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# Spiritual Transformation is a Social Process II

## *2 Corinthians 5:11-21*

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*Purpose:* to convince every believer that spiritual transformation includes the transformation of our relationships and significantly, the eradication of rejection of others.

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### **Spiritual Transformation Is Not Simply A Private Matter**

Spiritual formation, good or bad, is always profoundly social. You cannot keep it to yourself. Anyone who thinks of it as a merely private matter has misunderstood it. Anyone who says, "It's just between me and God," or "What I do is my own business," has misunderstood God as well as "me". Strictly speaking there is nothing "just between me and God." For all that is between me and God affects who I am; and that, in turn, modifies my relationship to everyone around me. My relationship to others also modifies me and deeply affects my relationship to God. Hence those relationships must be transformed if I am to be transformed.

(Dallas Willard, Renovation of the Heart, p.182)

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1. Read Mark 10:13-16. Understanding that there may have been some cultural issues that influenced the disciples' actions, why was Jesus indignant that the disciples were preventing children from being brought to Him? Did Jesus simply have a soft spot for children or might the issue be deeper than that? Might Jesus have been confronting an institutionalized form of rejection?

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2. Discuss the Healthy Attachment Cycle and the Disturbed Attachment Cycle. Does this help us understand how some people in our culture cannot engage in meaningful relationships with other people? Could it be possible that people in our church were victims of the Disturbed Attachment Cycle? If so, how ought we to respond? Is rejection only destructive in the first year of life? Share experiences of rejection in your own life and how it affected you.

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**3.** Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. Discuss what it means to "regard no one according to the flesh." Be honest and consider if there are people in your life whom you have regarded according to the flesh. What will you do to welcome them into your circle of concern and care? How can you do this more consistently as you engage strangers in public places, acquaintances at church and people already within your circle of care and concern?