

# PEOPLE CHANGE

*Posted on January 5, 2015 by Emily Taylor*



**People change.** Whenever I hear someone utter the phrase “people don’t change, not *really*,” I can’t help but cringe a little. Because you guys, we do. It just seems to hopeless, so cynical to think we can’t evolve. Doesn’t it? Let’s have some reverence for free will. Some hope for learning. Some appreciation for living on purpose. When we deny the miracle of transformation, we deny the power God has to do a work in our lives. **Revelation of truth happens; and revelation beckons evolution of character.** *Sidenote: just because someone declares a dramatic change does not mean that we blindly believe them. Healthy transition allows for a provision of proof.* To deny a healthy boundary, or even observances of a declared devotion is to rob another person an exercise in discernment. Loving acceptance and informed discernment *can* go hand in hand. Another topic for another day...

I’m also not denying personalities, and predispositions — we aren’t a boring people. **We have a forte** we were designed for. **There are some things that God designed about us that make us the unique creature we are; but there are decisions we make, character-defining crossroads we all face, where we get to make a choice**

**about our core, the foundation we stand on. And those foundations can change.**

Sometimes painfully, but they can. Outside circumstances that threaten our otherwise unrivaled efforts to be a certain way can be really revealing of what we're comfortable with; how we are predisposed, what power source we're tapping into. Sometimes challenging influences win; but sometimes they do not. There is hope people! Until death greets us, we are always given the opportunity to make intentional changes in our lives.

**It's possible that no one in the history of the world has ever changed as much as the disciples did.** They fled for their lives in the garden of Gethsemane when the crowd came to capture Jesus. This, just after they had all made lofty promises to *die* with him if need be, but *surely* they would never disown him. Then they did just that -- they abandoned him in the face of fear. But something shifted... Immediately after they witnessed his death and resurrection the switch was flipped. Their understanding of who he was and what it meant to know him was finally realized, and with the enlightening of this powerful truth, they went to spread the news about him in places that desperately needed to know. They displayed dogged determination, tenacious resolve, unfaltering persistence... and eventually most were even *martyred* for their efforts. In His name.

What caused this dramatic shift of courage? What beckoned such clearly evidenced change in character? The right motivation. A powerful truth. People are not likely to die for something of little consequence.

I think there are 3 truths about change things we can take away from this example.

1. **Change requires the right motivation:** The greater the motivation, the more significant the consequence or reward, the more likely we are to take strategizing seriously. There is fuel being dumped on the fire.
2. **The right kind of change isn't always the popular one.** This one is tricky. Most of the disciples were killed for the shift their hearts made. We live in a world that will applaud certain values, certain platforms, appearances and even beliefs. The certainty of the applause is irrelevant — the bigger question is the moral authority on your position. Your audience holds no sway over the evaluation of your life. A standing ovation will not matter if your performance is for the wrong audience.  
*"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." — Romans 12:2*

3. **Core change requires a power source bigger than you.** We are not big enough to save ourselves, so why should we assume we're big enough to change ourselves?

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" — 2 Corinthians 5:17*

I love this verse because it just elicits hope and celebration. ***It gives credit to the one who is responsible for heart change.*** It highlights where true transformation happens — through Jesus. Life-giving, foundational change will not happen anywhere else. I love it because it's the most eternally impactful transition you could ever take part in. And it's also a matter of accepting a gift — the work is already done. That's the kind of resolution, the kind of transformation we all ache for and desperately need — whether we acknowledge it or not. We try so hard to become the kind of people we think we would be proud to be, but nothing else matters if you haven't dealt with the truth about Jesus, and his invitation to make you new in a way you can't even imagine.