

Open to Change?

How do you handle change, even when it is brought on by God?

Numbers 13:17-33 NKJV Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains, (18) and see what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; (19) whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; (20) whether the land is rich or poor; and whether there are forests there or not. Be of good courage. And bring some of the fruit of the land." Now the time was the season of the first ripe grapes. (21) So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. (22) And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) (23) Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. (24) The place was called the Valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the men of Israel cut down there. (25) And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. (26) Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. (27) Then they told him, and said: "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. (28) Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. (29) The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan." (30) Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it." (31) But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." (32) And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. (33) There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

- Joshua & Caleb came back and told of the great opportunity they saw and let's take the land God promised
- The others only saw the difficulty of changing their present situation and occupying the land God had promised
- God will have his way and did...but those that would not seek and fight to fulfill the will of God did not get to experience it when it happened

We are going through a time of change, a lot of change right now. Change happens – trying to stop change equates to trying to stop the passing of time

- You can drag your feet and complain
- Or you can gather as much about what is happening and adapt, change, and even enjoy
 - Positives of staying at home...
- Most of us view any change through the glasses of how it was and what we are comfortable with
 - The Jewish leadership and Jesus Christ
- Others view changes as how it could be, should be, how God wishes...
 - The followers of Christ

Let's look back at the Israelites and the promised land - Hanging on to old beliefs will hold you back from new directions from the Lord

- Israelites in Egypt – they wanted better, liked the blessing upon leaving, but always compared back when the change they were involved with became challenging.
- **Luke 9:62 NKJV But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."**
 - Plowing – changing the environment to produce what will feed you and others

The quicker you let go of old beliefs, the sooner you will find the new that the Lord is leading us to

During this time and unique situation – what do you want? Go back to how it was or seek and move into the next step the Lord has for you and us?

- Feeling a little lost and not knowing what to do? Don't do nothing, don't complain, Seek out the Lord will lead us to a new and deeper relationship with Him and those around us. New and more effective ways to share His gospel and minister.
- Two farmers and the drought story

I don't just want to get back to church and be the same as before, It was good yet do you think it was exactly the way the Lord wanted? I want to seek out what this present situation has allowed us to find that Lord would want us to be led to.

- Imagine the fellowship and assembling together that
 - Allows our worship to grow
 - Allows our praise to grow
 - Allows our edifying one another to grow
 - Allows our love for one another to grow
 - Allows your relationship with God the Father and His son Jesus Christ to grow, deepen in trust and faith.
- This will only happen if WE, not Me, want this and will seek after it... is it worth it?

Changing has an element of risk –

- I know what I have is not perfect, but will this change be better?
- Sometimes change is modifying or adding to what you have...and that entails focus and energy
 - Is it and will it be worth it...
- Sometimes it is to literally leave one thing and move to something new
 - Born again
 - Repentance
 - His will not my will
- Change can entail risk and Anxiety
 - Energy, direction, goal
 - Trust

As we move forward, the environment we live is different than what it was.

- Some of us will not be able to fellowship physically with the body because of health risks
 - What is the will of God on how to deal with this?
- If someone gets sick because of our gathering together...how do we look at it?

- How we want to do things, children Sunday school, pot lucks, community worship now have a health and safety variable we never had to deal with

What are we doing with our mind, heart and energies?

- Do we see it as an opportunity the Lord has opened to us to grow and step deeper in His will?
 - Truly immersing yourself into your relationship with Christ,
 - understanding his commandments more fully,
 - Seeking and living a deeper understanding of your role in the Kingdom of God and His Body
- Or blaming others that caused the change – There has to be a way to get back to the way it was
 - God will have His way...Israelites and promised land

I don't have an answer, but know the Lord want to make us stronger, individual and as a body in His Kingdom because of this and through this. Here are some scriptures that can help you, me, and us as we seek "what's next"

- Proverbs 19:2 GNB Enthusiasm without knowledge is not good; impatience will get you into trouble.
- Proverbs 18:15 NKJV The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
- Joshua 1:9 NKJV Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."
- Jeremiah 29:11 MKJV For I know the purposes which I am purposing for you, says Jehovah; purposes of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.
- Isaiah 43:19 MKJV Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall sprout; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.

What to do:

- Pray, truly pray and seek with such sincerity that when you believe the Lord puts something on your heart you have the confidence to share.
- Read, study, and establish out of His Word the image God has for:
 - You and your life and your relationship with Him
 - Your involvement with the body of Christ
 - You ministry to the lost
- Be both confident enough and humble enough to listen to others that you know love and life for the Lord that may view things different than you.
 - Jerusalem meeting on the gentiles
- Listen to all,
- Pray
- Then act on what to do
 - Me and purchase of the church and the organ.
 - The Lord did not tell me it was the right thing to do, but told me to trust in Bob
- We have some time...take advantage of it and we all need to seek the Lord on what new things He is opening up for us because of what we are presently going through.