

## A 60-day plan of transformation into Christlikeness

### Day #8: VIM (Vision, Intent, and Means) for Transformation

For latest edition of this article, see <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-8.pdf>

1. Carve out at least 30 minutes of quiet time with the Lord.
  - a. The best time for solitude and quiet time before the Lord is after you wake up, before you interact with anyone and go out into the world. As you make this a practice, this time will become very sacred to you and will be the most spiritually refreshing and edifying part of your day.
  - b. If God who became a man needed time of solitude with God, you can bet we do too. And He was far busier with more important and pressing work than any of us. Mark 1:35, “Now in the *morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.*”
  - c. The day before you is filled countless powerfully influential forces in the world that will be seeking your mind, emotions, will, and loyalty—from family and friends to work and cable news—and it is important to start the day off establishing and building your loyalty (mind, emotions, and will) around God and His Kingdom, Matt. 6:33. This is likely the only time you will have today of uninterrupted deep and unfragmented thoughts about your life, God, and the day.
  - d. This quiet time includes several spiritual exercises that will put you in a position to receive the grace of God, e.g., solitude, silence, meditation on Scripture, reflection, confession, and adoration of God. We will cover each of these in following lessons. One of the most important things during this time is to begin to root out the habit of rushing or hurriedness, which destroy peace and serenity.
  - e. If you are anything like me, you genuinely long for abilities that are beyond yourself in order to enter the fantastic abundant life that Christ promises (John 10:10). However, this kind of life cannot be acquired “on the fly” in the heat of the battle any more than someone can become a great baseball or football player by only applying principles during a game. Everyone needs practice, and your quiet time is the time of practice of reflection on Scripture and life before God. This quiet time with the Lord is where you will build strength in your thoughts, emotions, and will.
  - f. This practice of solitude with God deals with the primary spiritual problem in our age: distraction. Distraction is a root of most spiritual problems in our age. There was a day when all we had to do was to turn off the TV. Now we are in a sea of endless streams of internet links, Facebook posts, tweets, e-mails, and noise,

noise, noise. It seems everyone wants us to be accessible 24/7 and to respond instantly to every request. Neuroscience studies are now showing us that the neural pathways of our brains are being rewired in a way that is destroying our physical capacity for sustained attention. We might complain about our wired world, but if we are honest, we like the technological gluttony. We need to turn it all off for at least 30 minutes at the start of every day.

- g. A good suggestion is to start this 30-minute period off with reading Psalm 139:23-24. Then, be still and reflect on God, His grace, and your life.

## 2. VIM—Vision, intent, means.

- a. “Vim” is a derivative of the Latin term “vis”, meaning direction, strength, force, vigor, power, energy, virtue, nature, essence. This is a pretty good description of what is needed for spiritual transformation into Christlikeness.
- b. Scripture exhorts us to gain God’s power. Read Ephesians 3:16; 6:10.
- c. If we are to be transformed into images of Christ, we need three basic things: vision, intent, and means. Apart from the proper vision, the intent, and the means, Christ will not be formed in us.
- d. VIM: Vision #1. Jesus as our Example. Read Matthew 16:24; 28:18-20; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 1 Pet 2:21. I will be developing this in more detail in later lessons. In sum, everyone is following someone. We are to follow Jesus Christ.
- e. VIM: Vision #2: The kingdom of God. In order to be like Christ, we must have the vision of Christ. This begins with the kingdom of God. It is the place where Jesus started, read Luke 4:43. His entire life was about preaching and teaching on the nature of the kingdom of God. And the kingdom of God is the range of God’s effective will, where what God wants done is done, read Matthew 6:9-13, 33; Col. 1:13. Life in God’s kingdom brings peace, joy, and righteousness (Rom 14:17) because in His kingdom we live in the reality that all things are working together for good (Rom 8:28-30). Life in the Kingdom is built around the teachings of Jesus Christ, for example, loving your enemies (Matt. 5:44-48).
- f. Without the right vision, there can be no transformation into Christlikeness.
- g. VIM: Intent. Before one can gain the character of Christ, one has to want it. There is no osmosis in Christlike transformation. We must intend on being like Christ and intend on living in the Kingdom of God. This intention takes us beyond simply having right doctrinal thinking. We must intend on obeying the example and teachings of Jesus the Anointed. Intention involves a decision now without any procrastination. The intention must be there: You must want it more than

anything else in life. Or, at least, you have to want to want it more than anything else.

- h. VIM: Means. Having the proper vision and intention to follow Christ will naturally lead to seeking out and applying the means to that end. You can have all of the vision and intention in the world to be like Christ, but if you do not have the means you will never get beyond Pharisaical behavior modification. We cannot have the inner character of Christ apart from the means of His power. He must change our minds, emotions, will, body orientation, social life, and soul. The means will be grace. And this plan will outline how one can put himself into the position of receiving that grace by being yoked with Christ, a topic I will cover in the next lesson.
3. Scripture Reading: Mary, the mother of the humanity of Jesus Christ.
    - a. Read Luke 1:46-55. Consider the spiritual transformation of Mary. It is obvious that her mind, emotions, and will had been transformed by God. Note her VIM, her vision, intent, and means (grace). Where did she get this VIM? She did not have a physical Bible yet her song, the Magnificat, contains dozens of allusions to the Old Testament. There is no doubt that she had taken time to memorize Scripture, which became part of our soul and filled it with rejoicing in God and His marvelous grace. Consider how different she would have been different from pagan girls around her who had altogether different visions, intents, and means to accomplish pagan goals. Apart from the Word of God saturating our souls, we will think and live like pagans and miss the greatest offer in the world: a life transformed into and empowered by Jesus Christ.
    - b. Note Mary's treasured and pondered the words and works of the Lord: Luke 2:19 "But Mary treasured all these things and pondered *them* in her heart."
    - c. Read and memorize Philip. 4:13.

### **The 60-day transformation of the mind, heart, and emotions into Christlikeness**

Day 1 – A life that lacks nothing (Psalm 23), <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-1.pdf>

Day 2 - Satan, the enemy (1 John 2:15-16), <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-2.pdf>

Day 3 – Review, reflect, journaling, and Psalm 19, <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-3.pdf>

Day 4 – The six areas of inner transformation, <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-4.pdf>

Day 5 – The Word of God, Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1, <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-5.pdf>

Day 6 – 2 warnings & the promise of transformation, <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-6.pdf>

Day 7 - Solitude, Spiritual Disciplines, Transformation, <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-7.pdf>

Day 8 – VIM (Vision-Intent-Means) for personal transformation, <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/day-8.pdf>

*A fellow disciple of Christ,*

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