

The Dynamics of Change

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I. The Challenge of Change

A. “Lord, help us to be right for you know how hard it is to change.”

B. Nothing is more difficult – or essential – than change.

II. Romans 8:28-29

A. If we are predestined to be transformed into the image of Jesus, how much change should we expect? (Romans 8:28-29)

B. “Never before in the history of the United States has the Gospel of Jesus Christ made such inroads while at the same time making so little difference as to how people live.” George Gallup, Gallup Polls.

C. Don’t compare yourselves with other Christians, compare yourselves to Jesus Christ.

III. Romans 12:1-2

A. God never asks us to do anything for Him until He fully informs us to what He has done for us.

B. Christianity is not a process of what we will do for God, but a process of what we will allow God to do in His grace and mercy.

C. You are either in the Word being transformed into Christ’s image or you are in the world being squeezed into its mold. (Romans 12:2)

D. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:2)

IV. II Corinthians 3:17-18

A. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Is there freedom in your church?

B. This is not a freedom to do what you want to do, but a freedom to do what He wants you to do.

C. We are free to become like Christ.

D. We are being changed into His likeness.

V. II Peter 3:18

A. But grow in the present tense.

B. Growing in Christ is a process.

- C. Grace is first and then truth.
- D. Christ became flesh and was full of grace of truth. (John 1:14)
- E. The balance of grace and truth is the process of divine supernatural change.
- F. We are to abide in Christ because apart from Him we can do nothing. (John 15:5)
- G. We can do a lot of things without Christ but you cannot be like Christ without Christ.

VI. Preparing people for change

- A. The greatest need in discipleship is to prepare people for change.
- B. Change always brings tension, but there is no growth without tension.
- C. Too much tension leads to anxiety and too little tension leads to apathy.
- D. Our ministries are made up of a pastoral strand that demands compassion and a prophetic strand that demands courage.
- E. Why is the church, the most revolutionary force in the world, often set in concrete?
- F. The person who can affect the greatest change in a group becomes the greatest leader.
- G. The status quo can be defined as the mess we are in.

VII. Perspective on change

A. Five groups:

1. Early innovators.
2. Early adopters.
3. The leaders.
 - a. Titles do not make much difference. A leader is a person of influence.
4. The herd – the followers.
5. Unchangeables - they will never change.
 - a. Those who are carnal are extremely resistant to change.

B. Implications of these five groups:

1. At least fifty percent of people are slow in accepting change.
2. Where are you spending the bulk of your time?

C. Three stages people go through when confronted with change:

1. They resist it.
 - a. Expect this resistance and plan for it.
2. They tolerate it.
3. They embrace it.
 - a. The people who most strongly resist the change are the people who most strongly embrace it later.
 - b. This process could take minutes or years.

VIII. Principles of Change.

A. People must have reasons for change.

1. They must see the value to them.
2. We always talk about change in terms of the value to us or someone else.
3. If someone doesn't see the value to themselves, why will they be excited about it?
4. The plan must be understood by them.

B. People must be prepared for change.

1. Don't drop change on them.
2. Introduce your ideas and concepts months before the change is initiated.
3. Never bring up an idea in a board meeting. Instead plant some seeds among members and they will bring it up as their own idea.

C. People must be involved in the process of change.

1. If people share in the planning stages, they will buy the implementation.
2. People will accept change if they can help to create it.
3. We are doing too much for our people.
4. Anytime you do something for your people that they can do for themselves, you are making them spiritual cripples.
5. Are you doing the work of the ministry or equipping others for ministry?

D. People must be exposed to models of change.

1. Get a good supply of CDs, books, and videos and make them available to your people (e.g. take advantage of 'your' library at <http://www.discipleshiplibrary.com/>).

a. Expose your people to the ministry of other people and avoid monopolizing ministry.

2. Evaluative experiences.

a. Experience is worthless unless you evaluate it.

3. Educational conferences and seminars.

4. Expose them to infectious people.

a. Am I changing? What have I changed in the last three months?

b. If you haven't changed, then you are not a change element.

c. Change people are changing people.