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Tower of Strength

**“The name of the Lord is a strong tower
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”**

—Proverbs 18:10

Another Night With the Frogs

The second plague was upon Pharaoh. Frogs had come up from the Nile and swarmed into the towns and homes of the Egyptians. The frogs were so thick, they even got into their food and beds (Exodus 8:1–15).

How disgusting! Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and begged for an end to the plague.

Moses replied, “the honor is yours to tell me: when shall I entreat for you and your servants and your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses?”

Pharaoh gave an oddly complacent answer. He said, “Tomorrow.”

Tomorrow? Why not, “Immediately!” or “Right now!” or at the very latest, “Tonight!” But, for whatever reason, Pharaoh was content to suffer yet another night with the frogs.

But, Pharaoh’s behavior is not so strange, when we think of how many people today are willing to remain in awful situations though they have the power to change them. For example, why do many

grown women continue to remain another day in dating relationships with men who are overbearing or even abusive? Why do many families tolerate lousy circumstances when better is at hand? And, why do many people continue to live lives that are lost in sin, when new life in Christ is immediately available?

Is it the fear of change? The children of Israel were willing to endure slavery to not have to face the unknown world of change (Exodus 14:11–12). They preferred free cucumbers and leeks to freedom because they were scared to strike out into the wilderness with God leading them (Numbers 11:5).

The writer Warren Wiersbe said, “when we are young change is a treat; as we grow older change is a threat.” We naturally live as creatures of habit. We get established and comfortable in certain routines and scold anyone who rocks the boat. It’s simple inertia.

But change is a vital part of life. Without change, winter would never be transformed by spring, and even spring’s beauty and sunshine would become monotonous. Without change infants would never grow up to be teenagers, and teenagers would never take their place in the world as adults. We might complain about a society ruled by cell phones and computers, but I’m sure the same complaints were heard when electricity, indoor plumbing, and modern appliances made their debut.

Most of the time, being cautious and conservative is a virtue. There is no reason to change just for change’s sake. Every opportunity to change should be examined. But, there are certain times in life when we should open ourselves to the possibility of change.

When You Discover You Are Sinning

Many of us commit sin not even realizing that what we are doing is defined as sinful. We do not intend to sin, but we meander through life like the early Israelites: “everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25). We try to live life as best we can, not hurting anyone else, keeping a pretty clean conscience, and following a course of human wisdom. But one day we find God’s revelation, and begin reading the Bible, and we suddenly discover that God frowns upon

certain of our activities. In this situation, we must change as soon as possible. It comes as a genuine surprise for many to discover that living with one's girlfriend, drunkenness, materialism, homosexuality, and lying are sins that God says will prevent a person from entering heaven (1 Cor. 6:9–10, Col. 3:5–7, Rev. 21:8).

Now that one has the knowledge, battle lines are drawn in the heart. Will he continue to participate in what he now knows is sin? Or will he change his life—no matter how painful the change may be—to become acceptable to God, and mold himself in the image of Christ?

People resist this change, because the status quo is more comfortable (Jer. 13:23). But repentance requires it!

When You Discover That You Are Not Saved

The biggest, most disturbing change is leaving the world to enter the body of Christ (Colossians 1:13). It is rightly compared to a rebirth (John 3:3–5); painful to experience, pleasant to have endured.

When you study the gospel and realize that your soul is under the penalty of death for sin, you must act immediately, obtaining the forgiveness that is available only through Jesus Christ. The Philippian jailer came to this moment, trembling, and cried out, “What must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:29–30), apparently ready to do anything required of him! Thankfully, God only asks us to believe, repent, and be baptized. It is a drastic change, but one that God helps us get through. Why procrastinate? There is nothing to be gained by waiting; there is everything to be lost.

When You Discover That You Are Following a False Religion

Paul excelled in his religion, being “extremely zealous” to the point of persecuting Christians (Galatians 1:11–16). But when he discovered that Jesus really had been resurrected from the dead, and really was the Messiah, the Son of God, (Acts 9:5–6), it took him less than three days to accept Christ. He began meeting with his new brethren in Damascus, and “immediately began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues” (Acts

9:18–22). Paul was very sincere in his religion (1 Timothy 1:13) but that didn't make him right. When he learned the truth, he changed. We may have followed a certain religion or denomination from childhood, but if we discover it is not built on the word of God, we should be willing to endure the agonizing process of change.

When You Discover That You Are Believing False Doctrine

A change of religion is not always in order, just a change in some misconceptions of that religion. Peter was a faithful Christian, but clung to the deep-seated idea that certain foods and certain people were unclean. But God revealed to him the truth (Acts 10:9–16) though it was at first perplexing and highly detestable to Peter. He changed, and soon began preaching the gospel to Gentiles (Acts 10:34–35).

When You Discover that a Course of Action is No Longer Working

Men who refuse change can sometimes hamper the work of the gospel. Within the boundaries God has established in His word, we have lots of room to obey His commandments as best fits our culture and age. Changes might be made in the order of worship, the color of the paint, the location of the building, the times of service, the type of songbook, the number of teachers, or virtually any aspect of our work that is not constrained by specific command. Think of all the exciting changes that have come about with technology in just the last few years! There is no reason to fear change when it is guided by godly men who respect the authority of God's word.

Spend not one more night with the frogs. Change as God gives us the ability to change!
—*John Guzzetta*

Quote of the Week:

“Every person who has ever lived will be present at that final gathering. Every heart that has ever beat. Every mouth that has ever spoken. Rich, poor. Famous, unknown. Kings, bums. Brilliant, demented. And all will be looking in one direction, at the Son of Man, wrapped in splendor.”

—*Max Lucado*