

Transformers and Things

*“If anyone is in Christ they are a new creation,
old things have passed away and everything is new.”*

2 Corinthians 5:17

My grandchildren, especially the boys, loved things called Transformers. They came into being about 1980, I believe. Usually the toy comes in the shape of some super hero and through twisting its many parts it can be converted into a car or some other device. Hence they are called transformers as they transform from one thing or person to a gun or some other usually violent weapon.

Many countries have their favourite series of action figures that transform into some weapon. In the ads you usually see boys playing with them.

In today's verse Paul speaks about humans being transformed through the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. Examples of such people abound in the history of Christianity. Transformations of violent, cursing people like John Newton abound. Newton was a foul-mouthed hateful man until he was converted to Christianity. After his transformation he was loved even by people who rejected his evangelical faith. Most people especially love one particular hymn John Newton

wrote entitled Amazing Grace.

I have witnessed totally irreligious people singing the words of that hymn at funerals of loved ones. Secular singers have taken Newton's popular song and sung it for millions of secular people. Imagine self respecting non-Christians who lustily sing Amazing Grace which begins with the words:

Amazing grace,
how sweet the sound;
that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now am
found, was blind but now I see.

Your average citizen in western society would never call themselves a “wretch”, they do not think of themselves as having been “blind”, nor would they believe they once were “lost”.

Why is it then that they love to hear popular singers render their version of this classic hymn, why do they love to hear a bagpipe band play this song, or why do they sing it at a funeral?

What is going on here? I am persuaded that there is a fascinating inconsistency between

what people believe deep down in their hearts about themselves and the thoughts expressed in this beloved hymn.

Certainly Newton came to believe he was a wretched man indeed. Even near the end of his life he could say, “Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly, I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Saviour.”

Those who have an evangelical conversion such as John Newton had grown more and more into the understanding that they truly were “blind” “lost” and “wretches” as the hymn says.

Only through Jesus Christ, the Resurrected One, can we truly “see”, find our real purpose in creation, and know the joy that is to be found in the fellowship of God's people. May all of my readers know this remarkable transformation that comes through becoming a follower of Jesus Christ.

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