

Change

2 Corinthians 5:17 | Dustin Losey | Hope City Church

CENTRAL QUESTION

Will you walk forward through the change God is bringing, or keep standing outside a door he has closed?

I. God Does Not Change, but He Changes His People

Key Text: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Malachi 3:6

- Dustin opens with one word for the night: change. He notes the church is finishing the Psalms series.
- God's character, holiness, promises, glory, and greatness never change. His Word never changes.
- God does change his people: you, your friends, your family.
- Examples he lists: Abram to Abraham (Genesis 17), Jacob the deceiver to Israel (Genesis 32), Joseph from pit to palace (Genesis 41), Moses from the backside of the desert to deliverer (Exodus 3), David from shepherd to king (1 Samuel 16), Peter from fisherman to preacher (Matthew 4), Saul from persecutor to apostle (Acts 9, Romans 1).
- Change is not always comfortable. It can mean leaving, losing, and hurting.
- God may remove something you begged him to keep. You may not understand until you see what he was making room for.

II. Change Begins With Leaving What Is Familiar

Key Text: Genesis 12:1, 4; James 2:20, 26

- God gave Abraham no road map and no destination. He said, "Get thee out."
- Abraham had to leave people, places, and comfort before he could step into the promise.
- Faith does not require a road map or a vision. It requires obedience to the next step (James 2:20, 26).
- Some seasons, God says you cannot take everything with you. Not every relationship or environment belongs in your next season.
- That does not make those people bad. It means their assignment in your life has ended.
- Dustin says he cannot sit and soak in a place that stops him from moving with what God has placed on his life. He will pray for you, but he has to keep going.
- Change will touch how you pray and worship. Obey God in the season.
- Sometimes a cold atmosphere shows the fire is still burning inside. You do not need someone else's anointing for yours.

III. Change Sometimes Means Letting People Go

Key Text: *Genesis 13:8-9*

- Abraham and Lot were blessed together, and their possessions grew too great for them to stay together. Abraham asked for separation to avoid strife.
- Abraham could fight to keep the relationship the same, or accept that the season had changed.
- Abraham did not have to destroy Lot to move forward. You do not need to talk about how another person or church worships to move on. Give God the glory and keep walking.
- Forgiveness is different from continued access.
- Loving someone is different from walking the same road with them.
- You can wish someone well without carrying them into your next season.

IV. Change Hurts Before It Makes Sense (Joseph)

Key Text: *Genesis 37:23-24; Genesis 50:20*

- Joseph's change started in a pit, not a palace. His brothers stripped his coat and threw him in.
- He had dreams and promises, but in the pit he saw only darkness.
- He did not know the pit was part of the path, or that betrayal would become part of his testimony.
- The change began in the pit. It was not finished there.
- The enemy can use change to hurt you. God can use the same change to develop and prepare you.

V. Change Can Move You to a Hidden Place (Moses)

Key Text: *Exodus 2:15; Exodus 3:10*

- Moses went from palace to wilderness, from privilege to poverty, from being surrounded by people to years alone.
- In the wilderness, nobody sees you or understands what God is doing. You get scratched and scarred.
- Hidden does not mean forgotten. The wilderness was not wasted. It changed Moses and prepared the deliverer.
- The change happens in the hidden place, not in the public eye.

VI. Change Happens in the Gap (David)

Key Text: *1 Samuel 23:14*

- David was anointed young but not yet established. He spent years running from Saul.
- There was a gap between the promise and the fulfillment. In that gap people left, betrayed, misunderstood, and pursued him. God was developing him.
- Your current situation does not cancel your future purpose.
- Even after years of drifting, David says, if you return and repent, the promise is still where God placed it.

- Being in the wilderness does not mean being outside God's will. We are wrong to measure God's will by who talks to us or who shows up.

VII. Change Requires a Decision (Ruth)

Key Text: Ruth 1:16; Matthew 1:5

- Ruth lost her husband. Naomi told her to go back. Ruth chose Naomi's people and Naomi's God.
- She did not know what waited for her, but she knew something did.
- Because she walked into the new season, she became part of the line of Christ (Matthew 1:5).
- Do not underestimate what God can do with one step. The vision looks far away, but it gets clearer as you walk, because it is God's vision.

VIII. Change Comes Through Failure (Peter)

Key Text: Luke 22:61-62; John 21:17; Acts 2:14

- Peter said he would never deny Jesus, then denied him three times and wept bitterly.
- Failure was not the end. Jesus did not throw him away (John 21:17).
- The man who ran from pressure later stood up and preached (Acts 2:14). Knowing Jesus still loved him and offered grace changed him.

IX. Change Can Stop You in Your Tracks (Saul)

Key Text: Acts 9:3-4, 20

- Saul was not looking for Jesus. Jesus was looking for Saul.
- In one moment his direction, purpose, identity, and relationships changed.
- The man who opposed Christ began to preach Christ.
- God transformed Saul, and he did it in blindness and uncertainty.

X. Change Means People Will Walk Away

Key Text: John 6:66-67; Acts 15; Matthew 10:14

Jesus and the disciples who left

- Many disciples walked away from Jesus (John 6:66). He did not chase them. He asked the twelve if they would go too (John 6:67).
- Stop chasing people. Some will leave, and it will hurt. Not everyone who starts with you will finish with you.
- In the gap, Dustin still had to love and pray for someone he did not like. Love does not turn into bitterness or revenge. You keep walking to the promise.

Paul and Barnabas

- They separated over John Mark (Acts 15). The Bible does not hide it.
- Dustin says he shares the ugly parts of his testimony so he can help others in ugly seasons.
- God keeps working even when relationships change.

Doors that close

- Jesus told his disciples to shake the dust off their feet (Matthew 10:14).
- There is a time to stay, fight, forgive, and depart. Some doors need to close. Some conversations do not need another response.
- Illustration: Dustin pictures a back-and-forth with God where he wants the last word. God points him to the people who were in the pit and the wilderness and still in his will.

XI. You Cannot Enter the Promised Land While Clinging to Egypt

Key Text: *Numbers 11:5; Hebrews 12:11*

- Israel was out of Egypt, but Egypt was still in their hearts. They remembered the fish and forgot the promise.
- The future feels unfamiliar, so we look back at what we knew.
- God did not bring you out so you could keep living like you are still there. Speak the testimony, but do not live in it.
- Change hurts, and God is still God. Not everything that is good for you feels good while it happens (Hebrews 12:11).
- Illustration: God asks for five hours in the prayer closet and we want three minutes.
- The anointing is a crushing. God prunes us because he wants us to bear more fruit.

XII. Stop Looking at the Empty Chair

Key Text: *Isaiah 43:18-19; Romans 12:2*

- Some people are stuck looking at what was: the empty chair, the old relationship, the old job, the old house, the old version of themselves.
- God says not to live looking backward when he is doing something new. Instead of asking why they left, take the next step.
- Take the chair out of the room and put your Bible where it was. Seek the God who has always been there, not the person who left.
- The biggest mistake is believing everyone else needs to change while you stay the same. Maybe you are the one who needs to change.
- Transformation begins in the mind and resides in the heart (Romans 12:2).
- You cannot carry yesterday's bitterness into tomorrow's blessing. Old wounds should not decide your relationships.
- Dustin says people hurt us, not the church, and that correcting members is part of a pastor's job.
- Come as you are. It is not our job to fix people. Get them to Jesus and let Christ do the changing.

XIII. Closing: None of These Was the End

- Joseph's pit, Moses's wilderness, David's cave, Peter's failure, Paul's old life, Ruth's loss, and Abraham's leaving were the beginning of change, not the end.
- God changes your surroundings, relationships, plans, priorities, and heart. Sometimes he simply changes you.

- If God is calling you forward, do not turn around because someone refused to come. If God closes a door, do not spend your life standing outside it.
- Let people leave without bitterness. Let God use the change. There is a difference between mourning what was and refusing to receive what is next.
- Seeds planted long ago and forgotten may have grown through every season into some of your biggest blessings.
- Invitation: whether the need is in relationships, worship, prayer, bitterness, depression, or addiction, take the first step. It will not be easy. Walk away from the closed door and look for the open one.
- The message ends as the church moves into worship.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

1. Abraham was told to go without a map. What step has God asked you to take that you keep putting off until you can see the whole road?
2. Dustin said forgiveness is not the same as continued access. Is there a relationship you need to release without bitterness or revenge?
3. Joseph, Moses, and David each waited in a gap between promise and fulfillment. Where are you in a gap right now, and what might God be building in you there?
4. Israel remembered the fish of Egypt and forgot the promise. What are you still looking back at: the empty chair, the old job, the old relationship, the old version of yourself?
5. Dustin asked whether the one who needs to change might be you. Where might God be asking you to change, starting with your mind (Romans 12:2)?

Scripture References: 2 Corinthians 5:17 | Malachi 3:6 | Genesis 17 | Genesis 32 | Genesis 41 | Genesis 12:1, 4 | James 2:20, 26 | Genesis 13:8-9 | Genesis 37:23-24 | Genesis 50:20 | Exodus 2:15 | Exodus 3 | 1 Samuel 16 | 1 Samuel 23:14 | Ruth 1:16 | Matthew 1:5 | Matthew 4 | Matthew 10:14 | Luke 22:61-62 | John 6:66-67 | John 21:17 | Acts 2:14 | Acts 9 | Acts 15 | Romans 1 | Romans 12:2 | Numbers 11:5 | Hebrews 12:11 | Isaiah 43:18-19