

## **Brief Perspective on Transitions (Changing Seasons)**

*Change is inevitable<sup>1</sup>. Growth is optional.*

*John Maxwell (1947- )*

*The author is asking if we are growing spiritually in the midst of the changing circumstances and through the different seasons of life.*

*The critical questions to ask (if the quote resonate strongly in our head and heart) are 'Who are we changing to?' and 'How does spiritual change occur?'*

*I suspect most of us know the answer to the first question. God's goal is to transform us to become like His Son (Rom 8:28).*

*To answer the second question, most of us would prefer some sort of 'Road to Damascus' experience where God would zap us and transformed us almost instantaneously. But God does not work this way. What kind of processes does God use to change a person?*

*There are many processes that are important but I will highlight two: Prayer and the Word of God.*

<sup>1</sup> **in-ev-i-ta-ble**/in'evitəbəl/

Adjective: Certain to happen; unavoidable:.

## Brief Perspective on Transitions (Changing Seasons)

### Warming Up

1. When does a person decide to change?
2. In the context of spiritual change, what are the benefits of change and what are the consequences of non-change?

### Into the Passages

*Read Jonah 4*

*God's character does not change - Malachi 3:6 'I the LORD do not change' (NIV)*

3. What was the context in which the LORD declared that He does not change? How does this declaration of God comfort us?

*God's Word does not change - Isaiah 40:8 'The grass withers and the flowers fall but the word of our God endures forever'.*

4. To what is the eternal Word of God contrasted against?

*God's purpose does not change - Hebrews 6:17-20  
'... unchanging nature of his purpose...'*

5. What was God's purpose in the context of these verses? To whom was His purpose revealed?

### ***The call of the eternal unchanging God***

*Joel 2:12-14*

6. What was the call of the eternal God to His people (the southern nation of Judah) then? Did His people heed His call?

### Moving Forward

*When we see as God sees, then we will do as He says. The converse is also true, when we cannot 'see', then we will not do what God says.*

*The ability to test and approve what God's will is (Rom 12:1-2) belongs to the transformed person, whose mind is being renewed by the Word of God.*

7. Let's choose this path of delighting in God's Word because the benefit is immense (the ability to know God's will!).

### Life Together

*Practise the principle, glean the benefit and pass it on. Some of us in BCEC have learnt that community living is powerful – small group is the place where we love one another, where we study the Word of God together, where we pray together. Now that we have benefitted from community living, be God's change agent in getting BCEC members who are not already in small group to join one.*

## Brief Perspective on Transitions (Changing Seasons)

*These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.*

2. In the context of spiritual change, what are the benefits of change and what are the consequences of non-change?

*[Notes are not normally provided for Warming Up questions but this question warrant an exception]*

***God's goal for us is transformation into the image of His Son, Jesus. Those who embark on this narrow path back to the Father enjoy an intimate walk with Jesus, experiencing the peace and joy of the Holy Spirit despite their outward circumstances.***

***Those believers who do not desire God have their minds set on the things of this world – unable to appropriate the promises of God to escape the corruption of life in this world (besetting sin, lack of joy and peace).***

### Into the passages

*God's character does not change - Malachi 3:6 'I the LORD do not change' (NIV)*

3. What was the context in which the LORD declared that He does not change? How does this declaration of God comforts us?

***Malachi was prophesying to the Jewish exiles that they were not completely destroyed because the LORD is God of the covenant. God does not change as He had made the covenant with Abraham. God did not blot them from the face of the earth despite their persistent unfaithfulness.***

***The covenant God made with us through Christ is superior and likewise Jesus is the same, yesterday, today and forever. Heb 13:8***

*God's Word does not change - Isaiah 40:8 'The grass withers and the flowers fall but the word of our God endures forever'.*

4. To what is the eternal Word of God contrasted against?

***The transitory life of men and their fleeting faithfulness.***

*God's purpose does not change - Hebrews 6:17-20  
'... unchanging nature of his purpose...'*

5. What was God's purpose in the context of these verses? To whom was His purpose revealed?

***God's unchanging purpose was to reconcile men to Himself. This purpose of reconciliation is revealed to all recipients (including us) and we have the privileges of being ministers of reconciliation.***

*The call of the eternal unchanging God*

*Joel 2:12-14*

6. What was the call of the eternal God to His people (the southern nation of Judah) then? Did His people heed His call?

***The call of God was for His people to return to Him and to embrace His purpose. Unfortunately, Judah did not heed His call and God judged them by allowing the heathen (the Babylonians) to conquer them.***