

Planning Any Changes?

by Wayne Goff

It's a new year, 2020! That sounds amazing to me and far *later* than 2019. I'm not sure why. Maybe it's because we are also in a new decade. So now we consider those new year **resolutions**. It's another word for **changes**. You may not make any new year's resolutions, but I hope and pray that you decide to make some **changes** this year.

We all need to improve, to do better, and to give back more than we have received. Thus the need for change. Biblically, change means "**repent**." And oh, how people hate that word! But consider that if you never plan to do better, then you are as good as dead! Staying *just like you* are is stagnation, apathy, indifference, lazy.

Here are some things in the Bible that "**change**:"

- Wages, Gen. 31:7, 41
- Clothing, Gen. 41:14
- Behavior, 1 Sam. 21:13
- Names, 2 Kings 23:34; 24:17
- Earth life to eternity, Job 14:14; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52
- Promises, Psalm 15:4
- The heavens, Psalm 102:26; Hebrews 1:12
- Politics, Proverbs 24:21
- Laws, Isaiah 24:5
- Minds, Jeremiah 34:11
- Times & seasons, Daniel 2:21
- Man's countenance, Daniel 5:9

Keep in mind that every person who ever became a Christian had to experience the *change* of **repentance**. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ introduced the coming Kingdom into the world with the words: "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!*" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). Every single disciple of the Lord needed to change, and needs to change today.

Jesus explained further that God has always desired mercy over ritual, Matthew 9:13. So "just going to church" is not change.

That men are **extremely resistant** to change is obvious from the fact that even Jesus Christ could not get the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin to repent! (Matt. 11:20-21). If Jesus could not effect change in men, then many preachers today will face the same discouragement. But beware, dear reader, that you are not one of them. The only ones who do not need to change are the "*righteous*," (Mk. 2:17). But Jesus said that to those who were self-righteous!

Jesus preached 2,000 years ago, and we preach today that all of us need to "*bear fruits worthy of repentance*" (Lk. 3:8) because if you do not "*repent you will all likewise perish*" (Lk. 13:3, 5). Every person must change his ways when he becomes a Christian. And every Christian must faithfully examine himself to be sure that he is still in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5). That comes only by faithful attendance to one's self (see Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:16).

Some **changes** that you *may* need to make this year, as opportunity affords you: (1) priorities, Matt. 6:33; (2) contributions, 2 Cor. 8:3-5; (3) sinful habits, Rom. 6:2, 6-7; (4) foul language, Eph. 4:29; (5) bad temper, Eph. 4:26; (6) lying, Eph. 4:25; (7) laziness at work, Eph. 4:28b; (8) bitterness, malice, Eph. 4:31; (8) hatred toward others, especially your brethren, Eph. 4:31-32; (9) bad study habits, 2 Tim. 2:15; (10) Love, 1 Cor. 13:4-6. **Just remember:** *Change for the better is not only a good thing, it is life.* No change means death.

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