

Lesson 6 / April 6, 2008

Extreme Makeover: Heart Edition

for use as

STEP 1

Lesson 6

Focus:

God expects radical change in those who trust Him.

Lesson 6

Bible Basis:

Mark 15:34, Colossians 3: 1-14

Why do Americans like makeover shows so much? We like to marvel at before-and-after footage because it tells us that somehow it's possible to change. New haircuts, a fashion change, a magnificent new house, dramatic weight loss—the more radical the better. The further the distance from here to there, the more we feel . . . well, inspired. Most people are hungry for transformation.

So when Oprah Winfrey started pitching a book called *A New Earth*, it would stand to reason that the world would listen up. She is offering an online course in tandem with a gentleman named Eckhart Tolle, and their promises are astonishing. (It might be helpful to view her recent promotional video on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zE_YFiAkgDU. If you don't have the capability to show your group the streaming video in class, you can still summarize the video for your students and discuss the following questions together). The video is an inspirational montage that hypes Winfrey's new program of self-improvement.

- **Why do you think it's easier for Americans, more than perhaps those in nondemocratic societies, to believe in the power to change themselves?**
- **What is particularly attractive about these quotes:**
 - Discover the depth within yourself.*
 - Find the goodness already within you.*
 - Life is the dancer and you are the dance.*
- **What do these quotes promise, and whose power does it point to?**
- **If you've seen the video, what adds to its power besides the poetic language?**
- **What is striking about these two screen quotes from the video: "I AM" and "Only the TRUTH of who you are, if realized, will set you FREE." (They look very similar to Bible quotes, but with the emphasis changed to be about the power of the individual.)**

Lesson 6
Memory Verse

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.
—Colossians 3:1-2

It seems clear that Tolle and Winfrey are putting their faith in the transforming power of man himself. Who wouldn't like that notion? It sounds so . . . so utterly possible, so completely inspiring to just look inside yourself and SURPRISE—there's a new you!

Today's lesson also focuses on a radical change, but its foundations are entirely different from the ones that Oprah Winfrey is promoting. Let's see what the book of Colossians has to say about spiritual transformation and the source of our "new life."

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *High School Teacher's Guide*; Step 4 appears below.)

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After studying the source of God's transforming power, your students will enjoy this visual and creative application. If they've never seen the show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, explain the premise to them before starting this exercise.

<http://abc.go.com/primetime/xtremehome/index?pn=about>

Have your students pretend that ABC has been contracted to film their spiritual transformation in the form of a primetime makeover show entitled *Extreme Makeover: Heart Edition*. (If you or one of your teenagers is good at video production, it might be fun to assign a little project ahead of time by having him or her design the opening sequence of this television parody. Some groups might also want to extend this into a larger project by videotaping a mock episode of the show, substituting a spiritual host for the ABC's Ty Pennington and so forth. You can, of course, simply do the exercise that follows).

To begin, have each student write down four or five things that were wrong with their spiritual "house" before they were introduced to Jesus Christ. If you teach an especially creative group, you can even encourage them to draw a picture of what it looked like before any renovation took place.

Next, your group should consider what the renovation will look like. What would it take to tear down the old house? (a crisis, faith, curiosity, the Holy Spirit, etc.) What tools does Jesus use to renovate our hearts? (forgiveness, the support of other Christians, repentance, baptism, etc.)

Finally, what would their new house look like? What kind of (figurative) appliances, themes, rooms, landscaping, etc. would God install in this dramatic new space? Encourage them to draw a picture or describe the new home.

If you have time, share your before-and-after makeovers with each other. Then, finish with these questions:

- **Do all makeovers happen in a short, dramatic period of time? Can you think of people whose lives were transformed by God somewhat slowly rather than all at once?**
- **Demolition is often ugly and painful. Can you think of a time in your life when it was hard to change for the better?**

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- **What do you think God is currently doing in your own heart? What kinds of renovations is He currently making?**
- **Do you think that your beautiful new house will ever need repairs in the future? If so, what should you do about it?**

Close your time together in prayer, thanking Jesus Christ for His remarkable ability to transform hearts and lives through His redemptive work on the cross.

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