

Hard Changes!

For several weeks we have been planning to close the sale on our old home this Tuesday. For the last few weeks, I have been cleaning out the last of our personal items; holiday decorations, camping equipment, books, bedspreads, old dishes, and comforters, and pictures-lots of pictures. Almost each item represents the way things were. We have sold or given away most of what we had.

I have stood there looking at these items and for a moment I travel back in time. I then return from the past and I am standing alone at this empty house that used to be so full of Wells. This has happened over and over again.

The truth is my life has changed forever and it will never be the same. I remember when I was young and I was so excited about things changing. Going to the high school, going to college, getting married, going to seminary, having a child, getting my first job in the ministry, moving into a new home, meeting new people, were all changes that I looked forward to making. I never thought about changes being hard.

Hard changes are not just for people over 50. I really feel for Will and Mercy right now. When you are the youngest in a large family, you are always the one being left. You are the one experiencing the hard changes rather than the one who is making them for others.

I want to share with you some things that I have learned about how to deal with hard changes when they happen to you.

This would include changes like someone dying, divorce, loss of your job, children leaving, aging, and in any other way that people or circumstances cause major disappointments.

- Believe that God is in control of your hard changes.

Job 1:6-12

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

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Never accept a theology that says changes can occur outside the realm of God's control. God does not have to do anything for hard changes to occur in your life because of the free will of man and the fallenness of nature. But there is not one hard change that you experience that happens that He could not stop. He is all powerful and in control.

- Believe that hard changes are for your good.

Rom 8:28

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

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This is difficult to believe, especially when there are so many of them in a short season.

What is the good?

God uses hard changes to transform you into His image.

God uses hard changes like a potter uses pressure to mold His clay.

God uses hard changes to open a new way for you to minister to others.

God uses hard changes to purify your love for Him.

Will I believe that God loves me in spite of hard changes? It is a real test to believe that someone loves you when they are ultimately responsible for making hard changes in your life.

But developing this kind of faith is for your good. If you finish well there is great reward. It has a tremendous impact on your legacy of faith when those closest to you observe how your faith in God's love for you increases when you experience hard changes. It prepares your posterity for tough times. It prepares you to triumph over death.

To believe that God loves you in spite of hard changes, you have to reject every temporal and material blessing as the basis for your faith in the love of God. We should be grateful for these blessings but we must not base our faith in God upon them.

The basis for our faith in the love of God must be salvation from sin. Salvation from sin was the promise that God gave to Abraham. God then pledged His faithfulness to the promise with an oath. He swore by Himself.

This promise must be the anchor of your faith or you will be swept away when you experience hard changes.

How much does salvation from sin mean to you? Salvation from sin enables you to have an eternal relationship with God. Salvation from sin enables you to have a personal relationship with God. Salvation from sin enables you to have intimate relationships with others. Salvation from sin enables you to be free of the control of sin and the devil. Salvation from sin enables you to have peace of mind and a clear conscience.

This is the anchor of those who are in heaven. The focus of their praise is not the material blessings of heaven. Their focus is the lamb that was slain to save them from sin.

How much does salvation from sin mean to you? When you sing about it, does it move you emotionally? If something means a lot to you, you will talk to others about it. You will never be much of an evangelist until your faith in salvation from sin is the anchor of your soul. How much does salvation from sin mean to you?

It will never mean much to you until you see the affects that sin has on mankind. It will never mean much to you until you understand what Jesus did to save you from sin. It will never mean much to you until you experience victory over sin.

When salvation from sin is the anchor of your soul, you will not love God any less when hard changes occur. God uses hard changes to purify your love for Him. Do you love Him because of some temporal or material blessing? Do you love Him because He saved you from sin?

- [Believe that hard changes will end.](#)

[Heb 11:9-10](#)

[9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:](#)

[10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.](#)

[KJV](#)

I really hope that I outlive Sandra, for her sake. But if I outlive her or if I outlive one of my children, it will not be long and all my hard changes will be over. When you are running a sprint, keep your eyes on the finish line. Be like Abraham.

As a young man, I was never comfortable speaking at a nursing home or to senior adults. I had a hard time relating to those who were nearing the end of their life. I wanted to talk about God's power in the church, the gifts of the spirit, and how there was not a limit to what God could do thru a person who was totally yielded to him. I really didn't have a life message that would help a man confined to a bed that had to wear an oxygen mask to

breath or a lady who was just barely cognitive enough to understand every other word I was speaking.

As a result, I didn't have a message for a great percentage of the world's population. But things have changed and things have changed me. Hopefully, I can be effective inspiring the young and exhorting the aged.

Hard changes will end!

How do you deal with hard changes?

- Believe that God is in control of your hard changes.
- Believe that hard changes are for your good.
What is the good?
God uses hard changes to transform you into His image.

God uses hard changes to open a new way for you to minister to others.

God uses hard changes to purify your love for Him.

- Believe that hard changes will end.

I got an e-mail yesterday that the buyers for our home are backing out of the contract. Sandra and I were really looking forward to just having the expenses of one home.

God never stops working in our lives to produce in us the good. In the process, He is always faithful to be there for us when those we have loved the most cannot be there for us.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of hard changes is that they help us see how much we need Him. He is the only one who can pledge that He will never leave us or forsake us. He is the only one who can pledge that He will always be there for us.

Do you see how much you need Him? Then humble yourself and tell Him right now. Tell Him you want Him to be the savior and Lord of your life. Tell Him that you will trust in Him no matter what hard changes you experience in your life.

He is the only one that can be your anchor. Make sure He is your anchor right now.