

Announcer

Welcome to transformed by the word, a podcast about discovering how to live your life with gratifying purpose. God created you for a reason and the Bible contains the keys to unlock your transformed life. Now, here's your host, Debora Barr

Debora 0:21

Thanks for joining me for Episode 11 of transformed by the word. Today we are exploring The Key to Life and you might be surprised, it's not what you might think.

If you think the key to a life of satisfaction and purpose is achieved, by getting rich, being elevated to positions of higher status, obtaining more education, more influence, more friends, or more material possessions, you are completely missing it.

It is found by looking in the other direction, from the things that we've been taught by listening to the reasoning of this world.

1:08

Here it comes. The key to life is death to self.

I don't know about you, but I don't always see things clearly. Circumstances I find myself in are not always what they appear to be. Recently, I was driving to meet a friend for coffee, and I went down a different road than I normally do. Because there was a lot of traffic, and I didn't want to be late. When I rounded a turn, a car was coming straight at me in my lane.

Well, I immediately thought, What an idiot! I even honked my horn, then I saw it. Wrong way, do not enter. It was at that moment that I realized that I was going in the wrong direction on a one way street. It is times like these, that I realize, I don't always see clearly that things aren't always as they seem, despite how strongly I might feel about them.

2:21

In fact, if I were to be honest with you, I would have to admit that I lived my life for many years in deception, and didn't even know that I was wrong. You see, I lived nearly two decades of my life as a lesbian in homosexual relationships, and thought that I was born gay.

I was seeking to fill a relational void in my life, through same sex relationships. And I was seeking to fill other voids, through job promotions, educational pursuits, and new adventures. What I was seeking was the key to life, a life of fulfillment and purpose.

3:10

Has what happened to me, regarding the one way street incident ever happened to you? You thought you were so right about something, only later to realize that you were wrong. Have you two been seeking the key to life in the things of this world? In a better job, a better education, better titles, material possessions, relationships.

What if God says that the key to life is not found in the ways of this world? The real key to life is in fact 180 degrees away from or completely opposite from the ways of this world.

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3:59

Let's turn to Scripture to see what God says about the key to life. Let's look at 2nd Corinthians chapter five, verses 14 through 17. Here's what it says in the New King James Version.

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge that if one died for all, then all died, and he died for all that those who live should live no longer for themselves. But for him who died for them and rose again. Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him thus, no longer therefore. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. old things have passed away. behold, all things have become new.

5:15

The key to life is death to self.

Verses 14 and 15 say, for the love of Christ compels us. Because we judge this, that if one died for all, then all died. And he died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves. But for him, who died for them and rose again.

Why do we need to die to ourself to have life? Well, because Jesus died to himself, so that we could have life. In Christ, we have his example.

6:00

Jesus was with God in heaven, from the beginning of time, from before the creation of the universe. Just imagine, the heavenly throne room where all of the angels and created beings worshipped Jesus day and night. Yet because of our sin, and his amazing love for us, Jesus chose to leave that all behind and come to earth, to be born of a virgin, humbling himself to take on human flesh, and live on this earth. Not only did he humbled himself to take on human flesh, but he lived a completely sinless life, being tempted by all of the things of the world that tempt us, yet he remained without sin. Jesus then did the unthinkable. He sacrificed his own life, so that he could take away our sins by his death on the cross. This was God's own son, who left the throne room of heaven, where he was worshipped and adored, by all created beings in heaven. He left all of that behind, to be beaten, mocked, and tortured to death on a wooden cross, all for the sake of you and me.

7:39

He died and was buried on the third day he rose from the dead, where he is now seated once again, at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Verse 15 of our scripture says, He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves. But for him, who died for them, and rose again, he did all of this, so that those who believe in him and put their faith and trust in Jesus will no longer be slaves to sin, so that we no longer live for ourselves but for Jesus, who died for us. Are we truly living for him? Or are we living for ourselves?

The Word tells us in First Corinthians chapter six, verses 19 and 20, that we are no longer our own. We were bought at a price. Because of his great love for us, Jesus purchased our freedom from sin with His precious blood.

8:54

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If Jesus died to himself, to give us life, we need to do the same. The key to life is death to self.

9:08

A few years ago, I heard a story about a little boy whose sister had a rare disease that required her to have a blood transfusion. Now the doctor explained to the boy that she had the same disease that the little boy had recovered from just two years earlier. And her only chance for life was a blood transfusion from someone who had previously conquered this disease. Since both siblings had the same rare blood type, he was an ideal donor.

Would you give your blood to your little sister? The doctor asked. The boy hesitated. His lower lip started to tremble. Then he said yes. For my sister.

Soon the two children were wheeled into the hospital room. The little girl was pale and thin, and the boy was robust and healthy. Neither of them spoke. But when their eyes met, the little boy grinned at her. As the nurse inserted the needle into his arm, his smile faded as he watched the blood flow through the plastic tube. A few moments later, the boy asked the doctor who was standing nearby. When do I die?

Only then, did the doctor realize why the little boy had hesitated. Why his lip trembled when he agreed to donate his blood. He thought that giving his blood to his sister meant giving up his life. Fortunately for him, he didn't have to die for his sister. But Jesus did die for us, giving up his blood, he gave up his life.

The key to life is death, to self.

11:25

Another point from the Scripture is that in Christ, we have new life. This comes from verse 17, which reads, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new.

What does it mean to be in Christ?

In Christ means that we surrender our whole lives to His Lordship, which is so much more than just knowing Him as our Savior, to be in Christ demands that we not stay in self.

12:16

I know that for many years, I controlled my life. I thought the key to life was found in the things that I could acquire the promotions, I could get the educational pursuits that I could conquer the people that I could be in relationship with. But what I found and all of that striving to get and be and do, I was never really satisfied. It was as if there was an endless hole in my heart that could never be fully filled. My old life, led only to death.

To be in Christ means that we surrender completely to him, yielding every aspect of our lives to Jesus, our mind, our will, our emotions, our bodies, our finances, our plans, our desires, our future, our everything, surrendering and allowing Jesus to direct every single aspect of our lives. While it can seem counter intuitive, but there is so much peace in surrendering to Christ. When we realized that we don't

have to strive and fight and work to have abundant life. When we surrender to Him, Jesus takes full control of our lives.

13:58

Now, when I was a little girl, I took swimming lessons. And what I learned during that experience, is that thrashing about in the water, flailing my arms and legs, trying to stay above the water does nothing but wear you out and you end up sinking, instead of swimming. The key is to completely relax and trust the water to hold you up. If you just surrender, lie flat on your back in the water, it will hold you up with no effort at all.

Verse 17 of our scripture says that when we are in Christ, all things become new, and there is no work or striving that we have to do to receive this newness. All we need to do is to rest and abide in God. God's Word tells us in John 15, verse four, that we are to abide in Christ and allow him to abide in us. It goes on to say, just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can we, unless we abide in him.

15:27

Now think about it, does the branch of an apple tree work to produce an apple? No. All it does, is abide or stay connected to the trunk of the tree, drawing nourishment from the soil in which it is planted, and drinking in the light of the sun, through its leaves. The new life comes solely as a result of the work that God does in the tree to bring forth the fruit.

It's the same for us.

When we completely surrender to Jesus, and abide in Him, God does the work in us to bring about new life. God begins to bring forth in our lives the fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. It is God who transforms our life. He radically reorients our lives, essentially altering the whole fabric of our being, our thinking, our feeling, willing, acting. He gives us peace, that is beyond understanding. He lets us know down deep in the core of our being, that we belong to Him, and He is in control of all, we are transformed from the inside out. In Christ, we have new life.

17:17

The key to life is death to self.

How do we know this? Well, first in Christ, we have his example. Secondly, in Christ, we have new life. Our third and final point is also found in verse 17.

It says in Christ, we have new creation. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away, meaning old things have died. Behold, all things have been made new, new creation.

When we abide in Christ, the old things must die.

We are no longer operating from our own understanding. We're seeking the direction for our lives from God. The Bible says that Jesus died to give us abundant life. Our old self-centered way of living must die. Our old way of looking for satisfaction and purpose from the things of this world must die.

18:43

You might be asking, How do I do this? Well, by spending time with God daily in His Word, by developing a personal relationship with Him through prayer, communicating with Jesus throughout the day, and by remaining connected to the body of Christ, through other believers who can help us to grow spiritually and connected, staying connected with them, people who can challenge us and hold us accountable. When we do these things, God makes us new from the inside out as he transforms and enriches our lives.

19:33

Think about this. What happens to a seed when it's planted in the ground. Think of a single kernel of wheat. Inside that kernel is the potential to be so much more than a single kernel that cannot satisfy hunger on its own to experience the fullness of life that God intended for it. To fulfill its greatest potential. First, it must die. When the kernel of wheat is planted in the ground, it dies to itself. And then God recreates that seed into something new, multiplied and productive.

20:26

JOHN 12 verse 24 says, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces much grain. Its impact and effectiveness in life is multiplied exponentially. But first it has to die.

Again, the key to life is death. And the same applies to us. We must die to self and allow God to fulfill the plans and purposes that he intended for our lives, the full potential that he placed within each and every one of us. When we do that, God supernaturally makes your life matter. You can live a life of purpose and satisfaction. You can impact generations for the good. You can be used by God to do great and mighty things.

21:36

When I fully surrendered my life to Christ, and fell in love with his word, he began an amazing transformation process in my life. As I learned to abide in Jesus, he transformed my self-centered thinking. He turned it outward, and I began to serve others. He gave me a life of true purpose, and hope for the future, not found in the ways of this world. But in the ways of his kingdom. He showed me who I am and him, and it radically transformed my life. He revealed to me that he did not create me to live in homosexual relationships. So I chose to die to my old way of life, and I am now living an abundant life as a new creation in him.

22:35

Now he will do the same for you. But in order to live, First, you must die to self. You must put to death, old habits, old behaviors, old patterns of acting and reacting, and old ways of thinking. The Bible says that we need to die daily to the desires of the flesh, and to rest in him. Why do we need to do this daily? Doesn't life get easier after we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior? No! when we become Christians, the enemy of our soul will do everything in his power to drag us back under his dominion back into the self-absorbed life. But God has given us a deposit of his spirit, to give us the power to overcome these temptations of the flesh. What we need to do is to rest in him.

23:44

What would your life look like if you truly embraced what the Bible is teaching us in Second Corinthians chapter five? What if you stopped trying to find satisfaction in people in status, in physical pleasure in accomplishments in the things of this world, and truly died to self? What would happen in your life if you decided to embrace the key to life, being death to self. If you would truly surrender those remaining areas of your life that God has brought to your mind during this message? Those things he wants you to let go of. You would be transformed into a new creation.

You would experience the abundant life that God wants you to have on this earth and for all of eternity. You would experience a life of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. You would have the power to overcome persistent sin. And you would begin to see life differently, experience life more fully, and have unexplainable peace, joy, and purpose. You will make a difference that transforms not only yourself, but the environment around you.

25:27

The key to life is death to self.

Now, if you've never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, the power of God is not currently available to you for this life transformation that I've been speaking about. It is vitally important that you make a personal decision to accept the free gift of salvation that Jesus offers to you, by his sacrifice on your behalf. You can get right with God today.

It is by faith that we believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. And if you are ready to place your trust in the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Would you pray this prayer with me right now?

26:24

God, I confess that I'm a sinner, and I need Jesus in my life.

I repent of my sins and I turn to you.

I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins. He was buried and rose from the dead.

I accept this by faith and invite Jesus to be Lord of my life, to reign and rule in my heart.

Thank you, God for forgiving me, and saving me. Amen.

Now, if you just prayed that prayer, you are saved.

27:08

If you are already saved, meaning that you surrendered your life to Jesus at some time in the past, but you've gotten off track, you've gone into a backslidden state. You can repent and recommit your life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Bible says in first John chapter one, verse nine, that if we confess our sins, He meaning Jesus is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If you repent of your rebellion, and confess your sins to Him, He will forgive you and bring you back into right standing with God. All you need to do is accept His forgiveness.

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Now, if you just accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, or you read committed your life to him, I would love to hear from you. Please visit my website at TBTW, which stands for Transformed by the Word TBTWPodcast.com and let me know about your decision for Christ. So that I can follow up with you and encourage you and support you in your next steps of faith.

28:39

My prayer for you is that you will govern your life by the truths of Scripture, instead of the ways of the world. That you will truly embrace a life of surrender and learn to daily die to self in order to experience the abundant life that God has for you. Now I pray that he would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith that you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width, and length and depth and height. To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all of the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. To him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever, amen.

30:10

Stay tuned for our next episode of transformed by the word, where we will explore the topic of walking in integrity.

Announcer 30.23

Thank you for listening to transformed by the word with your host Debora Barr, be sure to subscribe to our podcast on iTunes or Google Play and connect with us at TBTWPodcast.com. Until next time, be blessed.