

The Encouragement Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4

October 31, 2008

....BUT LET US
ENCOURAGE ONE
ANOTHER-AND
ALL THE MORE AS
YOU SEE THE DAY
APPROACHING.

HEBREWS 10:25

CHANGE

CHANGE— the “buzz” word the Democrats or the Obama campaign. Some of the slogans we have seen are - “Vote Change”; “Change We Believe In”; “Stand for Change”; “We Believe in Change”; “Plan for Change”; and “Hope for Change”. The Republicans also jumped on this slogan after it was coined by the Democratic party. I am not writing to endorse a candidate. However, I am writing to say that everyone in our nation and the world knows one thing—“It is time to CHANGE It’s all around us – we have a financial crisis, a moral crisis, spiritual crisis, personal problems, just a lot of issues and the resolution is

CHANGE!

It is easy to say “CHANGE”, but to “do” change, that’s another matter. We are all prone to ruts, getting comfortable, creating comfort zones and wanting to keep things just the way they are. Right? If you have ever tried to change your eating habits or add exercise to the schedule, it is very hard. For me, saying that I am going to get up early to seek the Lord is a challenge. I want to get every one of my “Zzzzz’s”. But, I try. :-)

CHANGE definitely isn’t always easy, but it is something we will always have to do in some area or areas of life as long as we live.

CHANGE Defined-

1) To make different: Alter, to give a totally different form or appearance to: Transform; 2) To lay aside, abandon, or leave for another: switch; and 3) To become different; the act, process, or result of changing; **Transition** from

one state or phase to another. The core meaning is to make or become different

Synonyms alter, modify mutate turn, vary,

Transition is the passage from one place or state to another.

Who Should Change

Everybody. No matter who you are. Your rank, stature, position of authority, age, or status does not matter. No one is exempt. Everybody will change except for ONE – and that is God (See Mal. 3:6 a).

Although God does not change, He may change His methods. For example, **Preaching**- the gospel. You can hear the gospel on TV 24-7 and the internet. It is no long limited to certain hours of a church service or radio station. Another example is, **Our way of communicating**. In addition to regular house phones and fax machines, we have cell phones, e-mail, txt messaging, and blogs. God uses all of these methods to communicate all day and night globally. Lastly, (just as an aside) we can shop till we drop after the malls are closed because we can make purchases at any time, 24-7 anywhere in the world by accessing the internet.

Some change is not always a welcomed change because it is outside of our control. I call it “forced” change. Like the gas prices, grocery prices, air fare, tuition, electricity and you name the rest. We are all paying 2008 costs. The price of bread is no longer 10 cents.... as I heard it was at one time. If you are look-

ing for bread to be 10 cents and refuse to pay today’s costs, you will starve or make your own bread. Even that will cost more than 10 cents – per loaf.

Why Change – especially if it isn’t broke?

- 1) **Change cycles are necessary elements of life.** If we all stayed the same what would we look like, where would we be financially, personally, spiritually, etc. To move forward we all must change.
- 2) **Change for health reasons (both natural and spiritual)** In the natural 9-month process, to birth, the health of the child and mother are linked together. This process is defined by constant change—daily, weekly and monthly.
 - a) It is essential for the mother to eat right. The diet can and will affect the child’s development. **Our spiritual diet will affect our development into a mature man or woman.**
 - b) Refusal to change will cause deformation (improper development) or death of the child. Spiritually, the refusal to change can cause spiritual deformation or death (spiritual, relational, etc.)
- 3) **Change because there is a need for a different result.** Things are not always resolved the same way. Adding any two of the same numbers will always yield the same result. Ex. 4+2=6 and 2+4= 6. If I want another outcome (higher

CHANGE—Transition from one state to another.....

or lower), I have to change the numbers in the equation. If we want another result we must change. We need new measures of the Spirit of God and constant upgrades. We need to experience something larger or bigger than what we have already experienced because God is much bigger than our last experience. We cannot continue to use some of the same methods (*Method- mode or procedure for accomplishing something*) because that method may be outdated.

4) CHANGE is what the Lord requires.

Jeremiah 7:1. (Amend - Make Well -Concord-; remove error, modify, improve, alter in minor details) The children of Israel had a problem with change and in this verse they are being admonished to change. In Exodus, we find that they could not renew their mind to the promise of God and wandered for 40 years in the wilderness. They would not renew their mind to think like children of the King. They actually had a defeatism mind set. They wanted to go back to Egypt because their minds could not see the past as the past and look forward to the future that God promised. **If we do not amend our ways, we will wander aimlessly like the children of Israel.**

5) CHANGE because seasons change.

We do not (should not) wear a coat with down feathers in 100° weather. Nor should we wear shorts & sandals in 32° weather. Seasons change and so should we. We will either burn up or freeze. What season is it for you? Doing the wrong thing in the wrong season is non-productive. Strive to be in the "right" season doing the "God thing" and not just a "Good thing"

6) CHANGE because someone's life depends on it.

No man or woman is an island. Our decisions affect others (i.e., our spouse, children, family and friends) If we don't change our spending habits we will have financial problems. If we don't change a bad attitude, it will affect those we love. If we don't change our ways, it will con-

tinue for another generation. Some things we must change so that the future generations will not have to suffer. This is part of the problem with our financial markets today and it is going to take generations to correct. Someone did not CHANGE

What Makes CHANGE so Difficult

1) FEAR- afraid; anxious; (Psalms 34:4)

- Fear of the unknown. (*See Isaiah 41:10*)
- Fear of Man/Woman and their opinion. What they will or will not say. Will they approve or reject me. Saul was afraid of the people & sinned. (*See I Samuel 15:24 & Psalms 118:6*).
- Fear of Failure. (*See Joshua 1:7*)

2) LACK OF KNOWLEDGE- (Information)

- Knowledge of the change you are going to make is vital; however, walking by faith to change will require us to move with very little information sometimes. We have to trust we are hearing from God and move. (*See Proverbs 1:7 (fear in the verse means reverence); Proverbs 1:22, 10:14, 24:5*)

3) STUBBORNNESS- (Stiff neck - stubborn; unyielding)

- I've already talked about the children of Israel, but they were stubborn and stiff neck. They refused to change and died in the wilderness. This was not the perfect will of God, but they exercised their will to be stubborn and stiff neck and all of them died (except for two) without seeing the promise. Some who are too stubborn to change lose their husband/wife, children & relationships. Most of all there is a loss of fulfilled purpose. (*Deuteronomy 9:6,13, Psalms 78:8*)

4) WE LEAVE GOD OUT OF THE PICTURE-

- We think we have the strength and ability within ourselves. (*See Proverbs 3:6*)

5) OLD WINESKINS -

- Trying to do a new thing with an old mindset is virtually impossible. Because the change begins with the mind. And if you or I are really convinced that the old is better....you (I) will never change. (*See Luke 5:38-39*)

6) WANTING THE OTHER PERSON TO CHANGE FIRST -

- Sometimes you have to be the first because it's the will of God. (*See I Peter 5:6*)

7) UNCERTAINTY. Walk in obedience and leave the results up to Him.

8) OPPOSITION. The enemy will oppose every effort to change for righteousness sake. If the change means we will be a threat to his kingdom, we can expect opposition. (*See Eph. 6:10-18, II Cor. 10:3-6, II Tim 3:12*)

9) PRIDE - (An overly high opinion of oneself)

- Don't want to look weak, like a fool, and image is important. We'd rather do our own will than his. Got to hold on because I've always had this place. Pride of life is a sin (*See I John 2:15-17*) *Thinking our own way is better than God's is pride. Pride comes before a fall. (See Proverbs 16:18). God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (See James 4:6)*



HOW DO WE CHANGE

- 1) **Realize the need to change** and envision things differently. *(Proverbs 29:18)*
- 2) **Repent** for not changing when you know you should have. *(See Psalms 51:3)*
- 3) **Examine thinking patterns closely.** This is not an option. Change begins with the mind. It has taken years to develop the current thinking patterns (which may not necessarily be stinkin' thinkin', it just isn't the thinking pattern needed for this season of life. *(See Romans 12:2)*
- 4) **Acknowledge** that you fear change and changing. The process can be fearful. *(See Proverbs. 3:6)*
- 5) **Fast and Pray** for guidance of the Holy Spirit and His grace (ability & enablement) to CHANGE. We can do nothing without Him, but with him all things are possible We can do all things including CHANGE-but not alone. *(See (Matt. 19:26, Luke 18:27).*
- 6) **Ask God for help**— If you ask, you will receive the steps needed to change your life. No matter where you are. *(See John 15:1-8)*
- 7) **Ask someone to help.** Getting help from someone who has already been where you are going will not only be helpful, but will be so encouraging. They can also help you avoid costly mistakes. Oh...you can get short cuts from them too. *(See Proverbs 24:6)*
- 8) **Count the cost/Get the knowledge** necessary to transition. *(See Proverbs 24:3-5, Luke 14:28)*

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CHANGE

- **We become wiser** and experience a new level of knowledge. *(See Proverbs 1:5)*
- **Life.** Refusal to change results in death. (This can be natural & spiritual). *(See Deuteronomy 30:14-20)*
- **Blessings.** We will always see the blessings of God when we obey. *(See Deuteronomy 28:2)*
- **Humility.** God can use anyone with a humble spirit. *(See I Peter 5:5-6)*
- **Confidence.** Whenever we obey God and see His results, we are energized, have more confidence in him. So, obeying Him will always put us at an advantage. *(See I John 5:14-15, Proverbs 14:26a)*

CONCLUSION

- **No one person can change another.** You can only CHANGE You. We all must look at ourselves first because we have to give an account for our own deeds. *(See Romans 14:10-12)*
- **Everyone will not always agree with your change.** If you're walking in His will, that's what matter. He will give the wisdom to change, but we cannot look for a positive vote in matters of our life. We must look to obey and please the one who has called, anointed, appointed and sent us according to His will and purpose.
- **Finally, realize that CHANGE is a Process** that begins with a Yes to Him with and a mind and will to follow in obedience. Our heavenly Father knows our frame and that we are dust (earth, ground). *(See Psalms 103:14-18)* Also, Dust is fragile and weak. It can be blown in many directions. He knows how to make us strong. He knows that change isn't always easy and we will make mistakes along the way. He is our strength and help. So, buckle your seat-belt, get ready for the ride and trust the Driver—the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the last Encouragement Newsletter for 2008. I want to thank all who have contributed in any way to making this vision a reality. There's always a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction when stepping out and obeying the will of God. Each newsletter was met with its challenges, but with Perseverance to continue on His Chosen Path, I've experienced significant CHANGE in my life this year as I embarked upon this writing endeavor. And, I am grateful to God and for everyone who kept pushing me. I love you all.

As we approach the Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year– 2009, I pray you all are blessed and ready to meet the New Year with great expectation in God and the great things He will do. Not because of what's going on in the world, but because He Who has begun a good work in me and you will complete it.

If this newsletter has been an Encouragement to you, please let me know by e-mailing me at hisminstrl@yahoo.com . I'd love to hear from you.

"It's all around us – we have a financial crisis, a moral crisis, spiritual crisis, personal problems, just a lot of issues and the resolution is CHANGE."

Jesus Christ is the Author & Finisher of my faith

Co-Author—
Veronica B.
McCray

Editor—Fred
McCray, Sr.