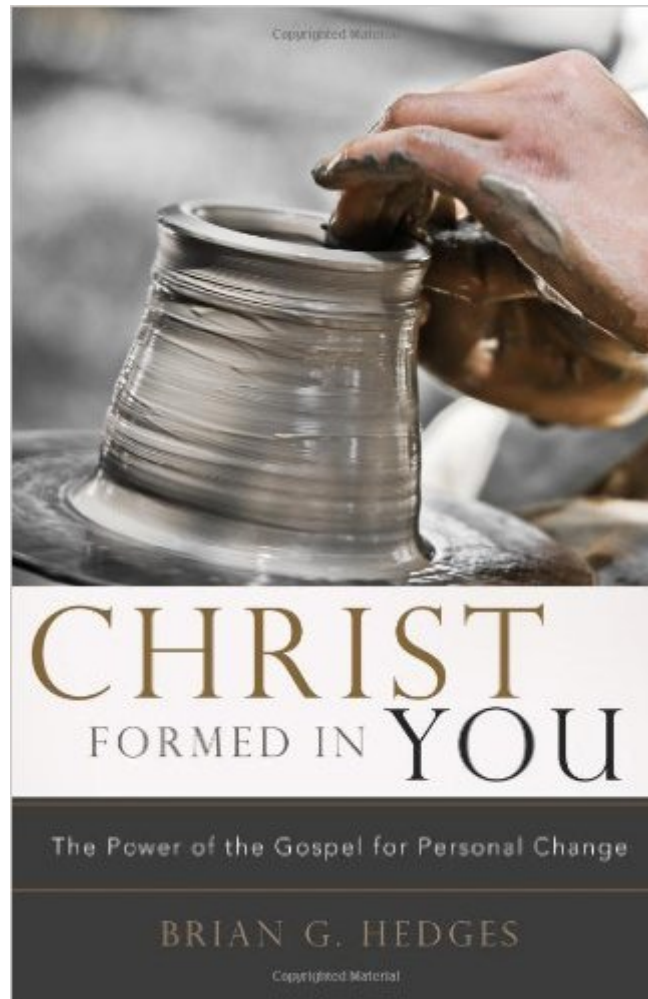


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# Christ Formed In You: The Power Of The Gospel For Personal Change



## Synopsis

The central claim in *Christ Formed in You* is that it is God's purpose to change us by progressively making us more like Jesus, and that this happens only as we understand and apply the gospel to our lives. In the pages that follow we will explore the transforming power of the gospel from several angles. Part One focuses on the foundations for personal change. We will look at God's ultimate goal in transforming us (Chapter One); the key to transformation, which is the gospel itself (Chapter Two); and the application of the gospel to our lives in three specific ways (Chapters Three, Four, and Five). Part Two then takes up the pattern of personal change. We will explore the captivating beauty of gospel holiness (Chapter Six); with its demands that we both kill sin (Chapter Seven); and grow in grace by the power of the Spirit (Chapter Eight); and the quest for joy that motivates us in this pursuit and strengthens us in the battle for holiness (Chapter Nine). Part Three of the book focuses on the means of personal change, the tools God uses to transform us. These final three chapters, while building on the foundation of the gospel discussed earlier in the book, are the most practical. We will learn how God uses spiritual disciplines (Chapter Ten); suffering (Chapter Eleven); and personal relationships in the body of Christ (Chapter Twelve) to conform us to the image of Christ. In each of these chapters, my aim has been to connect the dots between the gospel, the goal of Christlikeness, and the specific aspect of spirituality under discussion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book had at least three things going for it before I even picked it up - the publisher (Shepherd

Press, whose books I regularly enjoy), the endorsements (Tripp and Lundgaard among others), and most of all the topic...books on spiritual formation abound, but good books are far less frequent. Scanning the contents and forward (by Don Whitney) confirmed my desire to invest the time in reading the book, as well as the works referenced (by men such as Ferguson, Lloyd Jones, Carson, MacArthur, Ryle, Owen, Packer and others). Hedges begins by outlining his aim: mapping the trail to Christlikeness. He describes many of the ways in which the gospel is warped, and seeks to trace a path between legalism and cheap grace towards Christ, and this is what the gospel is all about - it is simply the 'implanting, writing and living out the gospel in our lives.' He will do this with clear writing, sound doctrine and a healthily spattering of examples and references to literature (Narnia, Middle Earth and others being prominent!) The first section covers The Foundation of personal Change, covering 5 chapters (The Goal, the Gospel, Justification, the Heart and Sanctification). The first 2 chapters outline what the gospel is, and the reader should not skip past these as they are a very helpful recap of the gospel message and foundation for what comes afterwards. In chapter 1 Hedges outlines the grand themes of the story: Scripture, Creation, Fall and Redemption, showing that God's purpose is to restore the shattered image in ever deeper conformity to Christ.

Christ Formed in You; The Power of the Gospel for Personal Change. Brian Hedges (Review) Christ Formed in You; The Power of the Gospel for Personal Change is a promising and compelling title. It is promising because it suggests it is the Christian gospel that empowers change. It is compelling because of the universal longing for change. Personal change is big business in our world. People want to change. They know they need to change. To at least some degree, they desire personal change. Thousands upon thousands of books are sold in America every day on aspects of personal change. People are not unaware of their need for personal change. They are not unwilling or disinterested in change. They are, however, often lacking desire and power for personal change. Popular studies suggest that many who claim to follow Christ are not different from those around them who make no such claim. This is one of many reasons professing Christians need to experience personal transformation. In Christ Formed in You, Hedges deals with the foundations for personal change, the pattern of personal change, and the means of personal change. Hedges states early that his "...central claim in Christ Formed in You is that it is God's purpose to change us by progressively making us more like Jesus, and that this happens only as we understand and apply the gospel to our lives." The book is about change. It is about a miraculous and lasting kind of change the Bible calls transformation. It is about a miraculous transformation that results in holiness. Hedges book is not just about how to be saved by the gospel, but how to be made

progressively holy by the gospel. Does that work? How does that work? Hedges answers these questions.

While his teenage peers worried about little more than Friday's exam over Romeo and Juliet, Brian Hedges was contemplating a call to preach. He answered that call at the age of eighteen. Since then, between serving in a para-church ministry and preaching in his local church, Hedges has gained eighteen years of ministry experience. That's not bad for a 36 year old. Hedges' preaching is characterized by clear, well-organized, well-illustrated, expository sermons that are full of practical application. And in his first book, *Christ Formed in You*, he proves that he can deliver as powerful and practical a message in writing as he can in preaching. In the foreword, Donald Whitney captures the essence of *Christ Formed in You*: "Brian Hedges understands that the pursuit of "the holiness without which no one will see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14) requires a clear understanding of the Gospel. For it is in the Gospel that we see Christ in His glory most clearly. And the better we understand and feast our souls on the Gospel of Christ, the more intimate with and like Jesus we become." The twelve chapters in *Christ Formed in You* are divided under three headings: Part 1: The Foundations of Personal Change Part 2: The Path of Personal Change Part 3: The Means of Personal Change In Part 1, Hedges gives an in-depth explanation of the gospel and its various aspects. These chapters are foundational to the book, just as a correct understanding of the gospel is foundational to any progress in holiness. Change "happens only as we understand and apply the gospel to our lives." And central to the gospel is Jesus Christ, our example of perfect holiness. Hedges writes: "Jesus is the true *Imago Dei*, the true image of God.

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