

## **Sermon for Youth Sunday**

**Text: Colossians 3:1-10**

**Preached on 09-16-2007**

### **Introduction:**

“*Transformers*” is a movie about a race of giant, alien robots that once lived a peaceful, quiet existence. One of the more powerful robots named Megatron, however, grew prideful. He soon possessed an evil desire to rule the galaxy, killing anyone who stood in his way. Especially Optimus Prime! The ensuing war between the Autobots and Decepticons destroyed their home-world (called Cybertron), sending the All-Spark hurtling into outer space. The All-Spark, a source of unspeakable power, was coveted by Megatron as the ultimate prize. He wasted no time, therefore, in pursuing it to a distant planet, bringing the Transformers’ war to Earth.

War was waged between Satan and God sometime shortly after the creation of the world. Satan lost his home-world (called Heaven), bringing his war to Earth. As a result, humanity lost its holy, sinless image, becoming “*Punished and Enslaved*” for Hell. BUT Jesus’ sacrifice has changed our status before God. It changed our eternal destiny, producing in us a different kind of war. It is the on-going, daily struggle to put off the old, sinful nature and to live in conformity with the new status we have as children of God. We do this because we have been...

### **Theme: Transformed In Christ!**

**Part I: We are like robots in disguise (vv. 1-4)**

**Part II: There is more to us than meets the eye (vv. 5-10)**

#### **Part I: We are like robots in disguise (vv. 1-4)**

The Christians to whom Paul originally wrote this letter had been won for Christ from an ungodly, war-torn world. Their new-found Christian values and Christian way of life soon came under heavy fire, however. Temptations surrounded them to return to the kind of living that satisfied their old, sinful desires. That’s why Paul encouraged them to remember what Christ had done for them. He said, “**You have been raised with Christ**” (v. 1). The word for *raised* here emphasizes the completed action that Jesus has already accomplished on our behalf. We have been rescued from our previous, life-less slavery to sin and unbelief. We have been set free from the eternal death we were destined for. Our sins ARE forgiven! Heaven IS ours! Nothing more needs to be done! Nothing more could be done!

Paul encourages us, therefore, to concentrate on those things that reflect our new life in Christ. He says, **“You died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (v. 3)**. In other words, rebelling against God’s will; being prideful; deceiving our parents and others is over and done with. We have died to them all. Not only that. In Holy Baptism we were raised again to live a new life. This new, spiritual life, however, is, **“Hidden with Christ” (v. 3)**. For all intensive purposes, therefore, our faith is undetectable to the outside world. Our new status with God, being concealed in our hearts, is invisible to the naked eye. In a very real sense, then, we are like robots in disguise.

**Application:**

Ron Witwicky made a deal with his teenage son, Sam. The deal was that if he raised \$2,000 and got three “A’s” in school, his dad would supply the extra \$2,000 needed for him to buy his first car. He had the \$2,000 and two “A’s”. After giving a family genealogy report on his great, great grandfather, he received the third “A” needed for his dream car. It wasn’t until arriving at “Bolivia’s Auto Resale”, however, that Sam realized \$4,000 doesn’t buy much of a car. After some wheeling and dealing, Sam drove away in an old, beat-up Camaro with black racing stripes. Un-announced to Sam, this smoke-billowing car was actually a robot in disguise.

On the outside, we may not look like much either. We’re just ordinary people, no different from anyone else. We too blow clouds of dark smoke with our lying, cheating, stealing, and other sins. These things billow up, spreading to everything and everyone around us. Before you know it, we find ourselves hanging out with the wrong crowd at school, our grades begin slipping, and we’re getting into trouble more often. That’s a dangerous slope for any young teen to be on. I know. I was on it at one time. BUT God got me off of it. He did so through Youth Ministry. Through Youth Ministry I really started to appreciate my Savior. I learned that I was set apart (or Sanctified) to live for God. Even though none of my friends at school could see my faith, I still believed. Even though I still messed up at times, I still was forgiven. I guess you could say I was like a robot in disguise.

**Transition:**

Yes, we have been *Transformed In Christ!* Although this transformation is hidden from the rest of the world, upon Jesus’ return it will be displayed for all to see. Then, when we are given new, glorified bodies, all the world will see that...

**Part II: There is more to us than meets the eye (vv. 5-10)**

But we don't have to wait until the Last Day for the world to see us as we truly are! Having been *Transformed in Christ*, Paul tells us to, **“Put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (v. 5)**. The word for *put to death* here means to turn something into a corpse. In other words, every time sin rears its ugly head in our lives; whether it sprouts up in our thoughts, words, or actions, Paul's advice to us is to kill it off! He says to break out our plasma canons and blow it to smithereens.

One of the main things we, especially YOUth, need to put to death is, **“Sexual immorality” (v. 5)**. Now I know the world says that having sex is no big deal; that it's perfectly natural as long as you have decided the time is right for you. But that's not what the Bible says! Paul says to put to death, **“Whatever belongs to your sinful nature” (v. 5)**, and sexual immorality is at the top of the list, followed by some closely related sins, **“Impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (v. 5)**. Every one of these really deals with the human heart! God knows where our problems with sin begin. Jesus Himself said, **“Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, and sexual immorality” (Matthew 15:19)**. God knows that if we are going to live as His forgiven children, then we will wage war with our Old Self, daily struggling to kill it off. That means saying, “NO!” to sexual invites and lustful temptations; waiting to reach both a physically and spiritually mature age before dating. When we do that, we are really setting ourselves apart from the unbelieving world, revealing to others that there is more to us than meets the eye.

**Application:**

Sam Witwicky had a crush on the same girl since the first grade. Her name was Mikaela. There was only one problem. She was dating a football player who had a really nice SUV. Sam's big opportunity finally presented itself, however, after Mikaela and her jock boyfriend had a falling out at the lake. Seeing his dream girl walking home alone, Sam jumped into his Camaro, sped off, and offered her a ride home. Along the way Mikaela shared her frustration over always falling for the same type of guy: “Tight abs and really big arms.” That is why, when arriving at her house, she looked at Sam and asked, “You think I'm shallow, huh?” Sam instinctively replied, “No, no, no! I think there's more than meets the eye with you.”

Although Mikaela did numerous heroic acts in the movie, she still failed to display a single, godly virtue. The truth is that there was nothing special or unique about her. She was like everyone else: Shallow and self-centered! And so were we once. In fact, some of that shallowness still comes out from time to time. Choosing to wear a low-cut top with a sleazy mini-skirt, for example; or having “Ladiesman 217” as an internet username, is nothing more than reverting back to our old ways, revealing our old colors: The black billowing smoke of sin in our life. BUT God empowers us to make better choices. He does so through the new colors He has given us to wear: The red flowing blood of Jesus coursing through our veins. That blood, and the forgiveness it gives, is all the reason we need to make godly choices. Whether it’s the kind of clothes we wear; the type of friends we hang out with; or how long we wait before dating, every godly decision we make reveals that there is more to us than meets the eye.

**Conclusion:**

The Witwicky family motto was: “No Sacrifice; No Victory!” That’s the motto that led Sam’s great, great grandfather, Archibald Witwicky, to discover a giant, frozen Ice-Man in the Artic Circle. It’s also the motto that led to Sam’s heroic actions, refusing to hand the All-Spark over to the evil Megatron. Ironically, it is the same motto that compelled God to send Jesus to Earth. Satan was already here. So for God not to send His Son, would have meant total annihilation of the human race. We’d be “*Punished and Enslaved*” in the deepest regions of Hell right now.

BUT that is not the case! God sent Jesus to win “Freedom for All Sentient Beings!” He did so by following the motto, “No Sacrifice; No Victory!” That motto led our Savior to the cross, where He laid down His life. So what? Who cares? How does some guy’s sacrifice over two-thousand years ago benefit us today? In a word: Victory! The victory Jesus won over sin, death, and the devil changes everything about us. It changes who we are. Because we trust in Jesus’ “Sacrifice”, (1) we are like robots in disguise. Because we live out Jesus’ “Victory”, (2) there is more to us than meets the eye. All-in-all, we have been *Transformed in Christ!* Amen!