

FINDING PEACE IN THE MIDST OF CHANGE

By Catherine Gates

For most people, change is unsettling – even the idea of it. We tend to find comfort in the known, even when the known is not working so well. Some of the top reasons people resist change include: a sense of loss of control; fear of unexpected surprises; breaking routine and having to learn all over again; fear of failure, or at least a fear of making mistakes and producing subpar work in the learning process. If it involves a complete change in job status, such as a layoff, fears can mount exponentially.

Given this prevalent preference for the familiar, how is it possible to find peace in the midst of change, especially change that seems like a complete upheaval? I only know of one way: Faith.

I have been through many changes in my career – some welcomed, some not so much. They have included organizational restructuring, layoffs, and a complete shift in career that took twists and turns for 16 years. One very dramatic change involved moving halfway across the country with no prospects of a job. I refer to that season as my “Abraham experience”: I moved to a place where I had no connections. I had no idea what the job market looked like. And had no idea how I would fit into the culture. But I sensed God was leading me there.

The story of Abraham gives us encouragement and hope during times of change on many levels. God asked Abraham to leave everything he knew – his family, friends, home, and land – to go to a place God would “show him.” God didn’t say where, or what it would be like. God did tell Abraham – or Abram, as he started out – he would be blessed. Abram moved to foreign lands, went through famine, fought enemies, and dealt with many years of being childless. But God told him his offspring would be as numerous as the stars. Genesis 15:6 tells us, “*Abram believed the Lord, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*”

How can we get through such times without being overwhelmed with fear and anxiety? Abraham serves as a great example:

Seek to abide in the Lord. Abraham remained close to God, seeking His will and following His direction. As followers of Jesus Christ, we have the Holy Spirit in us to guide and direct us. We abide in God by reading and studying the Bible, through prayer, and by giving thanks. When we abide in this way, we receive wisdom and guidance to take the best steps.

Learn to submit to God. Although it often did not make sense, Abraham submitted to God’s will, setting the example for us of what it looks like to be obedient. When we take matters into our own hands, we are telling God, “I’ve got this. I don’t need You.” That is a frightening thought. We always need God because we don’t know what lies ahead. But He does. And His plan is always much better than ours.

Never stop trusting God. Abraham did not have his promised son until he was 100 years old – 25 years after God first made the promise. But Abraham never stopped trusting God. When I look back on my life, I can see God has always come through. It may take time – sometimes years – but God uses the time to prepare us for the better things He has planned.

Abraham’s story has inspired me to continually stay close to God and trust Him. As you increase your reliance on God, give thanks in all circumstances, and pray specific requests, God will give you His peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:6-7), confident in His goodness and His wondrous works.

© 2018, Workmatters. Catherine Gates is Director of Outreach & Engagement at Workmatters. Ms. Gates has more than 30 years of marketplace experience in a variety of industries, including technology, sales, and leadership development. She has overseen and contributed to the development of all Workmatters studies, designed to equip marketplace leaders with biblical principles for their work. She is passionate about helping others tap into more of their God-given potential. To learn more visit workmatters.org.

CBMC INTERNATIONAL: Jim Firstahl, President
2850 N. Swan Road, Suite 160 ▪ Tucson, Arizona 85712 ▪ U.S.A.
TEL.: 520-334-1114 ▪ E-MAIL: mmanna@cbmcint.org

Web site: www.cbmcint.org Please direct any requests or change of address to: jmarple@cbmcint.org

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How do you typically respond to change – especially when it is not on your own terms?
2. What are the aspects of change that you find most unsettling?
3. Ms. Gates suggests learning to “abide in the Lord” It that something that comes easily for you? Do you think or act differently when you are abiding in Him? Explain your answer.
4. Think of a time when trusting in God seemed most difficult? Describe that time, and how the circumstances turned out. What – if anything – did you learn about trusting in and relying on the Lord through that situation?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Psalm 23:1-6; Isaiah 26:3, 41:10; Jeremiah 29:11-13, 33:3; John 14:27