

Making Changes In Life

Dan Nelson

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We all need to make changes. Change is part of our everyday life. There is a colloquial proverb that says, "The only thing constant in life is change". For many people's lives, this statement rings true. But how do you make changes without going crazy in the process?

With technology and lifestyle changes moving so fast, the way we live at home and work is refashioning before our eyes. As a snapshot in my home of four children, the bedtime ritual has transformed from the simple brushing of teeth, extra drinks of water, prayers and blessings, to include a whole process of final checks on e-mail, voicemail, and the "putting to bed" of a myriad of electronic devices that need to be charged and ready for use in the morning. And speaking of major adjustment, as of this week, I am now the father of a teenager. Yikes, ch-ch-ch-changes!

As pastor of a church in transition, there seems to be little in my life that remains constant. Even my relationship with God Himself, although the scriptures say He is never changing, is transforming as my experience and knowledge of Him is growing everyday. As a church we are moving from the gymnasium at the community center in Oak View to "the Chapel" that has been under construction for months. We will be transitioning from one morning worship service to two. We have taken on new financial obligations by faith. Many people in the church family will be engaging in different types of ministry activities once we move. New people will also join us, which brings fresh relationships. There is so much change in my life, and in the lives of those I am leading, that it is tempting to get dizzy.

Earlier this year, while considering this whole aspect of radical life transformation, I decided I wanted to become an "expert in change". I am not sure what it means to be an "expert in change" but it really sounds appealing. After all, that is the area where I have the most experience and that is what I spend most of my time doing, helping people change. As a pastor I call people to do an "about-face" and turn to God". Frankly, I am challenging them to change their life. I counsel people in marriage, grieving, and similar life transitions aiding in the adjustment process. When I was in experience life's renovations together. As a man, I am getting older, and hopefully wiser, with ever expanding experiences and learning, purging the bad, learning to shine the good. In essence, I am being re-made and refined by God.

Since change is so much a part of every day life, why is that so many people resist change? Some people say, "Change can be the hardest form of work". Yet without change,

there can't be any improvement, any hope for something better, any life beyond what we are currently experiencing.

In my next few writings, I want to share with you some of the things I have learned about "change". Today, my intention is simple. I want to start at the beginning with our subject matter and encourage you to be open to change. You see, as long as we resist the inevitable, we are wrestling against an unstoppable force and we end up where we don't want to be. Imagine trying to stop or direct a moving car by getting out in front and pushing. Wouldn't it be so much easier to control it from the inside? This is how it is when we resist change. We risk getting run over and hurt. Instead, let's change our perspective. Let's expect change in our lives, embrace the concept, and renew our prayer. Ask God to reveal what needs to change, to direct the changes, and to empower the change. Remember that change is part of life and a central theme of the Bible. I believe the initial key is to determine to experience the right kind of change that brings the abundant life that Jesus said He came to bring.

Dan Nelson is a frequent contributor to the Ojai Valley News and currently serves the Ojai Valley Ministerial Association and community as editor of the Religion Column. This article was published in 2006. Permission is freely granted to reprint the article in its entirety. Dan Nelson is pastor of Calvary Chapel Christian Church of the Ojai Valley.



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Sunday Worship:

9:00 & 10:30am
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley
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Mid-Week Study:

7:00pm Thursday
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley
195 Mahoney Ave., Oak View