



HeartCry



Inside this issue:

Graduation 2

Echoes of His Voice 3

Tools to enhance your prayers 4

Evangelical
Congregational Church



Evangelism &
Discipleship
Commission

Prayer Mobilization
Team

CHANGES

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This is a very busy time in the lives of so many. A large number of pastors and churches alike are anticipating a new stationing assignment. We are under the authority and direction of a new Bishop. There will be ideas shared at National Conference that will be attempted to be implemented in the local church. Some of them will be accepted, some will be rejected, some things will fly, and others fail. Some things will stay the same. But no matter what happens, one thing is certain. There will be change.



All around us, the world is changing. It used to take weeks, even months to cross the ocean, or the nation. Now, it can be done in a matter of hours. Communication used to be limited to that same timeframe. Now it is instantaneous. The stars and planets used to be unimaginably distant to us. Now, we can view detailed photographs at a whim. The world has changed.

The church has changed too; simply because it is made up of people who live in the world. Both those who staunchly hold to the traditions of the past (many, if not all of which have been subtly influenced and altered even if we didn't recognize it), and those seeking to blaze new trails into the future have been affected by changes. It is a time of uncertainty that makes even the easiest of tasks seem difficult. The road ahead of us is uncertain in the midst of change. Excitement, encouragement, depression, and despair become traveling mates that are with us always. In the midst of change, they are not contradictory emotions. They are always present.

We tend to think of change as a bad thing, but is it? Even though the Lord's love never changes, nor does His nature, He is constantly changing His tactics and His activity. The same One who says "I changeth not." Declares, "Behold, I do a new thing." He sees the seasons in our lives, and moves in new ways in the midst of them to reveal Himself, to share His heart, to offer us His hope. If only we open our eyes to see it.

Change is inevitable. We rail against it at times, some even to the point of denying their birthday, or celebrating the same year over and over again for decades. But even so, we age. If we're fortunate, perhaps we even mature. There is no avoiding

change. But there is a need to learn to navigate it in ways that bring encouragement and hope instead of despair.

Thankfully, we serve a Lord who sees things from a much broader perspective than ours. He knows the plans He has for us, and they are good. He walks with us through change, and sees us through to the other side. We know that we can cast our cares upon Him because He cares for us. And that is what we must do.

Lord Jesus, help us to navigate the waters of change gracefully. There is much we don't understand. Even more that we cannot know. But You are with us, and that ought to be comfort enough.



Graduation

For many, this is a time of transition out of one phase of life into another. High School and College students are stepping out into the working world seeking employment, finding housing, maybe even thinking of marriage and starting a family.

It's important that when someone begins a new phase of life, that they pause and thank the Lord for the good of the past, and invoke His presence and path for their future. We seek the blessing of Jesus upon us, and deign to walk with Him every step of our journey.

As these new graduates face their newfound lives and responsibilities beginning to unfold before them, hold them in your hearts, and your prayers. Life is too hard to go it alone. We all need intercessors. And friends. And we should be the same for others.

Dearest Lord Jesus, Faithful Friend, You have walked with me to the end of one road, and now there are a myriad of on-ramps beckoning to me to take them. Guide me down the pathway You have set for me. And may whichever road I follow bring You glory and praise.



Echoes of His Voice



“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and then not fulfill?” Number 23:19 For most people, promises are in vain. I promise I’ll clean my room, or take out the trash. We parents know that really means nothing will happen. Even if we have good intentions, things happen that get in the way. But not with the Lord. When God tells us He’s going to do something, it will happen. Maybe not on our time table, but certainly in His, and at just the right time. *“Your promises never fail, Lord. Of that we can be sure. Help me to hold to them, to cling to Your Word. You alone can carry me through. You alone are my true Provider.”*

“He changes times and seasons; He sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.” Daniel 2:21 Things never stay the same. They are always in flux, always being altered. But it is not mere happenstance which makes it so. It is under the direction of the Lord that things change. Weather? Seasons? Leaders? All of these are altered by His hand. He brings us variety. He brings us health. He brings us flavor. In you are wise or discerning, you’ll understand why these are good things. If not, then like Francis, who only ate peanut butter and jam, you need to understand that His way for you is much better than your own. *“Lord Jesus, I admit that I wish all my days were sunny and warm. But I’d miss the snow if it weren’t there. And I appreciate the growth that changes bring. Help me trust that You really do know what You’re doing in the face of all the changes around us.”*



“I the Lord do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.” Malachi 3:6 If God changed His mind about us, we’d all be wiped out. We test His limits each and every day. But He is merciful. He loves us. I’m glad He doesn’t change. *“Thank you for Your unfailing patience. Thank You for forgiving when no one else will. You are constant and sure. You are reliable. Nothing else, no one else can boast that moniker. Lord, I rely on you. Your mercy never fails.”*



“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” James 1:17 By nature, a gift is something new. Well, maybe not new, in that it’s been in someone’s mind long before you receive it, but from the perspective of the receiver? It’s a new thing. So, yet again, we see the Gifter, who doesn’t change, giving, doing new things. Making all things, including us, new. And isn’t that the purpose of gifting us with His Holy Spirit through Christ Jesus? To make us new? That we might push through the dirt and find new life? Sure it is. The gifts are both good and perfect, and work in us to our good and perfection. This might be change, but it not by chance. *“What is it that You have in mind for me, Lord? I can’t even begin to see what You have in store, let alone comprehend all of Your plan. Help me to trust that You will always delight in giving good things to and making good things of Your children. And to understand that first and foremost, I am one of Yours.”*

Tools to enhance your prayers

Music

Todd Agnew – “Better Questions.” Ardent Music, 2007

David Crowder Band – “Sunsets & Sushi: experiments in spectral deconstruction.” Sparrow Records, 2005

Pocket Full of Rocks – “Song to the King.” Word Entertainment, 2006

Books

“Enjoying God.” S.J. Hill, Relavant Books, 2006

“Too Busy Not to Pray: 20th Anniversary Edition”, Bill Hybels, InterVarsity Press, 2008

“Intercessors Arise: Personal Prayer that Changes the World”, Debbie Przbylski, NavPress, 2008

“God on Mute: Engaging the Silence of Unanswered Prayer”, Pete Greig, Regal Books, 2007

