

July 7, 2019

“A Theology of Change”
Lamentations 3:22-24

FCF: Our struggle with “change”

PROPOSITION: (anchor) God brings change into all our lives all the time.
(magnet) Our response must be to look to Him.

SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION:

Let me start with a bit of word association. I’m going to give you a word and you think about the first things that come to your mind. It can often be a rather revealing experience. Are you ready? Here’s the word - change. What comes to mind? It could be adventure, opportunity, the excitement and anticipation of something new. Or it could be uncertainty, fear, pain, loss.

Some changes we initiate and pursue. Other changes come upon us. We didn’t ask for it. But it came. We’re pulling out of Matthew this week and we’re going to think about change.

SCRIPTURE READING: [Lamentations 3:22-24](#)**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION****SERMON INTRODUCTION:**

Life means change. A sperm and an egg came together and, nine months later, here you are. That’s change. As the years go by, we can have a change of heart, pace, or scenery. We change our address, the channel, the subject, our minds, our tune, our habits, and our ways. People change. Our children grow up and move away. Our bodies age and wear out. And all the while, the world around us is changing and the one steady constant seems to be change.

Life means change. God is in the business of change. Creation - from nothing then came everything. Regeneration - from death to life. Adoption - from helpless orphan to beloved child. Sanctification - becoming more like Jesus. Glorification - one day, all things being made new.

God is in business of change. Which brings us to our text. The year is 586 B.C. The army of Babylon has laid waste to the city of Jerusalem. Other parts of the Old Testament speak of the grim facts. Jeremiah is relaying here his grim feelings. He is dismayed by what he sees. His people had brought this on themselves. But the devastation was horrific. Yet somehow hope for a restored relationship with God bursts through. And with that we see a theology of change.

God brings change into all our lives all the time. Our response must be to look to Him. And what do we see as we look to Him? Three things. First, a love unceasing. Second, a mercy unending. Third, a faithfulness abounding. These three give us a practical theology of change.

I. A LOVE UNCEASING

First, Jeremiah points us to a love unceasing ([READ Lamentations 3:22a](#)).

A) What It Is

1. Definition

This is *hesed* - a rich term meaning loving-kindness, grace, and favor. It is a steadfast love.

2. Source

And it is of the LORD, the God of the covenant, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

B) How It's Shown

1. Never ceases

And how is this love shown? It never ceases. It never ends. It never says, "I've had enough."

2. Despite what's deserved

Despite what we deserve. Despite our grumbling and waywardness. It's a wondrous thing.

Change comes. We must look to the God of unceasing love ([READ Lamentations 3:22a](#)).

Application:

How does this help us to face change? Whatever the circumstances, His love is part of it. For the LORD can never turn away. He has already turned away from Jesus on the cross in our place. Whatever changes may come, His love is unceasing. And so the LORD is our hope.

God brings change into all our lives all the time. Our response must be to look to Him.

II. A MERCY UNENDING

His is a love unceasing which brings a mercy unending ([READ Lamentations 3:22-23a](#)).

A) What It Is

1. Definition

This is a compassion to those in need, real and practical kindness to the helpless and suffering.

2. Source

And, again, it is of the LORD - the Alpha and the Omega, the One without beginning or end.

B) How It's Shown

1. Never ending

He is without end. And so too are His mercies. There is no ceiling, no bottom, no limit.

2. Always new

And they are always new. Each day brings yet another wave, more evidences and examples.

Change comes. We must look to God's unending mercy ([READ Lamentations 3:22-23a](#)).

Application:

How does this help us to face change? God's mercies cannot be exhausted any more than He can. So they come. They may not come how we ask, insist, or demand. But they do come. Whatever else may be changing, His mercies are unending. And so the LORD is our hope.

God brings change into all our lives all the time. Our response must be to look to Him.

III. A FAITHFULNESS ABOUNDING

Love unceasing, mercy unending, faithfulness abounding ([READ Lamentations 3:22-23](#)).

A) What It Is

1. Definition

Think about this. An unyielding steadfastness and trustworthiness, an unqualified reliability.

2. Source

How? Because God is immutable. He does not change. He is the one sole constant.

B) How It's Shown

1. Other uses

So His faithfulness is greater than any other. He is said to be “great.” As are His many works.

2. Implications

So too is His faithfulness. It is great. His is a rich, manifold, multi-dimensional faithfulness.

Change comes. We must look to God’s great faithfulness ([READ Lamentations 3:22-23](#)).

Application:

How does this help us to face change? Listen again to these beautiful words from Thomas Chisholm’s hymn. We sang it earlier, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” ([READ first stanza](#)):

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

We must hold to that when we feel like we’ve been strapped to a treadmill running a few speeds too fast. Or tied to some sort of ride at an amusement park where all around us is swirling. It may well feel like that. But the LORD’s is an abounding faithfulness. So He is our hope.

God brings change into all our lives all the time. Our response must be to look to Him.

CONCLUSION:

Churches go through change as well. This church began as a plant with just a few folks. In 2002, Curt McDaniel, the man who planted this church, moved on and I was called to serve as the pastor. In 2012, we brought on Colin Roberts and he was here for three years. In 2016, we brought on Luke Banner and he was here for three years. All the while, we have seen a stream of folks coming and going. Churches go through change as well. And we are no exception.

Some changes we initiated. Others came upon us. Now change has come again. What will we do? We will look to the God of change. Life means change. And God is in the business of change. We need to keep those things in mind. What will be our first steps as we move ahead? We will take some time to evaluate our current needs and balance that with our limited resources. Along the way, we will commit ourselves to four fundamentals, each of which you will hear more about in the weeks and months to come. First - spiritual gifting, the roles and fitting within the body. Second - discipleship, the goal of growing as followers of Jesus in all we do. Third - rekindling the vision of a peacemaking church. Fourth - all of this rooted in prayer, individually and corporately. We’ll move ahead with care and an eye to what resources the Lord provides. And all the while, those four things will be our foundation, the fundamentals of all we will be and do. They will permeate our life together - our times on Sundays, our ministry teams, our community groups. Spiritual gifting. Discipleship. Peacemaking. All given to prayer.

God brings change into all our lives all the time. Our response must be to look to Him.

PROPOSITION: (anchor) God brings change into all our lives all the time.
(magnet) Our response must be to look to Him.