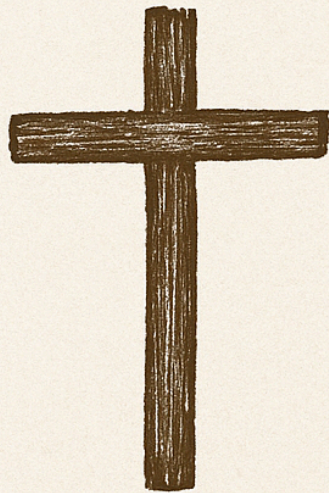


Formed by the Cross

Embracing God's
Slow and Thorough
Work of Love Within the Soul



By His Grace to His
servant Scott

The Slow and Thorough Work of Jesus

“Being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” – Philippians 1:6

The Hidden Wisdom of God’s Process

We live in a world that prizes speed—instant answers, instant growth, instant results. Yet the Kingdom of God moves at a different rhythm. God’s transformation in our lives is not rushed; it is deliberate, thorough, and often slow. He is not merely interested in changing our circumstances but in shaping our hearts to reflect His Son, Jesus Christ.

The work of Christ within us is the slow unfolding of grace through the cross. It is the patient labor of divine love purifying our motives, exposing our attachments, and drawing us deeper into dependence upon God. Though we often resist this process, the Father’s hand is steady and kind. He could make us instantly mature, instantly holy, instantly good—but He chooses instead to grow us little by little, day by day, through trials, waiting, and surrender.

Why? Because true maturity cannot be rushed. Real transformation takes place not through moments of emotional inspiration but through steady, faithful endurance. God is not just interested in behavior modification; He is forming Christ’s very nature in us.

The Cross: God’s Instrument of Deep Change

Gene Edwards once wrote, “God wants you to grow a little at a time and not burst into instant maturity. This is what He has decided, and you can only adore His wisdom—even when you don’t understand it.”

Every believer must face the cross—not just the cross Jesus died upon, but the personal cross He asks each of us to bear. It is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit does His most sacred work: detaching us from our self-reliance, pride, and misplaced trust.

Through suffering, disappointment, and loss, God gently but firmly loosens our grip on the things we thought we needed. He allows the fire to refine us, not to destroy us, but to purify our faith. Like gold heated until the impurities rise to the surface, our hearts are purified by the flame of His love.

At first, we resist this process. We cry out for God to make it stop, to make it easy. But over time, as His grace takes root in us, we begin to see what He was doing all along.

He was freeing us from ourselves—teaching us to live by faith and not by sight, to trust His heart even when His hand seems hard.

The Father's Loving Discipline

God is not cruel. He does not wound without purpose. The cross is not punishment—it is preparation. The Father disciplines those He loves because He sees what we cannot. He knows the eternal harm that self-will, pride, and wrong attachments bring to our souls.

Every pruning, every delay, every unanswered prayer is an act of mercy designed to bring us into greater intimacy with Him. Jesus said, “Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:2). The cutting away may feel painful, but it is the proof that we belong to Him and that He is cultivating something eternal within us.

When God removes something—or someone—from our lives, we may weep as though we've lost everything. But one day, we will see that He was saving us from a deeper sorrow. What feels like loss today often becomes the soil of greater life tomorrow.

The Father's goal is not comfort but Christlikeness. His process is not quick but complete. Every trial becomes a classroom of trust, every delay a test of surrender, and every hardship a seedbed for divine character.

The Eternal Perspective

We often see only the surface of our suffering—the inconvenience, the pain, the confusion. But God sees eternity. He sees who we are becoming. He knows how each season of testing contributes to the eternal weight of glory being formed within us.

Paul wrote, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17). God wastes nothing. Even the things we wish had never happened become instruments of grace when placed in His hands.

When we stop resisting His work and begin to trust His timing, we find rest. Our hearts quiet down. We learn that what He allows is not to harm us, but to heal us. The very cross that once terrified us becomes our teacher, our purifier, our path to resurrection life.

The Invitation to Surrender

The slow and thorough work of Jesus invites us into a life of continual surrender. To “abandon yourself to God,” as Edwards said, is not to give up hope, but to give up control—to release our insistence on how and when God should work.

When we finally lay down our striving and allow God to be God, we begin to experience true peace. We realize that He is not delaying because He is indifferent, but because He is wise. The same hands that hold the stars hold our hearts, shaping them gently, perfectly, and eternally.

The faithful Giver of every good gift gives us the cross with His own hand—not to crush us, but to complete us. The slow work of grace is the thorough work of love. And when the work is finished, we will see that every moment of waiting, every trial endured, every tear shed was worth it.

Because in the end, what God has been forming through all of it is Christ Himself—living, reigning, shining through us.

Prayer

Father, thank You for not rushing my transformation. Teach me to trust Your timing and surrender to Your process. When I grow weary of waiting, remind me that You are working in the deep places of my soul. Help me to embrace the cross You give, knowing it is designed for my good and Your glory. May Christ be formed in me—slowly, thoroughly, and completely. Amen.