

TRANSFORMED: THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

Feb 19, 2017 | Pastor Randy Remington

Every year the Oxford Dictionaries picks a “word of the year” that reflected the “ethos, mood and preoccupations” our culture for the year, this was 2015:

“That’s right – for the first time ever, the Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year is a pictograph: 😊, officially called the ‘Face with Tears of Joy’ emoji, though you may know it by other names. There were other strong contenders from a range of fields, outlined below, but 😊 was chosen as the ‘word’ that best reflected the ethos, mood, and preoccupations of 2015”.

So a year after Oxford Dictionaries it picked an **“Emoji”** as its “Word of the Year” for 2015, Wednesday said 2016 was best characterized by a word that questions the concept of facts themselves: **“post-truth”**.

Explaining: “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.”

So in 2016, relating to people is less about facts and truth and more about feelings. The goal is attempting to get people to feel something, (whatever area or subject that might be). “Truth” just doesn’t shape situations, decisions or people as maybe it once did...yet the scriptures show us that truth is embodied in a person (Jesus), that truth gives us freedom and it helps guide us, etc.

We know that where your focus is and where you spend your time will shape you. In the same vein people are shaped by the culture around them. God wants to shape our lives to look more like Jesus, through his Spirit, his Word, through trials and today we look at Transformation through service.

“Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.” 36 “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked. 37 They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.” 38 “You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” 39 “We can,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, 40 but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.” 41 When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. 42 Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:35-45)

His kingdom stands in stark contrast and opposition to the current evil culture that we live in.

“The power to lead in the Kingdom of God is through humble service”

1. DON'T BE A TYRANT, BE A SERVANT

The potential to be a tyrant is in all of us, because we were all born into sin. “Power” can be treacherous and what we do with power will be one of the greatest tests in life. Many in our world measure our worth by the power standard. You may see this if you read about the life of Steve Jobs, who was a brilliant person who gave us many of the tools we have today. Unfortunately, during his life and profession he left a lot of carnage in his wake.

Jesus would challenge this way of thinking and approach, not only philosophically through his teachings but through his life on earth and as the creator of the universe.

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The disciples had their focus on the “center of power”. Jesus was telling them; we are going to turn this world upside down, but not the way this world does, (the power way). He showed them how to be great by washing their feet.

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:2-3)

- **The Cross**

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)

“Though he was God, he didn’t demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a servant and appeared in human form.” (Philippians 2:6-7, NLT)

- **The Towel**

The most influential person that ever lived had legions of angels at his disposal. He made dead people live, had authority over the winds, seas and all of creation. He had immeasurable power and yet put on a servant’s towel.

“Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.” (John 13:3-5)

2. ***DON’T BE A SPECTATOR, BE A SERVANT***

“Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.

- **Discover and use your gifts to serve in the Family**

“Everyone has a gift, God gave you the gift, Gifts are for others”

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” (1 Peter 4:10)

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the common good.” (1 Corinthians 12:7)

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” (1 Corinthians 12:27)

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men...” (Acts 4:13)

“There is a difference between choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant. When I choose to serve, I retain control about whom I serve and when I serve. But when I choose to be a servant, I have given up all rights and all control.” - John Ortberg

SEE YOUR VOCATION AS YOUR DIVINE PLACEMENT...a place to serve (see your work as God’s work).

- Redemptive Work (God’s saving and reconciling actions): Counselors, Therapists, Psychiatrists, Pastors...
- Creative Work (God’s fashioning of the physical and human world): Entrepreneurs, Actors, Painters, Musicians, Producers, Poets, Dancers...
- Providential Work (God’s provision for and sustaining of humans and creation): Public workers, Policy Makers, Politicians, Shopkeepers, Farmers, Repairmen, Engineers, Chefs, Tailors, Finance, Electricians, Carpenters, Technology...
- Justice Work (God’s maintenance of justice): Judges, Lawyers, paralegals, City Managers, Prison Guards, Peace Officers, Diplomats, Supervisors...
- Compassionate Work (God’s involvement in comforting, healing, guiding): Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Psychologists, Social workers, NGO Directors...
- Revelatory Work (God’s work to enlighten with truth): Scientists, Educators, Journalists, Scholars, Writers, Researchers...

POSSIBLE RESOURCE IN THIS AREA:

Amy L. Sherman; "Kingdom Calling"

Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. "Truth", on page one of your notes Randy discussed the Oxford Dictionaries "word of the year". Although this may not be on our radar it does give us a unique peek into our culture. (at least North America, England and other similar countries) The word for 2016 was "post-truth", after reading the notes on page one what are your thoughts about "truth" and our culture today?
2. In our study so far we've look at God's transformation (Romans 12) in our lives. This happens by his spirit, his word and through trials. What is your initial reaction as you think about his transformative work through trials?
3. In Mark 10, Jesus explains to his ambitious disciples that his kingdom stands in stark contrast to the way things happen in the culture around them. Please discuss the following quote: "The power to lead in the Kingdom of God is through humble service"
4. In verses 42-44, Jesus tells his disciples that in his kingdom will be different than the gentile rulers. So take another look at pages 2 and 3 of your notes and discuss the implications of a "tyrant".
5. Jesus didn't just teach a philosophy of being a servant, he lived it. On page 3 Randy talked about Jesus in relation to the "cross" and the "towel". What do these (and the accompanying scriptures) teach us about the servanthood of Jesus?
6. Pastor Randy challenged us to "Discover and use your gifts to serve in the Family". As we look at the four scriptures listed under this category on page 4, it is very clear what these "gifts" are for. When you look at the gifts that God has given you, how do they serve others?
7. Lastly think about your vocation, from the President of the United States to a stay at home mom. Do you see it as a "Divine Placement"? For some of us it may be harder than for others. Take a look at the list on page 5 and discuss where you see your vocation. If your vocation doesn't fit into one of the categories, consider how it is a divine appointment.