



Change for the Better

Change for the Better

- Change is part of life under the sun
 - Ecc. 3:1 - “To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven”
- God expects men to change for their spiritual well-being
 - Psalm 55:19 - “God will hear, and afflict them, Even He who abides from of old. Because they do not change, Therefore they do not fear God.”
- Jesus required change for the better
 - Matt. 18:3 - “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Change for the Better

- “Some changes look negative on the surface but you will soon realize that space is being created in your life for something new to emerge. Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything” (*George Bernard Shaw*).
- “We are taught you must blame your father, your sisters, your brothers, the school, the teachers - but never blame yourself. It's never your fault. But it's always your fault, because if you wanted to change you're the one who has got to change” (*Katharine Hepburn, Me: Stories of My Life*).
- “Not all change is good, only change for the better.”

Some Things Cannot And Should Not Change

- God
 - Mal. 3:6 - "For I am the LORD, I do not change"
 - James 1:17 - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."
- Jesus
 - Heb. 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Some Things Cannot And Should Not Change

- God's word
 - Matt. 24:35 - "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."
 - 1Peter 1:23 - "Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever."
 - 2Thes. 2:15 - "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle."
 - 2Tim. 1:13 - "Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus."

A Change In Cognition

- The thief on the cross
 - Luke 23:39-43 - “Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us. 40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong. 42 Then he said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. 43 And Jesus said to him, Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

A Change In Cognition

- Shame for the past
 - Rom. 6:21 - “What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.”

A Change In Cognition

- Our thinking must change in order to be in Christ and to remain in Christ
 - Rom. 12:2-3 - “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”

A Change In Cognition

- Our thinking must change in order to be in Christ and to remain in Christ
 - Col. 3:9-10 - “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him”
 - Phil. 4:8 - “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.”

A Change In Condition

- From the kingdom of darkness to kingdom of the Son of His love
 - Col. 1:13 - “He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love”
- From death to life
 - 1John 3:14 - “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.”
- Old things become new creations
 - 2Cor. 5:17 - “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

A Change In Condition

- Children of wrath become adopted children of God
 - Eph. 2:1-3 - “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”

- Eph. 1:3-11 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, 10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. 11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will”

A Change In Conduct

- Sin must become past behavior no longer engaged
 - 1Cor. 6:9-11 - “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

A Change In Conduct

- Grace requires godly living
 - Titus 2:11-12 - “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age”

A Change In Conduct

- The change in conduct must be visible
 - 1Peter 4:4 - “In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.”
- When Christ lives in us, the change comes from within
 - Gal. 2:20 - “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

A Change In Conduct

- One gives all of his life to God Who facilitated the change
 - 1Cor. 6:19-20 - “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”

A Change In Life's Close

- Once we were without hope
 - Eph. 2:12-13 - “That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”
 - Col. 1:21-23 - “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard.”

A Change In Life's Close

- Change is entirely up to us
 - Rom. 6:23 - “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- If we are willing to change our cognition and conduct, God will change our condition and the close of our lives.