



Recap | Dr. Dorothy Dye. | Sunday, August 9, 2026

Theme: *Decision vs. Commitment; Conformation or Transformation*

Key Text: Romans 12:1–2

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice... be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

1. Framing the Series: Decision vs. Commitment, Conformation vs. Transformation

Mama D opened by connecting this lesson to the ongoing series on **obedience**, **living by faith**, and being in a **continual process of transformation**. She emphasized:

- Transformation is **ongoing**, not a one-time event.
- We are **always** either:
 - **Conforming** to the world, or
 - Being **transformed** by the Word and the Spirit.

She then broke down the **language**:

- **Prefix “con-”:** *together with*
- **Prefix “trans-”:** *change in form*
- **Suffix “-ation”:** *a process / continuous action*

So:

- **Conformation** – going *together with* the world; adopting its form; going whichever way the wind (or crowd) blows.
- **Transformation** – an ongoing *change in form*; spiritual metamorphosis through the Word and Spirit.

She also defined:

- **Decision** – a *choice* you make.
- **Commitment** – a *lifestyle change* based on that decision. Decisions must be followed by commitments.

2. Conformed or Transformed: Who/What Is Moving You?

Mama D contrasted being:

- **Conformed** – complying with the world, crowd mentality, “wishy-washy,” going with the majority without thinking.
- **Transformed** – being renewed, changed from the inside out by the Word and Spirit.

She asked:

Are you moved by:

- The *winds of society*, or
- The *wind of the Holy Spirit*?

There are only **two ways**:

- The **broad way** (conformation; crowd), or
- The **narrow way** (transformation; commitment to God).



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Key scriptures Tutu read:

- **Matthew 7:13–14** – wide gate vs. narrow gate
- **Psalm 1:1–2** – blessed is the one who *doesn't* walk/stand/sit with the ungodly, but *delights* and *meditates* in God's law.

Mama D stressed:

There is **no DMZ (no neutral zone)**. You are either:

- On the **broad way** of conformity, or On the **narrow way** of transformation and committed faith.

3. Decision → Commitment: Ruth as the Example

Under “**Decision leads to commitments**,” Mama D used **Ruth 1**:

- Naomi's family leaves **Bethlehem-Judah** (“house of bread and praise”) during famine and goes to **Moab** (a place God calls “my washpot,” symbol of unbelief and spiritual filth).
- In Moab, Naomi's husband dies; her two sons marry Moabite women (Orpah and Ruth); both sons die.
- Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem-Judah.
 - **Both daughters-in-law initially decide** to go with her.
 - But when Naomi explains the hard reality ahead, **Orpah turns back**. Her *decision* did **not** become *commitment*.
 - **Ruth, however, clings to Naomi**. She goes beyond decision and **makes a covenant commitment**: Ruth 1:16–17.

Key point:

- **Ruth's faith showed in her commitment.**
- Because of that **committed faith**, she is brought into the **genealogy of Jesus**.
- “Whatever you are committed to—that's where your faith really is.”

4. What Faith Is (and Is Not)

Mama D reframed faith:

Faith is NOT:

- An *event* or an emotional high.
- Just God answering prayers the way you want.
- “Name it and claim it,” having money, houses, or perfect health.
- Measured by material possessions (unsaved people have those too).

Faith IS:

- A **lifestyle** – consistent, daily, ongoing.
- **Living** Proverbs 3:5–6 and Romans 12:1–2: Trust in the Lord with *all* your heart. Lean *not* on your own understanding. In *all* your ways acknowledge Him.
 - Present your body as a living sacrifice.
 - Don't be conformed; be transformed by renewing your mind.



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- **Recognizing who God is** in your life and that He's in control.
- **Commitment** to the decision to follow Jesus.
- **Stability** in a world of instability:
 - Your hope in a hopeless world,
 - Your peace in storms,
 - Your shelter in the fire.

She emphasized:

- **Faith is the result of God's faithfulness.**
- **Faith belongs to God;** He gives it as a gift.
 - **Ephesians 2:8** – saved by grace *through faith*, and **that** is the gift of God.
 - **Galatians 2:20** – “The life I now live in the flesh I live **by the faith of the Son of God...**”
God gives you **His** faith so you can trust Him and be changed.

5. Faith and the Unseen: Creation as Evidence

Mama D connected **faith** to how we see **creation**:

- **Hebrews 11:1–3** – faith is the substance of what we hope for and the evidence of what we *do not* see.
By faith we understand the worlds were framed by the Word of God.
- What we **see** (sun, sky, moon, stars, order of the universe) should build our faith in the **God we don't see**.

Scriptures Tutu read:

- **Psalm 19:1–6** – the heavens declare God's glory; creation speaks everywhere, in every language.
- **Romans 1:19–20** – God's invisible attributes are clearly seen through what He made, so humanity is **without excuse**.

Point:

Even if you never hear a formal sermon, **creation itself** testifies that **there is a Creator**. That should move you toward **faith and commitment**, not unbelief and conformity.

6. Trials: “When,” Not “If”

Mama D moved to **how faith operates in trials**:

- **James 1:2–4** – “Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations...”
 - **Not “if” but “when”** – trials are guaranteed.
 - Trials test your faith and produce **patience** (endurance, staying power).
- **Job 14:1** – life is “few days and full of trouble.”

Key points:

- **Everyone** (saved or unsaved, rich or poor) has trials.
- **Money** doesn't stop trials:
- She cited Solomon in **Ecclesiastes 2:4–11**:
 - Houses, vineyards, servants, gold, entertainment—*everything* his eyes desired.



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- His conclusion: “**All is vanity and vexation of spirit.**”
- Rich people **also** struggle with depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. Life’s issues **touch everyone**.

So the question isn’t **whether** you have trials, but:

What is your **perspective** and **anchor** in the trials?

For the Christian:

- Trials are used by God in the **transformation process**:
 - To develop patience and character.
 - To strengthen your **vertical** relationship so you can handle **horizontal** life issues.
- You don’t pray to *avoid* all trouble; you learn to **trust God in it**.

7. Committed Faith: Contending and Fighting for It

She highlighted **Jude 3** and **1 Timothy 6:12**:

- “**Earnestly contend for the faith**” – be serious, purposeful, and determined about your faith.
- “**Fight the good fight of faith**” – same sense: maintain, stand fast, be steadfast and unmovable.

Faith requires:

- **Seriousness** – no “in and out.” **Stability** – rooted, not swayed by every wind.
- **Commitment** – ongoing choice to stand on God’s Word even when hurt, crying, or overwhelmed.

God **never** said: You wouldn’t hurt, You wouldn’t cry, You wouldn’t feel overwhelmed.

He did promise: **Presence, Purpose, Power** in the midst of it.

Key scriptures:

- **Psalm 61:2** – “When my heart is overwhelmed... lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.”
- **Isaiah 43:2** – *When* you pass through waters, rivers, and fire:
- **Waters** – “I will be with you.” **Rivers** – “They shall not overflow you.” **Fire** – “You shall not be burned.”

Note the repeated “**when**” – trials are certain, but so is **God’s presence and protection**.

8. God in the Cloud and in the Fire

Mama D then pointed to Israel’s wilderness journey as a model of **committed faith and God’s guidance**:

- **Exodus 13:21–22** – God goes before Israel:
 - **Pillar of cloud by day** – to lead them.
 - **Pillar of fire by night** – to give them light.

Key point: God gave Israel a **visible sign** of His presence, to train them:

- To know He was with them **in the cloud and in the fire**.
- So that later, even without those visible signs, they would **trust His Word and presence by faith**.

New Testament echo: **Hebrews 13:5** – “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

So for us:

- God is *still* present in the clouds and fires of our lives.
- Each trial is part of “**all things**” in **Romans 8:28** – working together for our good.



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9. God “Did It on Purpose”: Hemmed In for His Glory

Finally, Mama D unpacked **Exodus 14:1–4**:

- God **instructs** Moses where to camp—in a rough place:
 - Red Sea in front,
 - Pharaoh’s army behind,
 - Hemmed in on both sides.
- She emphasized: **God did it on purpose**:
 - For **His glory**,
 - To show His power to Egypt,
 - To prove Himself to His own people,
 - To teach them **how to trust Him**.

This became her closing emphasis:

- God sometimes **leads us** into tight, impossible places:
 - Not to destroy us,
 - But to show Himself strong,
 - To build **committed faith** and **deep transformation**.
- When you look at your own “hemmed in” situations, you can say:
 - “God, you did this on purpose—for Your purpose.”

Her final thrust:

- **God wants commitment, not just decisions.**
- He wants you to:
 - Trust Him with all your heart,
 - Refuse conformity to the world,
 - Embrace the ongoing **process of transformation**,
 - And live with a **committed faith** that stands firm in clouds, fire, and rough places—knowing He is with you and will never leave you.

Big Takeaways in One Glance

- You are always either **conforming** to the world or being **transformed** by the Word. There is no middle ground.
- A **decision** (like Ruth’s) must be followed by **commitment**, or it will collapse like Orpah’s.
- **Faith is a lifestyle**, not a moment. It is measured by **who has you**, not what you have.
- Trials are **when**, not **if**—but they are tools in God’s hand to **grow patience and depth**.
- God is present **in the clouds and in the fire**. He sometimes leads you into hard places **on purpose** so you can see His power and grow a **committed, transformed faith**.