

Major Tests of Our Faith – Lesson Seven

Changes in Life's Circumstances

The old saying goes something like this ... **“Change is the only constant in life.”** It's not a saying new to our generation, as Heraclitus, an ancient Greek philosopher, has been quoted as the originator of the line. We face changes every day – whether it is a simple change in the weather, schedule or matters of greater significance ... we better learn how to deal with change.

People deal with change differently. Some fear changes and live their lives accordingly, but, fear doesn't stop change does it? To expect & face change may help us to navigate challenging or unexpected life events. Just as change is an individual life event – it will affect the church too – as it cannot help but do so, b/c the church is made up of individual people who are daily experiencing change.

Changes in circumstances, can prove to be a major test of one's faith.

(a move from one place to another, a change in preachers; death of a spouse; and so on)

1. How did the early Christians face change? What was their response? **Acts 8:4**

2. Often it is work opportunities that demand change ... and moving. Aquila and Priscilla moved frequently, *(sometimes a job requirement in preaching)*.
They went from Pontus to Rome, to Corinth, to Ephesus, and back to Rome.
(Acts 18:24-26; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:3-5)
 - a. What are some things said of this couple proving their faithfulness wherever they went?

 - b. What qualities enabled them to continue their faithful service to the Lord even when being taken away from their familiar spiritual environment?

3. Why would a change of preachers prove to be a test of one's faith?

4. Think about the major change in the lives of the apostles when Jesus was taken up from them. What were their actions as noted in **Luke 24:51-53**?

5. Paul had both love and concern for the Thessalonian brethren after he departed from them. What report did Timothy bring concerning them in **1 Thessalonians 3:5-8**?

6. This might be a sensitive question ... but, why would the death of a companion who had served the Lord faithfully test one's faith?

7. Can you think of other changes in circumstances that might test one's faith?

SOUL SEARCHER... Think fairly & honestly

To whom is my greatest allegiance?

Is my faithfulness truly to Christ or is it to a preacher, a family member, a specific congregation, or some other influence?