

## You're Greater Than a Transformer

One of the most successful toy lines ever are Transformers. Apparently, this has nothing to do with getting electricity to your house; they're all about toy alien robots that transform into vehicles, animals, and I don't know, maybe Cuisinart blenders. Transformers became even more popular with a whole string of movies built on the same premise.



I was already an adult when Transformers were first produced, and my sons never got into it, so the popularity is lost of me. After seeing the first movie in 2007, I told a co-worker I thought it was the dumbest movie I had ever seen, and I hurt his feelings. He loved Transformers as a kid. So, my apologies to all your 80s kids.

I'm no toy CEO and apparently I'm no expert on what kids love. (I'm happy with a book—even one with no pictures.) But I can tell you that Transformers may be a great idea for the toy industry, but it's a lousy idea for the Christian life.

*Whoa, Lynn, back off. Doesn't the Bible say Christians are to be transformed?*

- We are to “put on the new self. **You are being renewed** in knowledge according to the image of your Creator” (Col. 3:10).
- We are to “to take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, **to be renewed** in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth” (Eph. 4:22-24).
- “Do not be conformed to this age, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2).

Yes, the Bible uses a lot of imagery that reflects the idea that we are to change and be transformed. But let me point to two truths that make us far greater than any toy.

1. **We don't transform ourselves.** In the three passages above, the highlighted phrases are in the passive voice, meaning this is not action we do, but action done to us. And in this case, it is God who transforms us. As we place ourselves under the lordship of Christ, God does the work of transforming us to be like Christ.
2. **Transformation only goes one way.** Transformer toys can change from a robot into a vehicle and then change back again. In Christ, we do not “untransform” back to what we were. A lot of people attempt to transform themselves, turning over a new life or working hard to be better people. However, that's hard work and, frankly, we're not good at it. We tire of the effort and fall back into our old ways. But when we place our lives in His hands, submitting to Him and letting His Holy Spirit take control, He does the work of changing our thoughts, convicting us of sins, and leading us to drop bad habits for good ones. It's His work.

Unlike some plastic toy that an eight-year-old can quickly manipulate to look like a truck (and back), God's transforming work in my life has often been slow. But the transformation is there. I'm more like Jesus now than I was last year ... ten years ago ... forty years ago. I'm not there yet, but I'm making progress. I am being transformed!

“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14).