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Crossroads Community Church

Sunday June 2nd, 2013

The morning started a little grey but the ?Son? shone right on time to greet us. Pastor Don blessed the service with prayer, shared announcements and the worship team lead us in beautiful praises to the Lord. Bob read Isaiah 55:1-3.

Pastor Don asked a question, ?Have you seen lately in the stores all the camping gear?? There are many things to choose from. Many go camping in huge motorized campers with all the perks, running water and A/C and others just pack a tent, camp stove and all portable gear in the trunk of their car. One is very comfortable, not unlike home however the second requires a change, stepping out of a comfort zone. That is what transformation with Jesus is like and what He is all about. Our transformation truly begins when we turn from the familiar and step into the unknown. ?Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect,? (Romans 12:1-2).

God has good plans for us, He wants our thinking to be changed, he wants our relationship with Jesus to progress into a deeper one. He wants to take away bad habits, replace them with good ones, rework our priorities and He wants shape our characters to be like His Son. He removes the veil of ignorance and reveals Himself setting us free to learn from Him and let His Spirit change us to reflect His Son, (2 Corinthians 3:16-18). This doesn't mean God wants us to be all the same, He loves our diversity after all He is the one who gave us our talents and personalities but we are not the perfect us He envisioned because of our sin. So He wants our hearts and attitudes to be like Jesus because He was sinless and He began the work when we came to faith in Jesus, (Philippians 1:6). To be followers of Jesus is a process of continually changing, learning and growing in character and love for God. We all go through difficult periods along the way but we keep going keeping focus on Jesus until we obtain the promise of eternal life which is the goal of our faith,(Philippians 3:12-14).

We often know what it is we need to change but we sometimes put up blocks so we don't change. The first step is admitting we need to change, it isn't automatic and we are not meant to do it alone, our transformation is a team effort between us and our Heavenly Father through the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This requires Salvation; it is being spared from God's punishment we deserve for our sins; it cannot be earned by our own actions, it is by God's Grace a free gift (Ephesians 2:5,8)Furthermore, He continues with what we believers know as sanctification, which in simple terms is the lifelong process of changing our minds, our attitudes, our characters and our hearts into what it was meant to be and to reflect the heart of Jesus.

Change is a choice but why do so many of us resist change? Well the familiar is less scary than the unfamiliar, it gives us a false sense of power and control, it makes us feel safe and certain. Even our attitudes of resentment, anger, pride and self-defence make us seem strong and fearless but they are all a false sense of security. Sometimes it is easier to stay how we are than to risk the unknown and Jesus understood that, here is an example, in John 5:1-9,?? One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, ?Would you like to get well?? ?I can't, sir,? the sick man said, ?for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.? Jesus told him, ?Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!? Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! Do you want to get well Jesus asked, seems like an odd question, but sometimes it's hard to step out into unfamiliar circumstances. We see in the story the man had been sick most of his life, he had learned to cope with his situation and didn't know any different than what he was accustomed to, begging and relying on others to move him. So to regain the use of his legs would transform his life. Scary maybe, but exciting too and the man obviously chose to believe and focus on Jesus then picked up his mat and walked!

So what do we want God to change in our lives, have we counted the cost? Do we believe Jesus can change us or are we focusing on our familiar circumstances? Are we ready to leave the past behind and move forward in our relationship with Christ? (Philippians 3:8). Beloved when we center our thoughts and hearts on Jesus every little change is worthwhile no matter how scary it may seem at first, let us be strong and courageous as He commands and let us not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD our God is with us wherever we go. Asherey Shalom!

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