

*Change Is Not the Only Constant in Our World: From a Lay Leader's Perspective*

Hello, Aldersgate Family!

I hope this latest missive finds everyone doing well, that you have gotten the hang of sheltering in place and that you are no longer bored or going stir crazy. No doubt about it, COVID-19 has changed our lifestyles considerably.

Recently Bill told me he felt the pandemic was not just temporarily life-altering, that it could very well be world-changing. I reflected on that statement a lot. Bill has a way of tossing out observations that sound like they are coming off the top of his head, but in retrospect are really thought provoking. He has a good point. Because when the stay at home orders are lifted, I don't think we will be surprised to find folks have lost a lot of their passion for big crowd celebrations; that there are some serious changes in power elite line-ups in cities, states and countries; and that vacationing in Europe, South America or Asia isn't quite the popular option it used to be. Sorry, Italy! You have now seriously slipped down my "to visit" list.

Yes, change is all around us on the collective level, but also gets us individually too. We change a lot as we age - waistlines get thicker, smooth skins gets lined, hair turns gray and Mr. Arthritis comes to visit and never leaves. Our ethical and political viewpoints tend to change too. Think about it. What we considered quite sane and rationale when we were in our teens or 20's is often a lot different than what we regard as sane and rationale now.

I had a boss who once said, "When changes are made, somebody's ox usually gets gored." While I think my boss may have exaggerated a wee bit with that statement, his point is well taken. Change can be scary. Fortunately, as believers our faith in Christ can ease our fear, especially when something or someone we thought was stable and trustworthy is now gone with the wind and a new situation is facing us.

Let us never forget that "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*" (Hebrews 13:8). The same chapter that points out our Savior's constancy, also reminds us that God said, "*Never will I leave, never will I forsake you.*" The Father and the Son are ever-present for us as is the Holy Spirit who was sent to be our comforter. Change may throw us for a loop, make us stumble, even gore our metaphorical ox for a season (be that finances, relationships, careers, etc.), but we can endure, even thrive and come out all the better for it. In the end, there really is no need to fear change because His love for us is unchanging and will be a sustaining force. No matter what.