

Total Make-Over

Hymns from "Favorite Hymns of Grace." Scriptures from the New King James Version.

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Devotional Summary: "Total Make-Over"

Over the past several years a new wave of entertainment has swept television called "reality TV." One of the arenas for this fad is the housing market. A show on cable follows enterprising young couples who purchase "reject" housing at auction, without ever being allowed to go inside the dwellings. The new owners then unlock the doors, with no small suspense, to discover what horrors or what fortunes they will encounter in the process of fixing them up for reselling. Of course, the goal is to hopefully "turn the property over" at a great profit.

Well, if you watch a series of these shows, sometimes a trend emerges. There are two basic kinds of investors: 1) buyers with limited resources who are taking a chance to make a big profit with a little bit of time, money and effort; and 2) investors who have plenty of money and are prepared for the "worse-case scenario."

Those buyers who jump into a purchase with limited resources invariably hope to encounter very little serious structural issues in need of repairs. If the defects in the home are too great, and major renovations are necessary before the home can be resold, the drama is devastating. The buyers are all excited with winning the auction at the beginning of the episode, but by the end of the show they are all down in the dumps and blaming each other for their dilemma. The deal did not look all that bad from the outside, but when they got into the project, unseen water damage, termites, vandals and/or poor workmanship in previous construction destroy superficial impressions. As the old saying goes, "You can't judge a book by its cover!"

The buyers who have plenty of resources, and, we might add, more experience, rarely encounter anything when they get into the project that throws them off track. They enter into the deal with the expectation of having to do major repairs and prepare accordingly. Their business plan is structured in such a way as to allow for unexpected problems, so a profit at the end of the day is predictable. In fact, the intention from the beginning of the deal is to completely "gut" the house and, more or less, start over. They do not hope the house does not need any extra work, they plan on it requiring a total make-over. When they are done, the new homeowners can buy with confidence and the investors do not make a "killing" but they make their predictable margin of profit...with very little drama. Not so good for TV ratings, but good for business!

Though there are scores of variations on this scenario, this basic theme does play out often. And here we can make an observation of a basic truth in our Christian experience. Let's start by looking at Holy Scripture:

For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin. Ecclesiastes 7:20

All of us need a total make-over!

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Galatians 3:22

But just like a house sitting on a lot, we cannot make ourselves over. God has made us a promise to do the work Himself as we lean on His provisions for us through faith in the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3

Again, it is crucial for us to understand that we cannot change ourselves into righteous people. God must do it! This is the object of our faith - not that we are able - but that He is able to do for us what we cannot do ourselves! Yes, we want to be made new, but only God can do it.

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." Ezekiel 36:26

This is God's promise to all who put their faith in the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1Jo 1:8-9

Here is the rub, we must humble ourselves to face our helplessness and turn to God honestly admitting our sins and our sinful nature and God Almighty has made us a promise that is priceless above measure - He will do a total make-over - He will give us a COMPLETELY DIFFERENT LIFE - A FORGIVEN PAST AND A CLEAN LIFE.

...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6

Yes, we make changes in the way we think and act. Our attitude changes and people see that change in our deeds. Love for others begins to grow in our hearts. And we know, inside, that it is God Almighty who is effecting this transformation as we rest by faith on His hand in our life!

We want to love others. We are weak. We fail often. It is hard to love some people. Here we have a wonderful gift - a grace beyond measure! We can call on God to work in our life to give us that love that we know we lack. As we confess to Him our weakness in loving the

unlovely we find Him able to work that love into our hearts! Ask and you will receive! God accomplishes in our heart what we cannot do for ourselves. We do not have the ability to change our own heart. We do not have the resources to overcome the trials and the difficulties of our circumstances on our own. It is God on whom we can lean. In our struggles, in our failings, in our suffering, in our sorrow, we have the victory as we depend on our Creator, our Heavenly Father, to give us that new heart, that new way of thinking and behaving. We cannot afford the make-over, but God has the unlimited resources necessary to transform us into a TOTAL MAKE-OVER as we put our faith in His ability...not ours!

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

1Jo 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith. 1John 5:4

Closing Hymn

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Prayer Requests and Corporate Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Recessional