

## “GROWING THROUGH THE TRANSITIONS OF LIFE”

### PART 3

*THE MOST DIFFICULT THING WITH TRANSITIONS IS REALIZING THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT IN YOUR LIFE. IT IS NOT SO MUCH THAT YOU ARE IN A DIFFERENT SEASON OF LIFE; IT IS WHAT I WILL BECOME OR NEED TO DO DIFFERENT WHEN THINGS CHANGE.*

*ACTS 13:1-5- PAUL AND BARNABAS WERE SEPERATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GO ON A MISSIONARY JOURNEY.*

*ACTS 15:36- PAUL AND BARNABAS SPLIT AFTER A DISSAGREEMENT.*

*GOD WANTS US TO THRIVE THROUGH THE TRANSITIONS WE FACE IN LIFE THAT THE ENEMY MEANT FOR EVIL, BUT GOD TURNS IT FOR OUR GOD.*

*EVERY CHANGE IN OUR LIFE REQUIRES US TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THRIVE IN THE CHANGE.*

*AT SOME POINT IN LIFE, YOU LEARN THE LESSON THAT NO ONE WANTS TO LEARN THE HARD WAY—EVERYTHING IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. EVEN IF YOU HAVE THE DREAM JOB OR THE “PERFECT” RELATIONSHIP, IT’S EASY TO LIVE IN FEAR OF LOSING THESE THINGS. INSTEAD, ASK GOD TO HELP YOU LOOK TO HIM FOR STEADINESS.*

*PSALM 62 PAINTS THE PERFECT PICTURE OF THIS. WHEN NOTHING ELSE IN LIFE IS STEADY, REACH FOR THE ROCK WHO IS.*

*YOU CAN BECOME A PRO AT HANDLING CHANGE THROUGH PRAYER, STUDYING GOD’S WORD, LEANING ON COMMUNITY, AND CONSTANTLY REMINDING YOURSELF OF THESE BIBLICAL TRUTHS:*

- **GOD IS WITH YOU** (JOSHUA 1:9)
- **GOD LOVES YOU** (JOHN 3:16)
- **GOD IS IN CONTROL** (JOB 42:2)
- **GOD HAS A GOOD PLAN** (ROMANS 8:28)
- **GOD DOESN'T CHANGE** (NUMBERS 23:19)

## **2. DON'T REACH FOR FALSE SECURITY** (1 JOHN 5:21).

WHEN NOTHING IN LIFE FEELS CERTAIN, IT'S EASY TO LOOK AROUND AND "GRASP" FOR ANYTHING TO "HOLD ON TO" THAT CAN MAKE YOU FEEL STABLE OR COMFORTABLE. FOR SOME, THAT LOOKS LIKE CONTROLLING WHAT YOU EAT (OR DON'T EAT). FOR OTHERS, IT MIGHT BE JUMPING INTO A RELATIONSHIP THAT ISN'T HEALTHY OR TRYING TO CONTROL THE BEHAVIOR OF PEOPLE AROUND YOU.

DEEP DOWN YOU FEEL OUT OF CONTROL OF YOURSELF, SO YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN TO TRY TO FEEL STABLE AND IN CONTROL AGAIN.

DOING SO MIGHT HELP YOU FOR A MINUTE, BUT IT WILL SET YOU UP FOR FAILURE LONG-TERM. YOU'LL BE DISAPPOINTED WHEN THAT "CRUTCH" YOU LEANED ON ALSO CHANGES. JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN PROVIDE LASTING STABILITY AND SECURITY. RECOGNIZE WHERE YOU "REACH" FOR FALSE SECURITY AND TURN TO JESUS INSTEAD.

## **3. ACKNOWLEDGE THE CHANGE** (1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18).

SO MANY PEOPLE JUMP FROM ONE SEASON TO THE NEXT, BUT STILL FEEL STUCK AND WONDER WHY. THEY MISS THIS IMPORTANT STEP.

WHETHER IT WAS A GOOD CHANGE OR A BAD CHANGE, IT'S STILL A CHANGE. WHERE APPLICABLE, GRIEVE WHAT YOU LEFT BEHIND OR "LOST," WHETHER THAT'S CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS, A ROUTINE YOU ONCE HAD, A PLACE YOU ONCE KNEW, OR FEELINGS YOU ONCE EXPERIENCED. WE'RE NOT SAYING WISH FOR THE PAST OR LONG FOR WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE. INSTEAD, WE'RE SAYING YOU CAN ACKNOWLEDGE IT FOR WHAT IT WAS AND THANK GOD IN THE MIDST OF IT.

*AT THE SAME TIME, DON'T GET STUCK IN THE PAST. KEEP MOVING FORWARD BUT GRIEVE WELL INSTEAD OF STUFFING YOUR FEELINGS DOWN AND WHITE KNUCKLING YOUR WAY ONTO THE NEXT THING.*

*IT'S NORMAL TO EXPERIENCE BOTH GRIEF AND GRATITUDE, SOMETIMES SIMULTANEOUSLY. WHILE CHANGE CAN BE A GOOD THING, IT MIGHT STILL BE APPROPRIATE TO GRIEVE WHAT'S LOST. WE SEE AN EXAMPLE OF THIS WITH JESUS ON THE CROSS. IN ORDER TO OFFER SALVATION TO THE WORLD, HE HAD TO DIE. NO ONE CAN ARGUE THAT JESUS OFFERING SALVATION TO THE WORLD WASN'T GOOD, BUT IT REQUIRED CHANGE THAT WASN'T EASY FOR BOTH JESUS AND THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM.*

#### **4. GIVE YOURSELF THE TIME AND SPACE TO ADAPT (PSALM 103:14).**

*CONSIDER THAT CHANGE IS CALLED CHANGE FOR A REASON. IF YOU'RE EXPERIENCING CHANGE, THAT MEANS THAT THERE IS SOMETHING NEW TO ADAPT TO, AND YOU'LL NEED TIME TO DO THIS WELL. YOU'RE NOT ALONE IN THAT—IT'S PART OF BEING HUMAN! CHANGE CAN MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE NOT "YOURSELF" FOR A WHILE. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU'RE JUMPING INTO A NEW JOB, CONSIDER THAT YOU MAY NOT CRUSH IT RIGHT AWAY, AND THAT'S OKAY. YOU'RE LIKELY IN A PHASE OF ADAPTING AND LEARNING. WITH TIME, YOU'LL BECOME ADAPTED TO YOUR NEW JOB ONCE AGAIN.*

*CONTINUE SHOWING UP ONE DAY AT A TIME, AND DON'T BE HARD ON YOURSELF FOR NEEDING TIME TO ADAPT. AS YOU TALK WITH GOD AND COMMUNITY TO PROCESS YOUR EMOTIONS IN A HEALTHY WAY, IT'S LIKELY THAT YOU'LL EVENTUALLY FIND A NEW NORMAL (PROBS RIGHT BEFORE BEING THROWN INTO ANOTHER SEASON OF CHANGE—BUT HEY, THAT'S LIFE).*

#### **5. LEARN TO APPRECIATE DIFFERENT SEASONS (ECCLESIASTES 3).**

*GOD WRITES STORIES STRATEGICALLY. LIKE EVERY GOOD STORY, THERE WILL BE GOOD PARTS, HARD PARTS, AND PARTS THAT HAVE YOU ON THE EDGE OF YOUR SEAT. THE SAME IS TRUE WITH THE STORY GOD IS WRITING FOR YOUR LIFE. IN FACT,*

THE STORY HAS ALREADY BEEN WRITTEN. INSTEAD OF FIGHTING OFF SEASONS THAT FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE OR HARD, LEAN INTO YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND OTHERS AND CHOOSE TO BE PRESENT IN YOUR CURRENT SEASON.

SUMMER, WINTER, SPRING AND FALL ALL HAVE REDEEMING QUALITIES. THE SAME IS TRUE FOR THE SEASONS IN YOUR LIFE. EVERY SEASON HAS ITS UPSIDE, EVEN IF THE ONLY UPSIDE IS THAT SOMEHOW GOD IS WORKING OUT FOR GOOD (ROMANS 8:28). IF YOU'RE IN A SEASON OF WAITING OR ANOTHER HARDSHIP, DO YOURSELF A FAVOR AND DON'T WASTE YOUR "WINTER" WISHING FOR SPRING.

**6. REMEMBER YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST PERSON THIS HAS HAPPENED TO** (1 CORINTHIANS 10:13).

THE BIBLE IS FILLED WITH PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCED GREAT CHANGE. ABRAHAM LEFT HIS FAMILY AND LIVELIHOOD TO FOLLOW GOD. THE ISRAELITES, AT ONE POINT, WERE SO UNCOMFORTABLE IN A TIME OF TRANSITION THAT THEY BEGGED TO GO BACK TO SLAVERY.

EVEN RIGHT NOW, PEOPLE JUST LIKE YOU AROUND THE WORLD ARE EXPERIENCING HARDSHIPS JUST LIKE YOURS (1 PETER 5:9). FIGHT THE LIE THAT NO ONE UNDERSTANDS YOU. OH AND BTW, JESUS DOES (HEB 4:15-16).

**7. TALK OR WRITE IT OUT** (PSALM 62:8).

THERE'S SOMETHING THERAPEUTIC ABOUT PICKING UP A PEN AND WRITING OUT YOUR MOST HONEST THOUGHTS. PSALM 62 SPECIFICALLY SAYS TO "POUR YOUR HEART OUT BEFORE THE LORD."

CULTURAL MANTRAS LIKE #GOODVIBESONLY AND #POSITIVITY HAVE BECOME AN EXCUSE TO STUFF WHAT YOU'RE ACTUALLY FEELING. WHILE IT'S TRUE THAT YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE, THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN YOU HAVE TO PRAISE GOD FOR EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE. SOME THINGS IN LIFE OUTRIGHT SUCK. BUT EVEN IN THE DIFFICULT, YOU CAN TRUST THAT GOD IS DOING SOMETHING GOOD. BE HONEST WITH

YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER. HE CARES ABOUT YOU AND HE CARES ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH.

**8. REMEMBER WHAT IT'S LIKE** (2 CORINTHIANS 1:4).

TAKE NOTES WHILE YOU'RE WALKING THROUGH TRANSITION. PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR STRUGGLES, SO THAT YOU CAN SYMPATHIZE OTHER PEOPLE WHEN THEY WALK THROUGH SOMETHING SIMILAR. DON'T WASTE YOUR PAIN BY FORGETTING WHAT GOD HAS CARRIED YOU THROUGH. SOMETIMES, THE BEST WAY TO REMEMBER TRUTH IS TO SHARE IT WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

JESUS DIED AND WAS RAISED TO LIFE AGAIN TO OFFER ANYONE ETERNAL LIFE WHO BELIEVES (JOHN 3:16). ONCE YOU'VE TRUSTED HIM FOR SALVATION, YOU CAN HOLD ON TO THE HOPE THAT NO MATTER YOUR CURRENT SITUATION, ONE THING IS CERTAIN—ONE DAY, HE WILL MAKE ALL THINGS RIGHT (REVELATION 2:14). IN HEAVEN, THERE WILL BE NO PAIN, SUFFERING, OR DIFFICULT TRANSITION. INSTEAD, YOU'LL HAVE AN ETERNITY OF SECURITY AND JOY. AND THAT'S WHERE HOPE CAN BE FOUND.

UNTIL THEN, CHOOSE TO BE HONEST ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE EMOTIONALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, AND APPRECIATE EVERY SEASON FOR THE GOOD GOD'S DOING IN IT. IF YOU'RE IN A TOUGH TRANSITION, FIX YOUR EYES ON JESUS. HE WILL NEVER CHANGE.