



Week Eight

April 1 - 7

Following Christ Together Through the Prayer Action Plan

IS CHANGE A BAD THING?

Mark Twain once said, "The only person who likes change is a wet baby." Can I get an, "Amen"? I do not think I have ever met a person who just loves change! One of the reasons I have always loved working with teenagers is that they kind of, sometimes, don't mind change, that much.

The truth is no one likes change. Some people are able to roll with the punches, so to speak, but others are very resistant to it. There are some people that find that change causes anxiety, or feelings of fear and frustration. Why? Why does change affect us so? Can anything good come from change?

The truth, whether we like it or not, is that the Bible is a book about changes. Those handled well resulted in great gains, and those handled poorly resulted in great losses.

In God's Word today we want to look at a passage that speaks to just one of the changes that God is always at work to bring about: the transformation of a life!

GOD'S WORD

¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. ¹⁷Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰But that is not the way you learned Christ! – ²¹assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²²to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:15-24 (ESV)

When I read this passage I immediately think about life in general. We start off as little babies, completely dependent on everyone else for everything.

Can you imagine if that was it, if that's where we stayed for the rest of our lives? That would be insane! Instead we grow. Our bodies are amazing things, and when everything works together, we gain the ability to walk on our own, and then run, and pick up our spoon and fork so we can feed ourselves. And then our brain develops so that we can think, make choices, and learn how to do all sorts of things so we can get jobs, start families, make budgets, pay bills, and all other kinds of things!

Well, our Christian lives work the same way. When we put our faith in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, He begins a work in us! He takes a person who was dead in their sins and brings them to life, to make them born again. Well, in order to become the person God wants you to be you need to grow. It all starts with love, which is the best motivator there is! Remember our study of 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 this past Sunday? Read it again. His love changes us and motivates us to pursue Him with our lives. And when we do that, as we pursue him through prayer, reading the Bible, serving Him, and sharing His love with others, HE CHANGES US! It's inevitable! You can't be in the presence of a holy, righteous and loving God and not be changed!

Well, it's no secret that change is happening all around us. Culture, society, belief systems, technology, worldviews, all these things are changing rapidly. If you buy a new piece of tech today, tomorrow it will be outdated. That's the world we've been called to go into and share Jesus with, and in order to do that it means our methods, our systems, our programs need to change too.

But here's the best news ever for people who don't love change. GOD NEVER CHANGES! This is the foundation for our peace, security and confidence. It's the anchor for dealing with all changes because it's the one thing that can be counted on to not change! Hebrews 13:8 says "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (ESV)

APPLY THE WORD

Take a moment and think about how you handle change. Are you someone who panics, or freaks out with change? Are you someone who immediately goes negative when you hear about change?

The bigger question then is *why*? Why do you respond to change the way you do? Could it be that you have a trust issue? Is it hard for you to trust that God is sovereign? Or could it be that you are not pursuing God with your life and allowing him to transform you into who you were created to be? Are you pursuing things other than God, and preventing growth in your life? Are you looking and thinking like someone who has been given NEW LIFE?

PRAY

Ask God to give you a passion for Him like never before! Ask Him to give you a passion for prayer, a passion for His Word and a passion for the lost! He will answer that prayer and you will see your life CHANGE!

Everyone a Disciple. Everyone a Disciple Maker.