

MAKING CHANGES

(2 Chron 29-30)

A. Change is inevitable (expected).

1. You have seen many changes to this congregation over the years.
2. You, personally, have experience many changes in your life.
 - a. Some you welcomed, & some you wish had never come to pass.
 - b. But through it all, the faithful Christian has a steady rock to lean upon.

Amid the changing scenes below, where many come & many go, my wistful soul will oft cry out for One who stays, Who changes not.

The years pass on, a shifting train, of things familiar, few remain, how sweet, how comforting the tho't, that One remains Who changes not.

As it has been, so will it be, till comes life's final hour for me, mine surely is a favored lot – I have a Friend who changes not (HFW#461 – He Changes Not)

B. **Most** people welcome some change.

1. Otherwise the politicians wouldn't promise it to the voters, or popular phrases like "let's make a fresh start" would be meaningless.

C. A true follower of Jesus Christ is in a constant state of change.

2 Cor 4:16-18 – Therefore we do not lose heart. ***Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*** 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory, 18 while *we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* For the things which are seen are **temporary**, but the things which are not seen are **eternal**.

2 Cor 3:18 – But ***we all***, with unveiled face [***not peering through the Law***], ***beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image*** from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

[When Hezekiah became king of Judah, he knew that change in his kingdom was necessary in order to please the LORD. **Hezekiah** was dedicated to making those changes. **How** did he do it so successfully (2 Chron 29:1-11)?]

I. HE ACTED IMMEDIATELY

2 Chron 29:3 (Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple) – In the **first year** of his reign, in the **first month**, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD & repaired them.

A. What a marvelous beginning to the reign of Hezekiah.

1. He SEES what the LORD would expect him to do, & he DOES it without delay.
2. Most people put off until tomorrow what they should do today.

Gen 19:15-17 (Lot) – When the morning dawned, **the angels urged Lot to hurry**, saying, “Arise, take your wife & your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.” 16 **And while he lingered**, the men took hold of his hand, his wife’s hand, & the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, & they brought him out & set him outside the city. 17 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, “Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed.”

Acts 24:25 (Governor Felix) – Now as he [Paul] reasoned about righteousness, self-control, & the judgment to come, Felix was afraid & answered, **“Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.”**

B. Procrastination is a human failing.

1. Procrastinate: To put off doing something, especially out of habitual carelessness or laziness. To postpone or delay needlessly.
2. Latin: *pro*, forward; *crâstinus*, of tomorrow {crâs, tomorrow}. (American Heritage Dictionary)
3. In secular (day to day earthly) matters **it** has all kinds of negative results. *Discuss...*
 - a. Paying bills, cleaning house, keeping yard, maintaining car.
4. But in spiritual matters, **it** will cause us to sin.
 - a. God doesn’t teach us to obey Him when we get around to it.

[James] reminds us that our time on earth is but a wisp of smoke (Jas 4:14). **So** we must do what He expects, now!

II. HE REMOVED EVERY UNHOLY THING

2 Chron 29:4-11, 15-16

A. **Though** we see them all around us, unholy things should have no place on this earth.

1. They certainly didn't belong in the Temple, where God was to be worshiped.
 - a. But Ahaz, Hezekiah's own father, brought many of those idolatrous articles into the Temple.
 - b. Jesus cleansed the Temple courtyard of thievery on two separate occasions.
 - c. Then one fateful day, Jesus explained why there was so much unholiness in the Temple.

Matt 23:25-28 – Woe to you, scribes & Pharisees, hypocrites! For *you cleanse the outside of the cup & dish, but inside they are full of extortion & self-indulgence*. 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup & dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 “Woe to you, scribes & Pharisees, hypocrites! For *you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones & all uncleanness*. 28 Even so *you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy & lawlessness* (cf. [Matt 15:18-19](#))

2. People (sometimes Christians) will do anything for money, & if they can hide their greed with a little religion, all the better for them.

B. **But** unholy things do not belong either in the church or in the Christian's heart.

1. Purity of doctrine & practice is our goal; & Christ makes us holy as a result.
2. Holiness begins in our hearts, when all impure desires & thoughts are removed.
 - a. Solomon warned us to “*keep our hearts with all diligence*” ([Prov 4:23](#)).

- b. He understood a blessing that would come later.

1 Cor 6:18-20 – Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that ***your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit*** who is in you, whom you have from God, & you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body & in your spirit, which are God's.

[We must make our hearts a place that God will inhabit by removing every unholy thing from His temple.]

III. HE PREPARED (sanctified, consecrated) EVERY HOLY THING FOR ITS PROPER USE

2 Chron 29:18-19 – Then they went in to King Hezekiah & said, “We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the ***altar of burnt offerings*** with all its articles, & the ***table of the showbread*** with all its articles. 19 Moreover ***all the articles*** which King Ahaz in his reign had cast aside in his transgression ***we have prepared & sanctified***; & there they are, before the altar of the LORD.”

A. The temple was now ready for God's habitation, a place from which He could be worshipped.

1. If we are to be ready to worship & serve God, through His Son Jesus Christ, then we must not only remove the unholy things from our hearts, we must prepare to do the holy things.

Matt 12:43-45 – When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, & finds none. 44 Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And ***when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, & put in order.*** 45 ***Then he goes & takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself,*** & they enter & dwell there; & the last state of that man is worse than the first (cf. [Rom 12:1-2](#); [Phil 4:8-9](#)).

[The habitation of God, which today is the church & each member of it, must fill His house with holy articles.]

IV. HE WAS ENTHUSIASTIC

2 Chron 29:20 – Then ***King Hezekiah rose early***, gathered the rulers of the city, & went up to the house of the LORD.

2 Chron 29:29-30 – And when they had finished offering, the king & all who were present with him bowed & worshiped. 30 Moreover ***King Hezekiah & the leaders commanded the Levites to sing praise to the LORD with the words of David*** & of Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with gladness, & they bowed their heads & worshiped.

2 Chron 30:22-27 – And **Hezekiah gave encouragement to all the Levites who taught the good knowledge of the LORD**; & **they** ate throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings & making confession to the LORD God of their fathers. 23 Then the **whole assembly** agreed to keep the feast another seven days, & they kept it another seven days with gladness. 24 For **Hezekiah** king of Judah gave to the assembly a thousand bulls & seven thousand sheep, & the leaders gave to the assembly a thousand bulls & ten thousand sheep; & a **great number of priests** sanctified themselves. 25 The **whole assembly** of Judah rejoiced, also the **priests** & **Levites**, all the assembly that came from **Israel**, the **sojourners** who came from the land of Israel, & those who dwelt in **Judah**. 26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. 27 **Then the priests, the Levites, arose & blessed the people, & their voice was heard; & their prayer came up to His holy dwelling place, to heaven.**

A. Hezekiah's enthusiasm for this work influenced every person in the nation.

1. The more exuberant & fervent we are—to act immediately to remove the unholy things & to replace them with the holy things—the more power we will have to sway others into that direction.

Col 2:6-8 (NASU) – As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 having been firmly rooted & now being built up in Him & established in your faith, just as you were instructed, & **overflowing with gratitude.**

CLOSING

A. Are you convinced that 2008 should be a year of change...of spiritual growth & improvement?

2 Chron 31:20-21 – Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah, & he did what was good & right & true before the LORD his God. 21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, in the law & in the commandment, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart. **So he prospered.**

1. Though change is hard, the results are worth the effort.

Jas 1:25 – He who looks into the perfect law of liberty & continues in it, & is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, **this one will be blessed in what he does.**

1 Cor 15:58 – My beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that **your labor is not in vain in the Lord** (such a one will inherit the kingdom of God with an *incorruptible, powerful, spiritual, heavenly, immortal* body, cf. **15:38-53**).

{Via Joe Griffin and Zeke Flores}