

*The Gift  
of  
Transformation*

*The Gift came to me  
wrapped in a package  
I did not expect.*

*With gratitude  
I convey it to you.*

*Dwight A. Clough*

My deepest gratitude to:

- Rev. Steve Freitag for pointing the way
- Dr. Ed Smith for his pioneering work
- My sweetheart, Kim, for walking this journey with me

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Dwight A. Clough

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# Foreword

by Steve Freitag

It was an honor to help edit the ***The Gift of Transformation*** and I am thrilled to write the foreword to this new edition. But it's been a greater thrill to be a part of Dwight and Kim's journey.

Dwight's message—come as you are, but don't expect to stay that way—will lead you to discover the treasure God created inside you. Since 2005, CrossCounsel has supplied copies of this book to our clients, expecting that those who dive into the pages will discover the depth and the truth of genuine Christ-centered transformation. It's quite a ride. You can breeze through it in 45 minutes or dwell on it for 45 days.

What is transformation? In recent years, our culture has watered down the word. True transformation involves complete metamorphosis—the caterpillar becoming a butterfly. What once was is no longer. The butterfly cannot reverse the miraculous. It is done. Finished. Completed.

As a close friend, I have watched Jesus transform Dwight and Kim's lives and marriage. They have taken the journey and come out the other side ready to share their experiences with candor. Encouraged by their example, I believe life-changing encounters with Jesus Christ are not only plausible, but are every day miracles. I have witnessed hundreds of transformations through my work with CrossCounsel, and each time I

stand in awe and wonder at the power of Christ.

Jesus invites everyone to experience His gift of transformation. Sadly, there has been a horrible disconnect in the American Church concerning emotional health and spiritual maturity. Despite our intelligence and knowledge, the failings of Christ's followers are frightening and seem no different from the failings of people living without Him.

I no longer believe my spiritual maturity rests upon improving my knowledge of doctrine, memorizing more Scripture, or watching my hair gray. Dwight offers hope to those who are frustrated with formulas for freedom. He bridges the gap between gut-wrenching pain caused from lies we believe from our past and our memories, and offers hope through the redeeming power of God.

Our world cries out for authenticity. It is time to embrace the brokenness within us. Maybe we will realize we not only need salvation from our sins, but also from the deeply embedded lies that prevent us from running the race He set before us.

In the third chapter of Philippians, the Apostle Paul told us to forget what was behind us. We need to stop taking him out of context. Justification for emotional suppression insults God's design for our minds. It contradicts Biblical responsibility of taking an account, asking forgiveness, and reconciling to one another. Damage from our past should never be an excuse for present behavior. What Paul put behind him were accomplishments of his flesh—performance and self-sufficiency.

He no longer framed his identity by his achievements.

Not everyone walks the same journey, but we can all walk with the same Jesus. When we open the door to His Spirit, He performs a unique and creative work inside us. Opening the door will not complete the transformation, but it becomes a tool to put you in touch with the One who can change your life forever—Jesus Christ.

I encourage you to read ***The Gift of Transformation*** and share it with someone else. Join us as we travel the path with Jesus and encourage one another. Spread the good news of God's gift of transformation. Some things are too good to keep for yourself. There is plenty of room next to the Master.

Rev. Steve Freitag, Director  
CrossCounsel International Ministries  
August 2011

***The Gift of Transformation*** is a quick read; an easy read. However, the depth of its content and meaning will surprise you. It will draw you away from a mind-set of denial into a desire to feel the compassion and healing truth that only Jesus can offer. If you are anxious about anything or often frozen in fear, Jesus will transform you one step at a time. This book will help you make the choice to start your own soul-healing search with Him. It's never too late to make that choice.

Tina Irwin,  
Judah's Call International, Inc.

# ***The Gift of Transformation***

*For a long time  
my wife wanted a dishwasher.*

*It might have something to do  
with our four kids  
and their tendency to eat  
a lot*

*every day.*

*So she prayed,  
and when my wife prays for things  
she usually gets them.*

*I don't know why that is.*

*She prayed for a dishwasher,  
and she got one.*

*We were very happy to get our dishwasher  
even though we didn't know how  
to install it.*



*We brought it home  
and put a blanket over it.*

*For many months it stayed warm  
under its blanket.*

*But my wife was not happy  
with this arrangement.*

*She brought this up  
in a gentle way*

*about two thousand times.*

So

*being the man that I am  
I decided to ask for help.*

*Several of my friends  
came over,  
looked at the dishwasher,  
looked at the kitchen,  
looked at me,  
left the house and  
did not return.*

*One of these friends  
single-handedly  
tore the cabinets  
out from under the counter  
and left me with  
helpful hints.*

*You can tell he's a real friend  
because he really thinks  
I can do it.*

*And he's not even crazy.*

*Armed with new confidence,  
I started drilling holes  
all over the place.*

*Drilling is a lot of fun.*

*Now there are wires running everywhere.  
Sort of like chipmunks.*

*I pause here  
because I don't know what to do next.*

*And because I want to talk with you.*

*I've written this book  
as a conversation  
with you.*

*I've written it because  
my life has changed  
and yours can too.*

*When we talk about a changed life,  
people imagine many things.*

*Some imagine setting goals  
and working hard.*

*I admire people like that.*

*But you can't get this  
by working hard.*

*Sorry.*



*Some imagine days of fasting,  
sweaty prayer meetings,  
shouting hallelujah,  
and calling down  
from heaven  
fire.*

*But this doesn't work that way.*

*Again,  
sorry.*

*This is easier,  
much easier,  
and harder,  
much harder.*

*Because it only takes one thing.*

*Courage.*

*Oh, yes,  
I need to tell you  
it will take courage  
to read this book.*

*In fact,  
so far we've been going along  
in a carefree manner  
that might suggest  
that this is a book  
just like any other  
you might choose to read.*

*So I need to draw your attention  
to the warning label  
on the next page.*

**\*\* WARNING \*\***

*This is a book  
different from any you may ever read.*

*Reading this book  
might change your life forever.  
The stuff in here is powerful,  
and — just like medicines and explosives —  
we need this warning label.*

*Please understand:  
I'm not a psychologist.  
I'm not a counselor.  
I'm only a friend.*

*You alone are responsible  
for your decisions  
— not me.*

*If you wish to make me responsible  
for any outcome that results  
from you choosing  
to read on  
or to follow anything  
you believe I suggest,  
then close the book  
and walk away.*



*Whew!*

*I'm glad that's over.*

*And I would like to congratulate you  
for your courage.*



*It takes courage to look inside  
ourselves.*

*Inside  
we find what we buried  
and what we hid  
from everyone  
including ourselves.*

*It usually begins  
with our feelings.*

*In my lifetime, I've felt a lot of feelings  
— all different kinds.*

*I've felt hopeful, self-important, secret pride.  
Come on! Hurry up! Get out of my way!  
Can't you see how smart I am?  
Can't you see my destiny?*

*I shake my head.  
Inside, I go to a place  
where my self-importance dies.  
There I see a girl in the Tijuana prison.  
She was seven, maybe eight.  
The sores in her mouth —  
none of us knew  
what they were.*

*All different kinds of feelings —*

*Years ago, I shook inside  
whenever I sat at a kitchen table.*

*Can you imagine that?  
A kitchen table would leave me shaking  
so hard inside that I had to stand up  
and walk away.*

*What about you?  
What feelings do you find inside?*

*Feelings are like threads  
woven through the fabric of our lives.  
If you follow them back far enough,  
they take you someplace.*

*My own feelings  
— all different kinds —  
they take me back.  
They carry me back in time,  
over the years,  
past the decades,  
back to my childhood.*

*Sometimes  
they take me back to 1965,  
to a place just off Dixie Highway  
about 40 feet from the shore  
of Lake Saint Clair.*

*I was barely eight years old.*

*I don't suppose you would even notice  
our little place if you drove by.  
So small and so insignificant  
to the big Detroit cars  
roaring past  
in the night.*

*No, you'd never see it.*

*I was awake. I wanted to be asleep.  
I wanted to sleep and wake up and  
discover it was all a dream.  
But it wasn't a dream.*

*My dad was coming back.*

*"Danny!" I whispered  
to my little six-year-old brother  
down in the bottom bunk.*

*"Danny!"*

*I don't know if my lips made a sound.  
I dared not let my dad hear me.*

*"Pretend you are asleep,"  
I mouthed into the darkness.*

*I wrapped my blanket tighter and shivered.  
"Pretend you are asleep,"  
I cried into silence.*

*I don't think my brother ever heard me.  
But if he did, and if he did follow my advice,  
it didn't do him any good.*

*The door was torn open.  
My brother was jerked out of bed.  
The beating started again.*

*I'm not sure what happened to his screams.  
I still can't find them in my mind.*



*Adults are funny, in a way.  
It's the middle of the night,  
so they assume the children are asleep.  
Mom was home now,  
back from the PTA.  
But it was my dad's voice that I heard.*

*"What are you telling me?  
"You don't want me to smack your kids?"*

*It seemed to take a long time  
for my mom to answer.  
"I'm not saying that," she said,  
"I just don't understand ..."*

*My dad interrupted.  
"I didn't give him one beating," he said.  
"I gave him four."*

*Justice was done.  
My brother was guilty.  
He put his clothes  
in the laundry hamper inside out.  
Now his six-year-old body  
was black and blue.*

*The stick was back on top of the refrigerator.*

*But later,  
much later,  
my mother threw it into the fire.*

*Are you okay with me telling you this?*

*Sometimes  
when we try to put together the pieces,  
some pieces just don't seem to fit  
at first,  
and we'd like to throw them away.*

*But what can you do?  
You can't throw away the past.  
If you try, it will surprise you  
like a boomerang.*

*What do you do?  
How do you navigate  
around the hurting places in your soul?*

*Some people don't believe  
they have hurting places.*

*These people are tricky.*

*So tricky  
they have tricked  
even themselves.*

*Some people think you can walk  
away from pain?*

*I was one of those people.*

*I believed you could forget the past.*

*Nobody ever told me  
that the past  
never forgets you.*

*On a sunny August day in 1975,  
I finally escaped the gravitational pull  
of all my troubles.*

*I went to heaven  
(I hoped)  
even if everyone else called it  
Chicago.*



*This was no ordinary college.  
This was a place of angelic song  
where everyone  
just like me  
wanted Jesus  
and nothing else.*

*Nobody told me  
that all my old bullies  
had been invited to attend.*

*If I were a psychologist  
speaking to an assembly of 17-year-old  
freshman students like me,  
I would tell them plainly,  
“The more you need this place to be heaven, the more  
it will feel just like hell.”*

*I can't fault the school.  
They didn't know they were supposed  
to rescue me from my past.  
How could they?*

*How could they know  
what's buried deep inside all of us?*

*But I kept looking for a way  
to walk away  
from pain.*

*Then, in 1977,  
as the earth turned away from summer  
into the fall,  
I finally I found  
my escape.*

*She called herself Kim.*

*Have you ever been in love?*

*If you have,  
then maybe you will understand  
my questions.*

*Why did I trace the veins in her hand?  
Was my love clean and pure?  
Why did I want her?*

*Why did I carry around  
that slip of yellow paper  
with those magic words,  
“I love you very much,”  
branded on my heart?*

*How did she release the dam inside me?  
Who gave her the key  
to my heart?*

*The best I could figure  
I was in love.*

*I don't know.  
People talk about a dry kind of love  
where Commitment is spelled  
with a capital "C."*

*But mine was intertwined  
with every thread of feeling  
in my heart.*

*Maybe that was a problem.*

*When I was with her  
my pain went away  
until one night  
she said to me,  
“I need to tell you about the men in my life.  
I need to tell you about my pain.”*



*Once there was a little girl,  
and everything she had  
was taken away.*

*When she said it,  
I didn't understand.*

*Nobody does.*

Find the rest of this book at:

<http://dwightclough.com/books2/dwight-clough-books/the-gift-of-transformation/>