

Have You Changed

I had returned home from my morning walk when I noticed my hostas were losing their deep green luster and were beginning to take on a yellow phase. As I scanned the landscape, I saw my daylilies were also following suit. It was a reminder to me that another season of change is about to take place. To God's wonderful creation, change is inevitable, and as with autumn, each season brings about a new identity to the firmament created by the Almighty. Such is true for the Christian as well. Obedience to God's will brings about inevitable changes.

In the first place, there is a change in name. The Messianic prophet of old prophesied of a time when God's people would be called by a new name (Isaiah 62:2; 65:15). Luke, the beloved physician, records the fulfillment of Isaiah's inspired prophecy. "And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. **And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch**" (Acts 11:26, emphasis added). Like the first century church of Christ, Christians should be honored to wear this name and should do so with respect and dignity.

In the second place, there is a change in will. The Christian no longer seeks after his own desires, but rather conforms his will to the will of the master. Just as the apostle Paul affirmed, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). This change in will necessitates that each one set his affection on things above and not on things of the earth (Colossians 3:1-3). Truly, this alteration in direction must be "...not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42b).

In the third place, there is a change in future. Obedience to God's plan of salvation saves one's soul from eternal punishment. Our loving Heavenly Father has graciously provided us with all that we need to avoid the wrath of hell. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:3). This decision to follow God's way has changed a Christian's future **from futile to fabulous**. What a truly loving Creator it is who provided us with this option to obey him and in turn change our eternity. Thus, we are inclined to ask with the Psalmist, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8:4).

Inevitably, changes are a reality. With this new season, my hostas and daylilies will fade away in time. Like a new season, a Christian faces a new identity in name, will and future that never fades away! Have you changed?

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