

Change or Transformation? (Question 1)

Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these?"

For it is not wise to ask such questions.

(Ecclesiastes 7:10)

*"The word **change** normally refers to new beginnings. But **transformation** more often happens not when something new begins, but when something old falls apart...The pain of something old falling apart—disruption and chaos – invites the soul to listen at a deeper level."*

Instead of Lamenting **Change**...

Seeing & Seizing the God-given Opportunity for **Transformation**

Romans 12:2

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.**

Three Transformative Questions I Want You to Ask Yourself Before 2021?

- The honesty of your questions has considerable influence in determining the integrity of your life.
1. **Do I see what God is saying and doing now in the world?**
 2. **How am I joining Him in those efforts?**
 3. **How does God want to transform my thinking about my "neighbor"?**

Do I See What God is Saying and Doing Now in the World?

1 Kings 19:9-18

"What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁰ Elijah replied, "I have zealously served the Lord God Almighty. But **the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.**

¹¹ "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the Lord told him. And as Elijah stood there, the Lord passed by, and **a mighty windstorm** hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, **but the Lord was not in the wind.** After the wind there was an **earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.**¹² And after the earthquake there was a **fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire** there was the sound of a **gentle whisper.**¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ He replied again, "I have zealously served the Lord God Almighty. But **the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."**

¹⁵ Then the Lord told him, **"Go back the same way you came...There are 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!"**

• Don't Be Derailed by the Work of the Enemy

- My human default is to look at all the wrong: injustice, sorrow, greed - what the enemy is doing
 - Generating fear, anxiety, sadness, and depression – draining and overwhelming me...
 - Withdraw (“What are you doing here, Lee?”)
- If you want to see what God is saying and doing in the world now, you can't be preoccupied and absorbed with the enemy and his threats...
 - I had an old friend give me a tip once on how to fight. “He said, if you know you're getting ready to get into a fight, don't think about what the other guy might do to you – keep you mind focused on what you're going to do to him – and do it!”

Hebrews 12:1-3

Let us rid ourselves of **every obstacle and the sin which so easily entangles us**, and let's run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking only at Jesus**, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him **who has endured such hostility** by sinners against Himself, **so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.**

• Don't Presume From Your Own Perspective

- I must also be on guard against my own will and desires that can counterfeit themselves, parading as God's agenda.
 - God's work is often NOT in the big and the dramatic (Wind, Storm, Earthquake, Fire)
 - We are often drawn to these things...
 - The cause, the movement, the stand, the soapbox...
 - But God's work is often in the “gentle whisper” He deposits in each individual's spirit...

*There can be **only one permanent revolution** — a moral one; **the regeneration of the inner man**. How is this revolution to take place? Nobody knows how it will take place in humanity, but every man feels it clearly in himself. And **yet in our world everybody thinks of changing humanity, and nobody thinks of changing himself.***

- Leo Tolstoy

• “Go Back” – With Renewed Hope in God's Providence

- “What are you doing here Lee?”
- *There's an army out there who have not surrendered*

Psalm 42: 4-8

My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks amid the sound of a great celebration! Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? Now I am deeply discouraged...Why is my heart so sad? **But each day the Lord pours his unfailing love upon me, and through each night I sing his songs, praying to God who gives me life...I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!**

John 16:33

“I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But **take heart, because I have overcome the world!”**