

Nothing Has Changed If You Haven't Changed

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 says "To every [thing there is] a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die;

A time to plant and a time to pluck up [that which is] planted;

A time to kill and a time to heal;

A time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace".

This is probably one of, if not, the most quoted scripture when it comes to dealing with change.

So today we are using this scripture and we are going to be dealing with the change. Understand that Nothing changes if Nothing changes.

The statement "Change is inevitable; misery is optional" is truer than many of us care to admit.

Somehow, we imagine that it is possible to live without change. However, we can no more live and not have change than we can jump without feeling the impact of gravity.

Therefore, to live is to change, and any thought that we can avoid change in life is pure illusion.

Women have rights just like men because something had changed.

I can try to resist change and try to stay the way I am or release my resistance to change.

But the Bible says in Hebrews 12:1 "lay aside every weight", in other words there is some stuff that has to change.

There is a saying that goes:- "NOTHING CHANGES IF NOTHING CHANGES AND IF I KEEP DOING WHAT I'VE ALWAYS DONE, I'LL KEEP GETTING WHAT I'VE ALWAYS GOT AND WILL KEEP FEELING WHAT I ALWAYS FELT."

That is a true statement because to do the same thing over and over without ever having something change and you keep looking for a different outcome to happen.

Albert Einstein said"- "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result"

1. "Nothing changes if nothing changes, and if I keep doing what I've always done, I'll keep getting what I've always got, and will keep feeling what I always felt."

2. Although this is a true statement it is just another way of saying that you are stuck in a rut.

One of the definitions of rut is "A fixed, usually boring routine" If you continue to do the same thing in that rut you will stay in that rut.

Unless there is a change we will be stuck in the same rut just spinning our wheels and going nowhere.

Many people are stuck in a rut in their lives they continually do the same thing over and over again only going deeper and deeper into the rut they are currently in.

People refuse to change because their mindset is that I am comfortable or I can control what I am doing and they are fearful of change.

Woodrow Wilson's gave a very wise warning: "If you want to make enemies try to change something."

Change can be very threatening. WHY – because change will bring with it a level of uncertainty and because of that uncertainty people develop an attitude or spirit of fear –

2nd Timothy 1:7 says "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind".

Therefore we should not be fearful of change. However, because of this attitude or spirit of fear people sometimes unconsciously and sometimes consciously become ineffective and irrelevant and ultimately die all because they refused to change.

It happens with individuals, marriages, businesses, organizations, and unfortunately with some churches. WATCH THIS:-

Even the people of Christ's day who were looking for and expecting the

promised Messiah didn't accept him when he came because he didn't come the way they expected him to come, nor did he do what they wanted him to do (that is, overthrow the oppressing Roman rule).

As a result they rejected Christ, the Messiah and clung to their irrelevant religious traditions and missed out on the opportunity to change.

{One of the main reasons people don't want to serve God is because it changes you and if it hasn't changed you than you probably not living for God.}

A lot of people go through the motions of Christianity but they never change their lives nor their life style.

2 Cor 5:17... **Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

The simple interpretation of this scripture is change.

Traditions and rituals are effective as long as they are relevant.

Refusal to change is called stubbornness and the Bible talks about stubbornness some 28 times and 19 more times it uses the word "stiff-necked," these words are talking about people that refuse to change.

- a. Understand God cannot allow people to lead comfortable lives when stubbornness separates them from Him.
- b. God wants everyone to let go of stubbornness and return to Him – in other words change.

While truth never changes, times change, people change, situations change and methods change so when our traditions are no longer relevant, we need to be open to change – WHY - for to live is to grow; to grow is to change.

It is not smart to continue to do the same thing and think something different is going to happen.

There's a saying that goes prayer changes things.

It's not very smart to pray and not expect change to take place.

When you pray expect change to take place Job 22:8 says **"Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee and the light shall shine upon thy ways"**.

If the church is growing, people are coming in, prayers are being

answered **WATCH THIS:– that’s change.**

Rather everyone likes it or not its change and things are changing because prayer changes things.

John 14:6 says “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”.

Jesus said He was truth - Hebrews 13:8 says “Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever”.

Jesus never changes, since Jesus is the Word of God in the flesh –God’s word never changes, therefore, if it is in the Word of God it can’t change regardless of whose feelings are hurt or what laws are passed.

(There are some things that will change in our life and there are some things that will never change and we must be able to accept that which we cannot change regardless if we like it or not.

We can’t change our past but we can change our present situation that will ultimately change your future.)

Living one day at a time; Enjoying one moment at a time; Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace.

Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; That I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him Forever in the next.

One of the most successful programs to help people with their chronic struggles has been the 12 step program. All 12 step recovery programs start essentially the same way:

Step 1 is about taking a step ---- I admit to myself that something is seriously wrong in my life.

- I have made a mess of my life. **I admit this and quit trying to play games with myself.**
- I realize that my life has become unmanageable in many ways. It is not under my control anymore.

I do things that I later regret doing and tell myself that I will not do them again. But I do.

I keep on doing them, in spite of my regrets, my denials, my vows, my

cover-ups and my facades.

The Bible says it like this in Romans 7 “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

If then I do that which I would not I consent unto the law that [it is] good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Step 1 is all about brokenness anybody broken?

Step 2 is a step of hope, faith and realization. It is a big step towards God. In essence it says: In spite of all of the failures in my own life - all of the broken promises, hard feelings, disappointments, failures, destructive behavior, hatred, anxiety, depression or guilt - there is still hope.

There is hope because greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world and with Christ all things are possible. I am incapable of doing it myself, I need God's help.

Philippians 3:13-14 says “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but [this] one thing [I do], forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”.

Step 2 is all about honesty! You must be honest with yourself and say I can't make it on my own, I have tried it and I made a mess of my life. I don't have it all together I need to change.

Step 3 is a step of letting go. I have made a conscious and willful decision to turn my will and all my life's circumstances over to the care of God.

1st Peter 5:6-7 says “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you”.

Step 3 is all about letting go. Now you don't have to be an alcoholic or an addict for these things to help. In fact, these are the essential first steps any of us must take if we are to grow in our walk with the Lord. Remember change must happen in life, for to live is to grow; to grow is to change.

STEP 1 BROKENNESS - For Psalm 51:17 says “The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise”.

This is I have been broken, my life is messed up, I am a shamed of the

things I have done.

When I look in the mirror I no longer can stand to see what I see because that's not me anymore. I am broken so Lord I'm giving it all to you. It's messed up, but I am ready for a change.

Lord I need you to put the shattered pieces of my life back together.

Isaiah 61:3 says "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified".

- God wants to take your brokenness and put you together a new.
- Nothing Changes if Nothing Changes.

STEP 2 HOPE, FAITH AND REALIZATION – My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus Christ and righteousness.

Romans 5:2 "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God".

FAITH – Hebrews 11:1 says "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen".

I'm standing at the break of darkness in my life, I don't know where the next step is going to take me, but I have faith that God will change my situation around. WHY – REALIZATION

I realize that in myself I have made a mess of things, but I realize what the Bible says in Philippians 4:3 says "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me".

STEP 3 LETTING GO AND RELINQUISHMENT – you can't hold on to stuff and expect things to change for nothing changes if nothing changes.

When you make up in your mind to let go of some stuff then God can do what no other power can do. 1st Peter 5:7 says "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you"

If you want things to change you must cast off some stuff. Understand that God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way.

If you are going to grow in your walk, you must be willing to allow God to

help you to change, to be more and more like Jesus.

Nothing changes if nothing changes. If you came up for prayer at altar call and got a good blessing 6 months ago and you and that man or you and that woman are still living together and you are not married – nothing has changed you are still living in sin and are on your way to hell –

1. WHY – because nothing changes if nothing changes.
2. You might say well I don't believe that God would send me to hell.

1st Corinthians 6:9-10 says **“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”**

Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God”.

Nothing changes if nothing changes. If you come to church every Sunday, pay you tithes and offerings, and even sing the praise songs loud and with enthusiasm, but you still have the same carnal mind then nothing in your life has changed because your mind is still the same.

Romans 8:7 says **“Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be”**. So we see that this carnal mind must be changed for nothing changes if nothing changes –

Romans 12 :2 says **“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”**.

TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND – Transform means to undergo a change in the structure a genetic modification.

A caterpillar is not a beautiful creature, it crawls around on the ground vulnerable to predators, but at some point in its life it under goes a transformation both physically and mentally.

The transformation physically causes the genetic structure to change and produces wings of a multitude of colors, that makes it possible for the new

creature to fly and look prettier than before, but also there's a transformation that takes place in the mind.

When it was a caterpillar all it could do was crawl around but after the transformation in the mind that caterpillar all of a sudden realizes he can fly. He can rise above being stepped on he can out maneuver its predators. If there hadn't been a change then nothing would have changed.

WATCH THIS:- 2nd Corinthians 5:17 says **"Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"**.

YOU CANNOT BE IN CHRIST AND STILL DO WHAT YOU WERE DOING BEFORE YOU GOT IN CHRIST –

WHY – BECAUSE IF YOU ARE STILL DOING THE SAME THING.
THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE AND NOTHING CHANGES IF NOTHING CHANGES.

You must have a changed mind changed heart a changed walk changed talk a changed life.

1. **Things you used to do you can't do anymore –**
2. **Why – because of change.**
3. **Places you used to go you can't go anymore –**
4. **Why – because of change. Nothing changes if nothing changes.**

CLOSING: - My mind goes to the 10 men in the Bible that had leprosy. Luke 17:11-17

"And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, were there not

ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"

I like to believe in my spiritual imagination that when they got in front of the priest, no doubt someone said, Priest after you pronounced us unclean, after you stripped us of all our dignity and possessions, after you made us to yell unclean, after you left us out there all alone to die, after all we been through,

I just want to ask you the question "HOW DO YOU LIKE ME NOW"

Sin is a form of leprosy that it eats slowly away at a person killing them in a very humiliating, degrading, uncomfortable way.

In sin we are clothed in corruption, our identity is taken away you look in the mirror and don't even realize that you are a child of God. A spiritual vale is placed over our eyes so that we are blinded to the truth.

The devil humiliates you and causes you to degrade your body. He destroys your reputation, separates you from those that love you, leaves you out there in sin to die all alone.

But one day you meet Jesus and cry unto Him Lord have mercy on me and He picks you up and turns you around, changes you into a new creature, old things are passes away and behold all things have become new.

A. You get a new walk, a new talk, a new point of view,

B. you get a new attitude. No longer are you like you used to be, you've been changed.

Something changed because something changed. The devil had a hold on me, but Jesus set me free.

You can't say that if nothing changes. WHY – because nothing changes if nothing changes.

There's a song that I heard sung that goes "I went to a meeting one night and my heart wasn't right, but something got a hold of me".

It was the Holy Ghost it changed me. The Holy Ghost made me anew. It was the Holy Ghost. And now I am no longer the same.

As long as you stay in that condition you are always going to get the same results, but if you would just change and begin to make the steps toward

God, He will turn your situation around.

Remember Nothing Changes if Nothing Changes.

You must make up in your mind that I am sick and tired of being sick and tired.

You must change from being dead in sin to being alive in Christ.

From lost to found. From hurt to healed from sad to happy from out of my mind to being in perfect peace.

TAKE THAT FIRST STEP - WHY – because change begins with that 1st step and Nothing Changes if Nothing Changes.

But there is still hope Let God help you make the changes in your life. God loves you and he wants more than anything to help you make it to heaven. Christ died for us to help us go from a sinful life to a life that is pleasing to God.

Some are making great changes a little at a time that is called growing and I am glad to see such a change in your life.

The more you are willing to change the more God will use you and then you will be able to help others grow gracefully in the love of God.