

Sermon Series – Winning the Battle

Part 4 – “Challenged by Change”

Pastor Dale Campfield - November 20th, 2011

Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Current Sermon Series: Winning the Battle

Theme Text: **2 Cor 10:5** “Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

Premise of Series: The fact is, as we go out, walking with faith to love others, the enemy is going to do everything possible to keep us from achieving the goal of making an IMPACT – reaching souls in the path of our lives for the Kingdom of God; Loving, growing and serving; he devil will throw everything he possibly can at you to keep you defeated, depressed and distracted. That is why it is of utmost importance that we bring every thought that we have into captivity in order to walk in obedience to Christ.

Today’s Sermon Title: **Challenged by Change**

The enemy loves to attack us when it comes to changing points in our lives. We all go through them, and often times during these changes, the enemy tries to take us off guard. In fact, he doesn’t wait till the time is “right” to attack you; playing fair. He play’s unfair and will attack you at the absolute lowest time of your life. Remember, God’s will for you is life – Satan’s will for you is death; and he’ll do everything he can to see that happen.

It’s during the changes of life that we are often times very susceptible to the attacks of the enemy. We’re sometimes at a low point....

Illus: When Cali Died

When our daughter died, the enemy did everything he could to attack us. It wasn't fair at all; but he never is.

My family is changing. The kids are getting older. My bride and I find that we're alone in the house a lot more than we use to be. Change is happening. It's weird, but it happens. Duper is getting older. She's barely getting around sometimes. Life changes.

And.....CHANGE ISN'T ALWAYS EASY!

In fact—it is inevitable! The sooner we embrace it—the sooner we will be at peace.

Knowing it is not easy—but inevitable—we need tools or principles to help us to keep moving forward into God's plan; for the battle of the mind is a battle that is fought in the midst of change.

Change is a constant in life: We fall in love and get married. Children are born. We grow older. Our children grow up and move away. People we know and love die. We switch jobs and careers. Even though changes come into every life, we're often uncomfortable with change.

Change creates anxiety because the physical, social, emotional and spiritual environment with which we have become familiar and comfortable is altered.

Some changes, such as pregnancy and retirement, are happy and welcome events, every change can cause stress. This is because all change involves loss. For example, even if someone is moving to a new neighborhood where life will be more pleasant, the old way of life is being lost. There's an instinctive desire to cling to the old even while adjusting to the new. Embracing change is the sign of a healthy, well-adjusted person. However, even healthy, well-adjusted people may need help and guidance to cope with changes. The enemy knows this; thus he fights at us during these times of change – and that battle must be won!

Here are some facts concerning change, and then some guidelines for us to follow when ministering to people faced with the challenge of change and the battles that ensue.

Change is a constant companion in our fast-paced lives. Did you know...

Every day in America:

- 108,000 of us move to a different home.
- 18,000 move to another state.
- 700 are moving to Florida.

Every day in America:

- The United States Government issues fifty more pages of regulations.
- Forty Americans turn one hundred.
- Five thousand eight hundred become sixty-five.

Every day in America:

- One hundred sixty-seven businesses go bankrupt.
- While six hundred eighty- nine new ones start up.
- And one hundred Americans become millionaires.

Every day in America:

- Americans purchase forty-five thousand new automobiles and trucks, and smash eighty- seven thousand of them.
- More than six thousand three hundred get divorced.
- While thirteen thousand get married.

Every day in America:

- We eat seventy five acres of pizza.
- We eat fifty three million hot dogs.
- We eat one hundred sixty seven million eggs;
- We eat three million gallons of ice cream;
- We eat three thousand tons of candy.

Change is constantly taking place in our lives.

- **Natural Changes**

There are natural transitions in our lives that are built into the maturation process. Done properly we move seamlessly from infancy to adolescence to adulthood, to mid-life, and finally to our golden years. The problem is that it is not always seamless. Many of us get stuck in one of the stage transitions and we hear of people who “never grow up” or who will “always be a child” or who “are ready to retire and still going through their mid-life crisis.”

- **Situational Changes**

Then there are all sorts of situational changes in life that generate transitions. The list includes five broad categories starting with the loss of a relationship. We have all experienced this kind of loss whether it is a good friend moving, or the alienation of a former friend, to the loss of a pet, to the death of a loved one.

- **Home Life Changes**

The next category is change in our home lives. This would include things like getting married, having a child, breaking up, retiring, changing jobs, moving, going to school, remodeling and the list goes on and you could add to this one.

- **Personal Changes**

The next category is personal changes which includes getting sick or getting well again, changes in lifestyles, changing habits, experiencing successes and failures and again the list goes on.

- **Financial Changes**

Then we have the fourth category of work and financial changes which includes changing jobs, being promoted or demoted, increasing or decreasing income, taking on new loans, etc.

- **Inner Changes**

And the fifth category is inner change or things like spiritual awakenings, emotional breakdowns or enlightenments, changes in self image, or responding to God's call.¹

How many here have experienced at least one of these situational change triggers in the last month? How many have experienced at least one of these in the last week? A few years ago a pair of doctors got together and they started rating these triggers in terms of the stress they cause and they discovered a distinct correlation between accumulated change and physical and emotion illness. You pile a home remodel onto a change in job, or a loss of a good friend, and it could result in illness. Even though change is built into our natural life processes we don't like it one bit.

Greatest Change Stressors

THE COMMON CAUSES OF STRESS

Researchers at the University of Washington School of Medicine developed the following scale for ranking stressful events. The higher one's total score in any given year, the more likely that person may develop a serious illness in the near future.

Event	Value
Death of spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marital separation	65
Jail term	63
Death of family member	63
Personal injury or illness	53
Marriage	50
Fired from work	47
Marital reconciliation	45
Retirement	45
Family member's health	44
Pregnancy	40
Sex difficulties	39
Addition to family	39
Business readjustment	39

Change in financial status	38
Death of a close friend	37
Career change	36
Marital arguments	36
Mortgage or loan over \$10,000	31
Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30
Change in work responsibilities	29
Child leaving home	29
In-law problems	29
Outstanding personal achievement	28
Spouse begins or stops work	26
Starting or finishing school	26
Change in living conditions	25
Trouble with boss	23
Change in work hours, conditions	15
Change in eating habits	15
Vacation	13
Christmas season	12
Minor violation of law	12

Typical Responses to Change

When dealing with change in your live, we usually choose one of these responses... You become one of these types of people...

Doubter - you doubt that the change around you is even taking place. DENIAL

Touter - you think you are impervious to the pain, cares, results and outcome of change. PRIDE

Router - you pass the pains of change on to someone or something else. TRANSFERENCE

Pouter - you simply whine and complain throughout the entire change process. BABY

Punchouter - you attempt to slander, embarrass and hurt the person who has or is bringing forth change in your life. DESTRUCTION

Holdouter - you refuse to accept the change no matter what! OBSTINATE

Freakouter - you simply go bizzerk, not able to control your feelings, emotions or actions in dealing with change. CRAZY.

Shouter - you shout to God, thanking Him that He knows what is best for you in the midst of the change. PRAISE

Because we all have this paradoxical love/hate relationship with change and because it is something we have to deal with so often in our lives we all have a “preferred style” of behavior to either protect us from change or to allow us to embrace change. Let me describe some styles of behavior and see if you can identify yours.

Styles of Behavior

Denying It

Some of us like to deny it. I call this one the “[I-am-going-to-buy-a-yurt-in-Montana-and-live-without-any-television](#)” technique. I will be honest that there are some days when I watch the evening news and I witness what is now acceptable behavior and I want my yurt.

Fighting It

Another style is **fighting it**. I call this one the “[that’s-not-the-way-we-have-done-it-and-as-long-as-I-have-breath-in-my-lungs-I-am-going-to-fight-it](#)” technique. I actually prefer this style to its dysfunctional sister which is...

Passive/Aggressive Fighting It

... passive-aggressive fighting. I call that one “[before-I-accept-that-change-I-am-going-to-make-you-crawl-over-broken-glass-but-I-will-be-smiling-and-saying-how-sorry-I-am-for-your-struggle](#)” technique. I will have to say this is unfortunately one of the more popular styles of dealing with change.

Avoiding It

This one I call this one “[I-love-the-fact-that-this-is-happening-to-me-right-now-but-I’ve-really-got-to-go-and-take-care-of-something-incredibly-important-before-I-do-anything-else-or-someone-just-my-die-and-go-to-hell-if-I-don’t](#)” technique.

Complaining About It So Loud That It Never Happens

Or the complaining about it so loud that it never happens, “[I’d-love-to-accept-that-change-but-it’s-ridiculous-that-you-are-even-asking-me-to-for-I’m-not-worthy-not-able-not-smart-enough-not-pretty-enough-not-wise-enough-and-for-pete’s-sake-I’m-just-too-tired-too-hungry-too-sick-wha-wha-wha-wha-wha](#)” technique.

Manipulating It

This one I call the “[I’ll-change-but-it-had-better-be-the-way-I-want-it-or-I’m-going-to-take-my-ball-and-play-in-somebody-elses-playground-for-the-rest-of-my-life](#)” technique.

Ecc. 1:4-7; 9-11 “Generations come and go but it makes no difference. The sun rises and sets and hurries around to rise again. The wind blows south and north, here and there, twisting back and forth, getting nowhere. The rivers run into the sea but the sea is never full, and the water returns again to the rivers, and flows again to the sea. History merely repeats itself. Nothing is truly new; it has all been done or said before. What can you point to that is new? How do you

know it didn't exist long ages ago? We don't remember what happened in those former times, and in the future generations no one will remember what we have done back here."

10 REASONS WHY WE RESIST CHANGE

1. People misunderstand why they must change.
2. People lack ownership in the changing process.
3. People don't like to change their habit patterns.
4. People feel the new is not worth the price.
5. People resist when they are threatened with the loss of something valuable.
6. People are satisfied with the old.
7. People are just negative towards change.
8. People don't respect the change agent.
9. People have their traditions: we have never done it that way before.
10. People have greater resistance when change comes as a surprise.

QUESTIONS WE MUST ASK OURSELVES

1. Is my trust in God, or do I trust things, money, my talent, or my job?
2. Will change make me better or bitter?
3. What enemies will I make by this change?
4. What friends will I lose with this change?
5. Have I done a good job in handling change in the past?
6. Will I be open to admit a mistake when a change doesn't work?
7. Am I willing to pay the price that change demands?
8. Do I live my life by principles or am I blown about by every wind of change that comes along?
9. Can I make a decision about the future and make it work?
10. Will I be comfortable in God's care if change doesn't work?
11. Will the change pull me closer to God, or draw me away?
12. Am I changing God's principles, or the way things get done?

Information has changed:

- More information has been produced in the last thirty years than in the previous five thousand years.
- More than one-half the scientists who have ever lived are alive today.
- Ninety per cent of all the items in the supermarket today did not exist ten years ago.

- It is estimated that fifty per cent of college graduates are going into jobs which did not exist when they were born.
- It is also estimated that ninety per cent of the businesses in the United States today were started in the last twenty five years. These kind of changes are taking place in every field.

Travel has changed:

More than two hundred years ago George Washington traveled from Virginia to Washington D.C. by horseback. It could take him ten days traveling at a speed of twenty five miles per day. Today astronauts can enter a space shuttle and travel at twenty five thousand miles per hour. At that speed you could fly from New York City to San Francisco in eight minutes.

With all these advances in air travel it is possible to have breakfast in New York, lunch in Dallas, and dinner in Los Angeles -- and have your luggage wind up in Mexico.

One man put it this way:

"My great-grandfather rode a horse, but was afraid of the train.

My grandfather rode on a train, but was afraid of a car.

My father rode in a car, but was afraid of an airplane.

I ride in an airplane, but I'm afraid of a horse."

The Media has changed:

Since the thirties movies have gone from silent to unspeakable.

Since the fifties when we had three networks: NBC, ABC, and CBS; we now have 750 channels - so that by the time we find the program we want to watch - it is already over!

And to many, television talk shows have become just one big grab-bag of dysfunctional people talking about their miserable lives.

Many changes have turned our world into a war game.

- Political corruption abounds.
- Crime rate escalates as domestic violence, gang wars, and drug traffickers plague our communities.

- One out of every four households in the United States will be touched by theft or a violent crime this year.
- One out of every five women of child-bearing age will have an abortion this year. In 1995, 1.5 million babies were killed. Within our memories, abortion was a felony in virtually every state in America. Today abortion is common place.
- Every four seconds a woman is violently assaulted somewhere in America.
- One in every four members of a church or synagogue is a victim/survivor of sexual or domestic violence.
- Drug abuse, suicide, sexual disease, and AIDS are major problems that should concern every one of us.

Our schools are in trouble:

In the fifties the major discipline problems in our public schools were cigarette smoking, skipping class, running in the halls, spit balls, chewing gum, and whispering in class. Today - the major problems are deadly weapons - kids carrying guns, knives, and even assault weapons. This is followed by arson, drugs, vandalism, and drunkenness.

Recently in Florida a high school teacher observed a number of boys in the corner of the gymnasium on their hands and knees. Rushing up to the boys, the teacher demanded, "What are you doing?" One of the boys looked up and answered, "We're shooting dice!" The teacher responded with, "Oh, thank goodness. I thought you were praying."

Relationships are changing. Fifty per cent of our marriages now end in divorce. And the odds are, when a couple walks down the aisle to be married; their marriage will not last seven years. One of them will walk out before the warranty on the refrigerator runs out!

Forty two per cent of our young people say they are sexually active; and one of every sixteen teenage girls has a baby each year. Our society has abandoned God's laws of relationships and has been writing their own. We have reached a state where common decency is no longer common. All our doing without God has finally outdone us.

With all these changes creating chaos and crises we, as a church, have been trying to hold on.

Just look how change has been impacting our churches:

Eighty to eighty-five per cent of our churches in America are on a plateau or are declining.

The number of unchurched Americans is escalating to sixty per cent or more in the '90s.

Two-thirds of our children in America are receiving no religious training.

We are facing years ahead when it will become increasingly difficult to minister -- probably already. The church is dealing and will be dealing with issues that no one could have imagined fifty years ago. So, as our world appears to be whirling out of control, racing toward a collision with certain calamity -- what can we do?

During the Battle Times of Life in the Midst of Change, allow me to encourage you to adhere to the following guidelines.

Three Things that Will Never Change

The Bible says that there are three things that won't change. In your battle, you can count on these three things never changing. It's these three things that you can rely upon in an unreliable world. It's these three things you can hang your hat on in a world of uncertainty. No matter your battle, these things will never change!

1. GOD'S LOVE WILL NEVER CHANGE.

In **Malachi 3:6**, God says, "***I, the Lord, do not change.***" There's a theological term for that called the immutability of God. That means He's always been the same, He is the same right now, and He will always be the same. Why does God never change? Is it that He can't? Is it that He doesn't want to? Is it that He's stuck in His ways? Why does God never change?

It's because He's perfect. And because God is perfect, He can't get any better – and He can't get any worse. If you're perfect there is no reason to change, because you are perfect. So God says, "***I never change.***"

In **Jeremiah 31:3**, He says this "***I have loved you with an everlasting love.***" You were created as an object of God's love. You were made to be loved by God. You want to know why you're here on this earth? You were created to be loved by God. His love is continuous. It is everlasting. It is consistent. The Bible says that God is always unchanging in His love toward us.

That is such good news. Because while God is consistent, I am incredibly inconsistent. The Bible teaches that God loves me just as much on my good days as He does on my bad days. He loves me when I feel it and He loves me when I don't feel it. He loves me when I think I'm close to Him and doing the right thing and He loves me when I'm not close to Him and I'm not doing the right thing. His love is not based on my performance. His love is based on His character. It is consistent. It is continual. It is everlasting.

No matter what happens to you in the next year 2012, or even tomorrow, there is one thing you can be sure of: *God is not going to stop loving you.* No matter what you go through, nothing is going to separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 119:159 proclaims, *“Your love never changes.”* You can count on God no matter what happens in the next year, or even tomorrow, because God is never going to stop loving you.

The point is this: We always get into trouble when we doubt God’s love. Always. I never need to doubt His love for me. There are a lot of things I could worry about but I don’t have to worry about that one. No matter how I feel, no matter what I’ve done, or what I’ve thought, God’s love is based on His character.

Romans 8:38 is a marvelous verse. Listen to it in the Message translation: *“Nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, thinkable or unthinkable -- absolutely nothing can get between us and God’s love.”* That means you can go to bed tonight, confident of the fact that tomorrow morning when you get up God is not going to have changed His mind about you. You will never be loved by God any more than you are at this very moment. You will never be loved by God any less than you are at this very moment. God’s love never changes. That is something I can anchor my life to.

2. GOD’S WORD WILL NEVER CHANGE

In **Isaiah 40:8** God says, *“The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the Word of our God shall stand forever.”* It’s timeless, enduring, and eternal. It never withers; it’s always fresh. It doesn’t get stale. God’s Word is never out of date.

That’s one reason why we fast and pray, and walk through God’s Word here at Eastgate Community Church at the beginning of each new year. We are saying that we believe God’s Word is eternal – it will guide us today and it will lead us into the new millennium.

Psalm 119:152 says, *“Long ago I learned from Your statutes that You established them to last forever.”* God’s Word will last forever because it is eternal. Jesus said it like this: *“Heaven and earth will pass away but My word will never pass away.”*

Did you catch the cover of a recent [U.S. News and World Report](#)? Alongside a dramatic painting of Adam and Eve, the title of the cover story asks, “Is the Bible True?” Based upon some new archaeological evidence, the article answers the question with a confident, *“Yes!”* Brothers and sisters, we have nothing to fear from scientific inquiry into the Bible. We should welcome it. Why? Because the Word of God is true and will never change.

When the American astronaut [Alan Shepherd](#) was getting ready to go up into space for the very first time, a reporter asked him *“What are you depending on in this flight?”* His answer is classic: *“I’m depending upon the fact that God’s laws will not change.”* Great answer.

These laws do not change because God's Word does not change. What would happen if gravity worked every other day? Would that put a crimp in your lifestyle?

In the same way, God has established some moral and spiritual laws for the universe. God gives these parameters for our good. When we ignore these spiritual laws, we don't break them – they break us. *We* get hurt. Every time I ignore God's laws, I hurt myself. They're there for my benefit. When I go against what God says, it causes stress. It causes worry. It causes guilt. It causes anger. It causes conflict in relationships.

God says to you and He says to me, ***"I want you to listen to My word."*** Do you know what the most basic fundamental temptation is? It's the temptation that Adam and Eve had and it's the same one you have every single day of your life: the temptation to doubt God's word. We hear it like this: *"Did God really say, don't do that?"* If Satan can get you to question God's Word, you're going to fall for anything.

Listen to what Jesus said in **Matthew 5:24**: ***"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice, is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."*** Jesus is saying if you want to have a stable home, you've got to build it on an unchanging foundation. You've got to build on a rock.

The same is true for your life. If you want to build your life in a way that is solid and significant and handles the stress and the changes of the 21st century, you'd better build it on the truth of God's Word, because it is bedrock. It is not going to change. Popular opinion is going to change, psychology books are going to change, what the talk radio hosts talk about is going to change. Everything else changes. But God's Word does not. So if you want stability, build your life on God's unchanging truth.

Here's a secret stabilizer from personal experience: if you want to lower the stress and raise the confidence in your life, battling the enemy, memorize scripture. That is probably the most significant habit that I can encourage you to develop this next year. As you read the Bible and you find a verse that really speaks to you, take out a pen, write it down on a three by five card and memorize it.

Some of you say, *"I can't memorize."* Actually, we memorize what we're interested in. I know guys who say they can't memorize but they remember every baseball statistic for the last ten years.

3. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MY LIFE WILL NEVER CHANGE

That's the third thing I can understand and know confidently. God's purpose for my life will never change. **1 Samuel 15:29** teaches that: ***"God is not a man. He doesn't change His mind."*** I'm really glad for that verse. Long before you were born, God planned you. And that plan has never changed. He created you for a purpose. You were made for a reason. If you are alive today, God has a purpose for your life.

Have you noticed that your plans often get changed? Why? There are at least two reasons: One, you can't see the future. You don't have foresight. You don't have the perspective. None of us can know what's going to happen tomorrow, much less ten years from now.

The other reason your plans often get changed is you don't always have the means to pull them off. You may have a great plan, but you don't have the time or you don't have the money, or you don't have the energy or intelligence or the opportunity or the power to pull it all off. Contrast that with God. God never has to change His plans. Never. Why? Because God is all knowing – He's omniscient. And God is all-powerful – He's omnipotent. So God never has to change His plans. He already knows everything that's going to happen and He already has the power to do anything He wants to do. So He doesn't ever have to change His plans. His plan for you has never changed – and it never will.

Since God says, ***"I made you for a purpose and that plan doesn't change,"*** that brings up three very important questions:

1. Can I miss God's purpose for my life? Absolutely. Of course you can miss it. Millions and millions of people miss God's purpose for their life all the time. You can miss it by neglect. You can miss God's purpose for your life by arrogance – by doing your plan and not God's. You can miss it by disobedience, by rebellion, and by laziness. You can live your entire life and never fulfill the reason you were actually put on this earth. That's a tragedy, but God never forces His purpose on us. It's a choice where you say, ***"Jesus Christ, I want You to be my Lord. I want to follow Your plan and purpose for my life."***

2. Can I get back on track after wasting years of my life? Absolutely. **Psalm 33:11:** ***"His plans endure forever. His purposes last eternally."*** That means that no matter what has happened in your life to date, God's purpose for your life has not changed because He's unchanging. His purposes never change. Some of you may say, *"But you don't know about that moral blowout I had three years ago or ten years ago. You don't know about that sin, that stupid decision I made where I took the wrong turn in life and wasted ten or twenty years or more. You don't know."* I say this: Regardless of what has happened in your life up to this point – God has not given up on you. And He never will. No matter what's happened.

Let the truth of **Proverbs 19:21** penetrate your life: ***"You can make many plans but the Lord's purpose will prevail."***

That brings up the third question:

3. What about all those dumb things I've done? What about all those stupid decisions and bad choices? Those things that I regret and wish had never happened and I'd like to go back and do over?

Romans 8:28: ***"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him and who have been called according to His purpose."*** We know that in all things God works for the

good of those who love Him. It doesn't say in some things. It doesn't say in the good things. It says in all things.

It does not say that all things are good. No, not all things are good. There is a lot of evil and heartache in the world. I've experienced some of it and so have you. It says in all things God works for good. He can take evil and tragedies and turn them around and bring good out of them. He loves to turn crucifixions into resurrections.

The Bible says, ***in all things God works for the good.*** For everyone? No, this is not a promise for everybody in the whole world. It is a promise for those who love Him, those who are called according to His purpose. Only when you say, *"Jesus Christ, I want to be Yours. I want to take all the pieces of my life and let You give me Your peace for my pieces. I want to give You all this."* Think about the biggest disappointment or hurt you've ever had. Or think about the thing you regret most in your life. Think about the dumbest thing you've ever done, your most unwise choice. Think about the most hurtful thing somebody else has done to you.

God saw it all before it ever happened. And He has found a way to weave it into His plan and purpose for your good, for your growth, and for His glory. What a God! He is good – all the time. No matter what you've gone through, whether it was your fault or somebody else's. God can use it for good if you give Him the pieces.

What are you afraid of? When you think about the future, what's your stomach in a knot about? When you think about the changes that are coming in your life, what is it that causes your back muscles and neck to tense up, or your face to feel flushed, or your mouth to go dry, because you wonder, *"I don't know if I can handle this or not."*

Regardless of what it is that's got you stressed out this morning, no matter the battle you are currently in, why don't you do what David did in **Psalm 56:11**: ***"I trust in God, so why should I be afraid?"*** Why should I be afraid? I trust in God. Then he says this, ***"God is our refuge and strength, a tested help [He's proven reliable] in times of trouble. And so we need not fear even if the world blows up and the mountains crumble into the sea."*** The truth is I don't know what the future holds. I don't know what the next millennium holds and either do you.

But I do know three things. And I know if I build my life on these three unchangeable facts, on these three islands of stability, I can handle enormous stress and change in my life. I know this:

- God will never stop loving me, even when I feel unlovable.
- God's Word is always true. It may not make sense. It may seem unreasonable and unpopular, but it is always the truth.
- God's purposes are greater than my problems.

Any time I start doubting these things – these three grand truths – I get myself in trouble. When I start doubting God's love, I start disobeying Him. When I start doubting God's Word, I tend to do my own thing. When I begin doubting that God has a purpose, I start saying *"Why are all these problems happening to me? Why me? What's going on?"* And I start doubting that God

really is in control. So if you want to face the future confidently and cope victoriously with change and the battles that come with it, all you need to do is respond. You see, it's not automatic. God offers us stability, but we must *respond* in order to activate His power in our lives.

3 Responses: Accept God's love. Believe God's Word, Commit to God's purpose

That's it. That's all you need for your future. **Accept** God's love, **believe** God's Word, and **commit** to God's purpose and you will make it. You do these three things and you have no need to fear any of the changes that will come your way.

Pray this prayer in your heart right now. God will hear you. *Dear God, I realize there are many things in my life that are beyond my control. You know that sometimes I have a difficult time adjusting to all the difficult changes around me. I need Your stability in my life, Jesus. I want to start focusing on the things that will never change. Thank You that You will never stop loving me. Thank You so much. Today I accept Your love through Jesus Christ. Thank You for Your unchanging word. Help me to learn it and live by it. Thank You for making me for a purpose. In this next year, I want to get to know You better and Your plan for my life. I ask You to forgive me for the years that I've wasted, but I want to get back on track today. I open up my life to You, dear Lord. Come in and take control.*

Conclusion:

Change is inevitable. How you handle that change will make all the difference in the world in regards to the IMPACT you will make on this earth. It's a battle during the change, but on the other side – there is victory! So, handle the changes of life knowing you are victorious!

And as you do... You watch... you wait... you'll see!
