

Change

"All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." (1Peter 1:24-25 ESV)

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." (James 1:17 ESV)

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8 ESV)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I can't remember where I read it, but consider this quote: "Change is happening so fast we can't keep up with it." I can think of many things that can apply.


- Technological. Got a new iPhone or Galaxy? Don't get too used to it. You'll be wanting its replacement in just a few months.
- Climate change. Ice melting. Crazy storms. Snow in Summer. Heat waves. Sometimes all in the same week.
- Culture change. What with the global economy, immigration, terrorism, politics, etc., no wonder everyone is wondering how we are to live and work together as a society.

Change is happening and it is happening fast. Often, we can't keep up.

So we look to the church for stability. And what do we find? Change. Consider these changes that I have seen happen during my time at Summit of Peace:

- Contemporary worship service.
- One day VBS with the rest of it spread out during Summer Sunday School.
- Cambodia Mission Trip.
- Life Group Ministry.
- "Grow in Faith, Share the Faith, Live the Faith".
- Technology in the sanctuary, fellowship hall and classrooms.
- Members joining, members leaving, members born, members entering eternity.
- And more...

And we are not done yet. More changes are coming in the months ahead. It seems the church is changing as fast as the world we live in and...it seems we



can't keep up. Every day brings a new insight or ministry opportunity or calling on how to reach the lost. It can all seem too much.

Now here's the thing: some view change as good, while other views change as bad. And depending upon your view of the change at hand, this is where struggle, conflict and infighting can cripple a church. This is where it can get to the point of finger pointing, shouting and "How can you call yourself a Christian?" that can tear churches apart. This is where people can feel alienated and out of the loop when change occurs. This is where people can leave because they can't handle the change. Looking to the church for stability in an ever-changing world can leave you looking for stability in other places because you aren't finding it in the church.


And that's why you don't look to the church for stability...you look to God, His Word, His Son, His love for you, me, everyone. These never change.

- God never changes. "For I the LORD do not change..." (Malachi 3:6 ESV)
- His Word does not change. "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever." (Isaiah 40:8 ESV)
- Jesus, God's only Son, never changes. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8 ESV)
- God's love for everyone will not change. "I have loved you with an everlasting love..." (Jeremiah 31:3 ESV)

In the midst of an ever-changing world of technology, climate, culture...in the midst of an ever-changing life of new jobs, new relationships, new opportunities, new disappointments, new sins...in the midst of change so fast we can't keep up...God comes to you and me and gives us peace, love, comfort, forgiveness and hope that NEVER EVER CHANGES.

What's more, we get to bring this eternal stability to all people who are experiencing the same rapid pace of change in their world and lives as we are. In the face of sudden natural disaster, we get to give them a God who does not change like the shifting shadows. In the face of a world where "truth is whatever you make it to be", we get to give them the truth of God's Word that is timeless. In the face of broken relationships and rampant sin and evil, we get to give Jesus to them and an eternal forgiveness, life and salvation that He alone can give. In the face of change that we can't keep up with, we get to give everyone a love that does not change and will not change.

But let me change things up a bit here (pun intended). *How* we as the church go about giving that unchanging stability in God, His Word, His Son and His love *will*



change over time. Yes, we will baptize people, but we might change it from a font in the sanctuary to a kiddie pool in someone's backyard. Unchanging grace, changed way of bringing it. Yes, the Word of God will be preached and taught, but we might go from chalk and chalkboard to YouTube and iPads. Unchanging Word of God, changed way of bringing it. Yes, the love God has for all people in Jesus Christ will never change, but, in word and deed, this might take shape as mission trips, using video clips in sermons, or simply praying with a homeless man who you have just given a bag full of supplies. Unchanging grace, yet so many opportunities, we can't keep up! This may cause struggle. This may cause conflict. This may cause strife. But when we look to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2), change becomes exciting, something to embrace.

And here's good news: God is going to use every single one of you to bring His unchanging love to an ever-changing world. The way you bring that unchanging love may change over minutes, hours, days, weeks, months or years. But during that rapid change, you can be at rest, trusting in the God who never changes.

God's (never ending) peace in Christ,

Pastor Roberts