not harm.

**Pray out:** Pray for the trip back home, and that students will have an opportunity to share the Transforming Love of God!

***SPPP... its time for Worship!***