



Blackfoot

Church of Christ

Published by Blackfoot Church of Christ
Blackfoot, ID

Volume 7 Number 41

October 13, 2019

When Life Changes

By Mike Thomas

Life is a series of changes, "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven...a time to gain, and a time to lose" (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 6). We see this truth every day. The kids grow up and leave. Our body morphs into a different person every year. People we know and love pass away. And the years fly by faster than they used to. Just when we get used to one scene in life, it quickly transforms into another. Nothing is constant in this ever-flowing river of change except change itself. Take a good look around. What you see today will quickly evolve into something else.

When life changes it is good to know there is One who is constant. This fact is developed when the psalmist said of God,

"Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end" (Psalm 102:25-27).

The same thought is said of our Lord: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

We need to thank God for being dependable, unchanging and constant. This enables us to rely on Him and should convince us to place our complete trust in Him, since the truth of God's word does not change. After he praised Jesus for remaining the same, the writer of Hebrews said, "Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace..." (Hebrews 13:9). God's righteous consistency should prompt us to

establish our own commitment to holiness. The imaginations of men will always present us with strange and ever-developing doctrines, from how to worship God to how to define marriage, but the word of God is constant. Peter saw this truth and said

“the word of God which lives and abides forever, because ‘All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you” (1 Peter 1:23-25).

Because God is reliable, we can build our entire faith on Him and know that our house will withstand any storm (cf. Matthew 7:24-26). This stability gives us real hope whenever our life takes an undesirable turn. No other person in life can give us this refuge and security. Even our family, who may be loyal to us as we are to them, cannot give us this foundation of dependability since neither of us possess immortality in this life. We “all have one breath” and “all are from the dust, and all return to dust” (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20). Yet, “From the end of the earth I will cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:2). I love the thought that Henry Lyte wrote in his beautiful hymn “Abide With Me”: “Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me.” Who among us can find a better response to the diversity of life?

Small Churches

By Mike Thomas

It is not uncommon for people to measure a church’s success solely by the numbers it has in attendance. One of the first things I am asked when people learn I am a preacher is how big the church is where I attend. They will then use this as a benchmark for whether or not I am a successful preacher or if the church is a vibrant congregation. I guess we all have done the same. For one reason or another, we are convinced that all we need to know about a church is found in its numbers. This perception leads some Christians to ask, “Have we failed because we cannot get more people to join our effort? Are we doing something wrong when the numbers are low?” This reflects the erroneous belief that a church’s faithfulness is determined by its attendance. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The church at Sardis had a reputation as a growing and active church, but from God’s perspective they were dead spiritually (Rev 3:1). Perhaps their pews were

filled to capacity and everybody who was anybody went there; with other churches in the area wanting to emulate their every move. But Sardis was not the ideal church from God's point of view. They still had a lot to learn from Smyrna (Rev 2:8-11) and Philadelphia (Rev 3:7-13) in demonstrating faith and zeal. This does not mean that every large church has compromised with sin to get to that size (Acts 11:21).

Nor does it mean that fewer numbers guarantees faithful, dedicated members. Some churches are few in number because they have a toxic environment of bitterness, slander, and hate; while others are small because they lack good leadership and are in constant turmoil. These environments force those who walk circumspectly to look elsewhere to work and worship. Yet at the same time, some churches are overflowing with people despite their poor teaching and leadership. Truly, numbers are not the final measurement of a church's dedication to the Lord. As long as a church as a whole is striving to keep the Lord's will, they should not feel like a failure when the numbers are not booming as in other churches. As Noah proved, sometimes the most dedicated disciples can only find a few others to join them in keeping God's word (1 Peter 3:20).

A church with few numbers can still have a very positive, uplifting, and encouraging atmosphere if it is willing. One of the finest churches I know of has attendance in the 20s to 30s every week. The world looks at numbers like that and says it is time to close the doors and go elsewhere to worship, but don't tell these brethren that. They are genuinely committed to worshiping God in spirit and truth—with no thought whatsoever of self-pity and disappointment. Their time in worship is deliberate and unhurried. Their singing is plentiful and with purpose. Their preaching (the kind they demand from visiting speakers) is straight out of the Bible. Any time they have together is time to let each other know how much they genuinely appreciate one another. They even keep the building up-to-date and clean. It's hard to believe a church like that will stay small for long, but then again that's measuring success with a different standard than God's. In any setting and in all things may our attitude be "not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). There is always reason to rejoice when gathered with fellow Christians to worship, especially when Jesus promises that "where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Ray & Ginger will be traveling to Utah for Doctor appointment
- Sylvia Ward, Ross's Mom, starting in-home rehab
- Cameron Bauman brain tumor and radiation treatments
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) cancer treatment
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines
- Men's meeting today after services

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Worship Assignments

Today

Song Leader – Ray Mitchell

Lord's Table – Chad Mitchell
– Ray Mitchell

Wednesday

Song Leader – Ray Mitchell

Invitation – Larry Thomspen

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM

Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM

Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



[www.facebook.com @blackfootchurch](https://www.facebook.com/blackfootchurch)

www.blackfootchurch.com