

LAMPLIGHTER

JULY 2009

THEME: “Under God’s Watchful Eye-Living with Change”

LUKE 12:6-9

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. (Phil 4:8 NIV)

Dear Fellow Workers in God’s Kingdom,

Change is rarely a welcomed experience in one’s life. Two members were contemplating a drastic change in their lives. They were both at the stage of life where they could no longer care for themselves. Susie went to the nursing home. She said to her pastor after her admission, “Pastor, there is only one way that I am getting out of here.” She never left her room except for meals. After the meal was over, she would immediately return to her own little spot. Needless to say, Susie gave up on life. There was also Sally. Sally went with the attitude of acceptance. She organized card games and dominoes. Daily she would gather with her new social club and visit about family, friends, church, and other activities. Sally even began to write a monthly article for the newsletter. While Susie survived only a few months before passing away, Sally lived much longer than many would have anticipated for her.

Susie saw this change as a threat to her way of living. Susie focused her attention on all the things she would be giving up. Sally, on the other hand, saw this change as a new opportunity. Sally would not be alone in her home anymore. She would receive three square meals a day. Her laundry would be done. Her medication would be given to her at the proper time. Sally could focus her attention on all the good things she would be gaining.

While change is rarely something that most welcome, it is inevitable. We would be more readily blessed if we anticipated and faced the changes that life brings our way. We would be blessed to view these changes as opportunities for God to work in our lives rather than as a threat to our way of living. God, who has all things under His control, says; (Jer 29:11 NIV) ‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’ “Our future includes change since we are by nature sinful and objects of wrath. However the God of all grace and mercy brings that change to us through His only Son our Savior Jesus. Here are a few of those changes: (Phil 3:21 NIV) “Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform (change) our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” (1 Cor 15:51-52 NIV) “Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”

While there is so much change around us every day, it is a comfort to know that God does not change. God’s expectations for His people revealed in Holy Scripture do not change. God’s plan of salvation carried out by His beloved Son does not change. (Eph 2:8-9 NIV) “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- {9} not by works, so that no one can boast.” While many would have us believe that the Word of God is alive and active which equates it to constantly changing, God himself says, (Mal 3:6 NIV) "I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.” (James 1:17 NIV) “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”

When we find ourselves asking, “How do I put up with the uncertainties caused by change?” we can progress through change in a healthy way. We anticipate that change is going to happen. We see it as an opportunity for personal and spiritual growth and not as a threat to our way of living. Most importantly we trust in God who keeps us under His watchful eye.

Close with prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, Benediction, and Song – #62 “Children of the Heavenly Father”