

TRANSITIONS

Churches from coast to coast are dealing with the process of transition – transitioning from one Pastor to another, from one building to another, from one era to another, from one philosophy of ministry to another, one style of worship service to another, etc.

We have overwhelming opportunities in the challenges that are taking place all around us. We are faced with unparalleled potential for advancing the cause of Christ disguised as population explosion, cultural shifts, technological advances, economic collapses, religious syncretism, political reforms, increasing sectarianism, etc. To take advantage of the ever increasing opportunities in our society, we need to step out of our routines and comfort zones and introduce fresh approaches to ministry. Our methodologies need to change as the times change or we will be completely ineffective. No taxi driver will succeed today if he insists that his passengers ride in a horse-drawn buggy!

Transition means change. Change is challenging and for some it is very threatening. Our observations of life should remind us that transitions are inevitable as well as helpful. The changing cycles of the seasons, Summer, Fall, Winter and Spring are essential for the survival of life on the earth.

We can get “set in our ways” and resist change. But as God’s children, we are challenged to “*grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*” (II Pet. 3:18) To grow in grace means continually transitioning from one stage of spiritual development to another in order to experience a closer walk with our Shepherd.

You may have heard about General “Chesty” Puller during the Korean War. He and his troops had been forced into a difficult position by the North Koreans. Behind them was the ocean, on the right flank a crocodile-filled river, on the left flank an impregnable jungle and ahead of them the North Koreans. He said to his troops, “Men, we’ve got ‘em where we want ‘em! They’ll never get away this time!”

The church of Jesus Christ must contact our culture, not isolate from it. There has never been a time when advancing the cause of Christ was easy. We must fight the good fight of faith regardless of the obstacles. “The pessimist sees a problem in every opportunity; the optimist sees an opportunity in every problem.” Well, we are faced with many problems. But, let’s look at it this way: “We are surrounded by insurmountable opportunities!” So, let’s make whatever adjustments we need to make and in the words of General Puller say, “they’ll never get away this time!”

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