

Survive or Thrive: Encouragement in the Midst of Change

As I reflect on the last 12 months, my life has changed in almost every way.

My husband became a Hospital Chaplain in training and resigned as Lead Pastor from our church of 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ years. We remained on staff at the church this year, under the leadership of the new lead pastor, our former youth pastor.

We moved from the main parsonage to a smaller staff parsonage across the parking lot. For so many years my husband and I worked side by side. Now, my husband works at the hospital 70–80 hour weeks with an hour commute each way.

Some of our children have experienced family crisis that resulted in employment change and moving hundreds of miles away with our grandchildren. I could go on and on, but you get the basic idea—we have experienced tremendous change.

Some changes we initiate; others happen without our permission or intention. They can either become enjoyable new seasons or produce pain. No matter what season of change you're experiencing, you can find comfort in Malachi 3:6, "I am the Lord, and I do not change . . . " (NLT). We can be confident in Him: no matter what changes in our lives, He remains the same.

We have the choice this year to either survive or thrive when change comes our way. When you're in the midst of change, I encourage you to:

1. Remember, you are not alone. God has a plan for your life. God can take any situation and use it for His good and your

purpose (Romans 8:27-30).

2. Refresh yourself in the Lord as the psalmist David did when facing challenges. Worship and the Word will refresh your soul and strengthen you to face each day (Psalm 33:4).

3. Rest in the promises of God and hold fast to what He told you to do. He will provide what you need to embrace any change and welcome the future knowing He is with you every step of the way (Ephesians 3:20).

Are you in a season of perpetual change? Take a few moments alone and reflect on the passages of Scripture listed above. God wants to encourage you in this moment to focus on Him, your hope and your salvation.

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