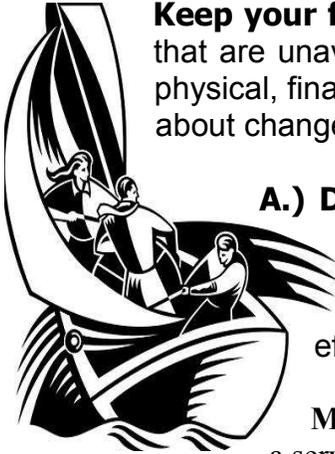


Renewal Ministries of Colorado Springs

Hope and Healing Through Christ-Centered Ministry

Navigating Through the Difficult Changes of Life



Keep your focus: Change comes to all of our lives and is one of the few things that are unavoidable. How we deal with the changes of life can be critical to our physical, financial, emotional, and spiritual health. When situations arise that bring about change, how do you respond?

A.) Denial and self-protection: From fisherman to apostle, Peter saw the humility, tenderness and authority of Christ Jesus. He could not or would not accept that Jesus would die as he had been told. When Jesus was taken to be tried and later crucified, Peter in an effort to protect himself, lied, denying that he had know Christ.

Matthew 26:69-75 (NIV) Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said. 70 But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said. 71 Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." 72 He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!" 73 After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away." 74 Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. 75 Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

B.) Fear and despair: 1. To lose all hope: 2. To be overcome by a sense of futility or defeat.

Fear is a tool of the enemy that feeds despair causing the loss of hope. Common expressions would be "it's over, nothing can be done!" "It's too late for me, no one can help!" "I can't go on, it's hopeless!" One of the prim examples of this type of despair is Elijah.

1 Kings 19:1-4 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them." 3 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, 4 while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

- **Beware of distractions:** Beware of those things that would distract us from God's vision and purpose for our lives. The enemy of our soul is determined to redirect our focus. He wants us emotionally consumed by the realities and perils of life. The Devil wants to blind our eyes to the ever-present miracle working God. We must remember

that regardless of what happens we can and must choose to walk in faith toward God. Where there is life there hope!

2 Kings 6:15-17 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. 6 "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Matthew 14:28-31 "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." 29 "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

- **Endure hardship/disappointment:**

Hebrews 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NLT) We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don't give up and quit. 9 We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going. New Living Translation

Luke 9:62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

"What does Jesus want from us? Total dedication, not halfhearted commitment. We can't pick and choose among Jesus' ideas and follow him selectively; we have to accept the cross along with the crown, judgment as well as mercy. We must count the cost and be willing to abandon everything else that has given us security. With our focus on Jesus, we should allow nothing to distract us from the manner of living that he calls good and true." —**Life App Notes**

Maintain five basic spiritual disciplines

Isaiah 26:3 (AMP) You will guard him and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind [both its inclination and its character] is stayed on You, because he commits himself to You, leans on You, and hopes confidently in You.

A. Prayer

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.

Col. 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

1 Peter 3:9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

Philip. 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

B. Fasting

2 Chron. 20:3 Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to inquire of the LORD, and he proclaimed a fast for all Judah.

Ezra 8:23 So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

Daniel 9:3 So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

C. Worship/praise

Philip. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Psalm 42:11 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

Psalm 100:1-5 A psalm. For giving thanks. Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. 2 Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. 3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. 5 For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

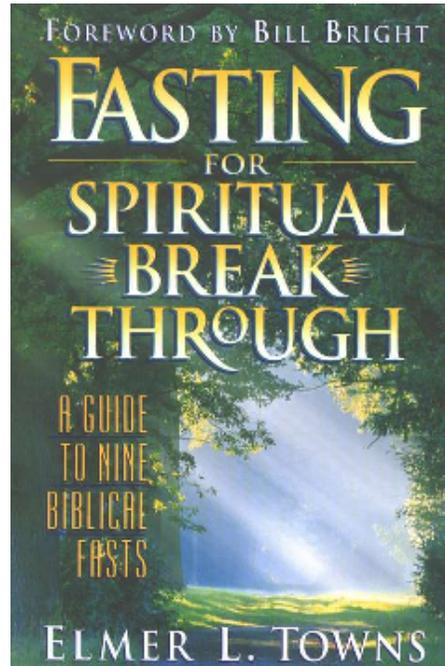
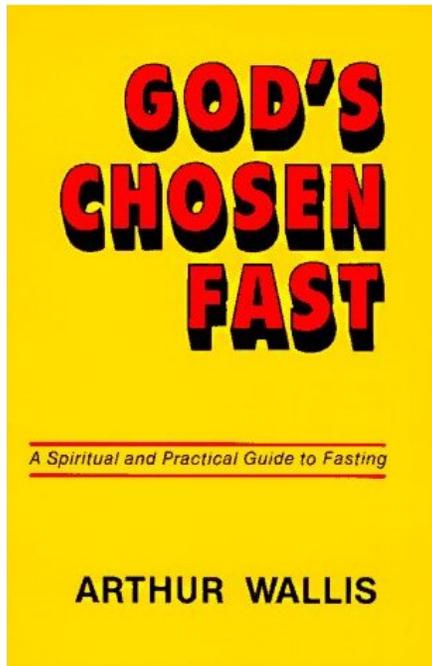
D. Bible reading

Psalm 119:97-105 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. 98 Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. 99 I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. 100 I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. 101 I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. 102 I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. 103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104 I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

E. Fellowship: Don't withdraw or isolate yourself.

Eccles. 4:9-12 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! 11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? 12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Hebrews 10:25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.



If you are looking for some great resources on fasting, I highly recommend both of these books, God's Chosen Fast by Arthur Wallis and Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough by Elmer Towns.