

Agents of Change

HOW GOD'S SERVANTS CAN BRING ABOUT POSITIVE CHANGE

What Kind of Change?

What kind of "**change**" is being talked about here?

Warning! Be careful of those "**given to change.**"
(Proverbs 24:21)

We need to talk about "**traditions**" ...

- **Traditions** to be **avoided.** (Mark 7:3-9; Colossians 2:8)
- **Traditions** to be **held on to.** (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6)

Why Is Change Needed?

Because times are different? (Ecclesiastes 1-2; Psalms 42:4)

Because standards are different? (Isaiah 5:20; Jeremiah 6:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:22-25)

Because people are different? (Romans 3:23; Psalms 143:1-2)

Because sin is progressive, pervasive, and unrelenting?
(Genesis 6:18-19; 2 Timothy 3)

What Kind of Change?

Change back to God's standards and will!

- Seeking the "**ancient paths.**" (Jeremiah 6:16)
- What does "**ancient**" really mean?

How did we get here? (Hebrews 2:1; cf. Isaiah 5:20; Psalms 42:4; Ephesians 5:7-16)

So how do we get back "there"? What does "there" look like? (Who's responsible?)

Where does it begin? (Matthew 15:18-20)

How do we change hearts? What? Who?

Who's Responsible?

Politicians? (Proverbs 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:2)

Clergy/laity? (What does that mean?)

All members? (Ephesians 4:11-16)

Am I part of the problem?

Am I part of the solution?

Biblical Case Studies ...

How Did They Bring About Change?

1. **Jehoshaphat** (How did he negate his ability to bring about reforms?) (2 Chronicles 17:3-9; 18:1-2; 6-9; 19:1-4; 20:1-12; 20:31-37)
2. **Josiah** (2 Kings 21-23; after generations of spiritual neglect)
3. **Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, Nehemiah.** (Ezra 5:1-2; Haggai 1:1-5; Ezra 5:8-12)
4. **Paul** (cf. 2 Corinthians 12:15; 1 Corinthians 9:23; Acts 26:24; those who knew him thought he'd gone mad!)
5. **Jesus** (willing to sacrifice all!)

How Do We Bring About The Changes Needed?

1. **Be personally responsible** and *“live the change”* boldly and courageously. (Nehemiah; Daniel 9:4-11; Isaiah 6:8)
2. **Dare to be different!** Stop the moral “drift” by returning to God’s standard.
3. **Look for open doors.** (Colossians 4:3-6)
 - Pray for them, pray we’ll recognize them, pray we’ll make the most of them.
4. **Outwork our opponent(s).** (1 Peter 5:8)
5. **Persuade others using God’s power.** (Acts 17:1-3, 17; 18:4; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

How Do We Bring About The Changes Needed?

1. **Influencers and Followers** – Pay close attention to who is influencing us and focus on influencing others.
2. **Demands of discipleship** – Learn what true discipleship to Jesus Christ is and how God can work through us.
3. **Salt and Light** – having the courage to dare to be different and become a preserving influence.
4. **Don’t Despise The Day of Small Things** – learning to make the most of what seems to be insignificant.
5. **Excuses and Reasons** – why can’t we be an influence for good and change the world?
6. **Influence within the home and family** – change begins at home.
7. **Spiritual Renewal** – focusing on personal change and growth from within.