

How Jesus Breathes New Life Into Our Circumstances

Ashley Stevens

Hi, my name is Ashley Stevens with "Mountains Unmoved." And today I'm excited to talk about how Jesus breathes life into our new seasons. I don't know what type of change you're walking through right now. Maybe your kid just left for college and you're new empty nesters. Maybe you had a job change, a loss, maybe you're starting college, or you recently moved, but I know our life is full of changes. And today I'm excited to talk about how God is present amidst the change and how we can truly trust He's leading us to a beautiful next step. But before I begin, let's open in prayer.

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen. God, I thank you for growth. I thank you for the beautiful plan you've laid before us, and I just pray for a greater patience in your will and greater trust in what you're calling us to do next. It's in your name I pray, Amen. Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

Good Things Take Time

Our God is a God of second chances. He's a God of fresh starts, He's a God of new beginnings. Even so for me, at least sometimes we really just see what that new beginning would look like. Right? Sometimes we wish we could see what our life will look like five years from now or 20 years from now or 50 years now. Sometimes it's hard because the timeline we would write for whatever path we're walking down is much quicker than God's timeline for our story and we're not alone in this.

In the Old Testament, it was prophesied that Jesus would be coming. But good things take time. From the fall of Adam and Eve to the call of Abraham, there was 2000 years. From the call of Abraham to when Moses received the 10 commandments, there was another 500 years. And from Moses's time to the coming of Christ, there was another 1500 years. Now I'm certain God will work on a much faster timeline in our lives and in our story.

But what I notice about that promise is how the prophets handled that timeline. They were excited, they were eager to meet their savior. But the prophets, including Isaiah and Jeremiah and John the Baptist all had hope that God's promises were true. They all prepared their hearts and their people for His coming. And what a beautiful witness for us when we wish everything would happen tomorrow and it doesn't. To trust God's promises and God's plan for our future amidst the season changes.

A Personal Season Change

Right now, I'm walking through a season change personally. I've been fortunate enough to stay at home with my kids since our oldest was born, she just turned 10. And during that time, I've gotten to speak and to write and to volunteer at their church, our church and their school events. I've gotten to coach their teams and I'm so thankful for that season.

But this past year, I just feel a strong peace that I'm called to go back to work for myself and for my family. Still my first interview with some seven months ago, I think I've done, I've lost count, 15 different interviews at eight or nine different companies. And we just, I just haven't found the right fit yet for myself and for my family. And I don't know if you've been there or are there too, when you really feel like God is calling you down a certain path, but it seems like so many hurdles and obstacles get in the way and you really begin to question, Lord, am I writing this path? Or is this truly the direction the season change that you're calling me to right now?

There is a Time for Everything

And I think personally, there's a few things that have put me at ease, amidst the rejections that I've walked through recently. And the first is that verse that says, ***"for everything there's a season and a time for everything under heaven."*** And Jesus's life was a great reflection of this promise. He didn't go into public ministry until He was ready. He didn't perform His first miracle until He had appointed His 12 disciples and He didn't lay down His life until it was His time to do so. He had even said, I think to His mother, to Mary, He said "it is not yet my hour." Even Jesus's life, the rhythm of His life echoed the "for everything there's a season." And I think what's most encouraging for me is that no season lasts forever.

Make All Things New

So, I don't know what type of change you're walking through right now, but I'm going to give you three encouraging things that are helping me walk through my current season. And the first is that God truly makes all things new. I grew up right outside the smoky mountains and every year we would go hiking there or driving through the mountains during the fall. And we'd watch the leaves beautifully change from green to yellow, to red, to brown and without fail every year they would die and fall to the ground. But also, as we all know, without fail, every year, every spring, the leave buds grow, they grow back. They begin again and turn into new leaves.

There's a verse from Isaiah that echoes that sentiment. I want to read to you now. It's Isaiah 43:18-19. And it says, ***"Remember not the former things nor consider the things of old, behold***

I am doing a new thing. Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

Our God is doing a new thing in your life. And maybe you're walking through the refinement process where your leaves are changing colors. I don't know what that looks like in your story. Or maybe you're walking through the loss process. When the leaves fall to the ground, maybe you had a job loss or a loss in the family, but I can say with confidence, whatever season you're at, God desires, and He will make all things new in His time.

God's Desires in Your Life

Another word of encouragement that's helping me particularly helping me in my job hunt right now is God wills are good. There's another verse I'm going to turn to right now in Ephesians, it's Ephesians 3:20-21. And it says, ***"Now to Him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus."*** I'm going to read that one part of that passage again, ***"to Him who is at work within us, to be able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think."***

Our God desires to do great things. Abundantly, exceedingly abundantly good things in your life. He does this in scripture. He calmed the storm. He multiplied crumbs of bread, into loaves, to feed masses. He casts out demons from people into herds of pigs. He does powerful things, amazing things. And He will's the kind of huge, good, great things in your life.

And right now, personally, today, I'm going to choose to believe and be bold to ask in prayer that, that job that God knows I will accept in the near future, hopefully pray for me. But that job when I accept that there will be such a strong peace that it's the right fit for my family and such a strong assurance that any of the jobs I've interviewed before then any of the 15, 16 interviews would have fallen short of His perfect plan of His exceedingly abundantly good job that He had lined up for me.

What a beautiful encouragement for all of us. If you're waiting in uncertainty, or if you're waiting in the next step, just to believe and pray and be confident that God wills you exceedingly abundant goodness in your life.

He Will Work Miracles

The final word of encouragement is our God is a miracle worker. We know this in scripture, He parted the red sea. He parted the Jordan river, so that His people could cross. He raised His son, Jesus from the dead so that we get have eternal life. He sent an angel to free Peter from prison when His people prayed. Our God wants to work miracles in our life and I'm going to choose

Pray More Advent Retreat 2021 - Transcript

today to believe that God will and He is working the same kind of miracles in my story and in yours.

So, I want to leave you and bringing this to a close by saying, whatever situation you're walking through, whatever hard kind of change you're adjusting to right now, our God is making all things new. Our God wills, your abundant goodness in your future. And our God will part seas. He will move mountains. He will work miracles for you in the next step of your journey. Let's close in prayer.

Closing Prayer

In the name of the father, Son and Holy spirit, Amen. God, I thank you that our story isn't stagnant, I thank you that you give us free will to choose you each morning to choose the paths that we walked down, Lord I just lift up anyone struggling with anxiety about the next step. Anyone not believing and trusting that your promises for us are good and true. And I just pray that you would remind them Lord, that you are with us, fighting for us and making all things new, this season and it's in your name we pray. Amen. In the name of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Amen.