

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on September 30, 2018:**

**"Standing at the Crossroad –
Change May Feel Strange but It Broadens Our Range
(Hebrews 1:1-12)"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman shows that change in this life is inevitable but we have one solid anchor, Jesus Christ who carries us through it all.]

Notes

Introduction:

- Now, as you probably heard, this is our last day here in Eagle Rock.
- Two weeks ago, pastor Craig had the opportunity to go on a road trip with his very close friend Ed Dunn, who was taking his daughter off to college for the first time to UC Santa Cruz.
- Because pastor Craig wasn't the parent, he didn't tap into the emotions of that transition, at least right away.
- But as they were unloading suitcases, etc. into the dorm room, he felt some of the emotions that the parents were experiencing.

- This reminded him of his emotions in the past, when he took his girlfriend, whom he later married, back to college.
- Also, it reminded him of an emotional time he had when he took his son to college for the first time back in Ohio.

- So when we go through these periods of transition, it can be a sad emotional time.
- So, as we said, this is our last day here, which is probably tied to many memories.
- It's good to reflect on change and what happens when we go through change.

- Pastor Craig is going to give us another ditty-saying today – "Change may feel strange, but it broadens our range."
- Now, that's important to keep in mind, because change is not something that we naturally welcome.
- When we wake up in the morning, we don't say to ourselves, "How can I create some change in my life."
- No, we like our routines; we're very comfortable with them.

- So, let's take a look at the top 10 stressors of life.
- Some of these we've faced in the past, and others we'll face in the future.

Top 10 Stressors (Holmes & Rahe scale):

1. Death of a spouse
2. Going through a divorce

3. Going to prison
4. Death of a close friend or family
5. Personal injury or illness
6. Marriage
7. Dismissal from work
8. Retirement
9. A negative change in your finances
10. Pregnancy
 - Now what do these 10 things have in common? It's change.
 - Now, there are some changes we enjoy – like what we talked about last week, where the apostle Paul said in 1 Cor. 15, “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we'll all be changed.”
 - Pastor Craig doubts that this change at Christ's return will be viewed negatively by anyone.
 - And yes, we know that we are also going through a lifetime of change – our spiritual transformation of going from an “old man” to a “new man” as scripture tells us.

 - We know that change in this life creates different opportunities.
 - One of pastor Craig's favorite poems is “The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost.
 - This is pertinent about what we are facing today.

The Road Not Taken – Robert Frost:

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
 And sorry I could not travel both
 And be one traveler, long I stood
 And looked down one as far as I could
 To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
 And having perhaps the better claim,
 Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
 Though as for that the passing there
 Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
 In leaves no step had trodden black.
 Oh, I kept the first for another day!
 Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
 I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

- Now, when Robert Frost wrote this poem, he meant it as kind of a joke to a friend of his, Edward Thomas, who often went walking with him and was always fretting about which path to take .
- Yet, when Robert Frost presented this poem to some college students, they took it in a completely different way.
- They took it as life choices and life changes.

Changes in our lives:

- And so, obviously today we face another change.
- But should this change be filled only with emotions of sadness?
- Or should it be filled with emotions of looking forward to what this new path has for us and what that might mean?
- Pastor Craig loves movies that refer to destiny and time travel which show what one choice in a person's life may mean 15 to 20 years down the road.
- We can all look back to the milestones in our lives where we made a decision and where that decision led us.
- It's important to realize that our future is nothing set in stone, but simply a progression of all of those changes, decisions, and choices we make and where that leads to.
- People often get stuck in that pain of stressful changes in their lives, that they can't move forward, which makes life difficult.
- It helps if we frame our emotions in a proper perspective by identifying what doesn't change.
- Psychologists have proven that we can only take so much change at one time for us to function well.
- Too much change puts us in a state of dysfunction.

Our church move:

- It's interesting to note that relocating your church was not part of the top 10 stressors.
- Pastor Craig has had a lot of nitty-gritty details to work out concerning the move.
- A group got together and had a great meeting Friday night at the Y testing out the sound and PowerPoint systems.
- Yet, pastor Craig has to accept the fact that we're not going to have everything go right even though he has done a lot of planning concerning this move.
- He is trying to create an atmosphere at the Y that feels like home, that feels like family and welcomes whoever God sends our way.
- And to do it in a way that honors each of us – members and new members alike.
- Yet there are going to be things occur that none of us have even thought about.

- Now the reason those stressors are a challenge is because a lot of times we so relate our identity with those things that are temporal and when they go away, it becomes tough on us.
- Now it's natural to identify yourself with your job, with your spouse, with your children
- So we might ask, "What's the solution?"
- We need to hold to things that come and go loosely instead of firmly.
- Yet we know that in a very positive way, there are some things that will not come and go, but are there forever, which we can place our identity in.
- And that's what the author of Hebrews tells us in the first 12 verses.

Hebrews 1:1, (NASB) God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

- Notice that God's way of communicating with His creation changed.
- He use to communicate through prophets, angels, visions, but today God communicates with us directly through His Son Jesus, whom resides in us.
- It's no longer through an old man with a white beard or whiskers, but it's through His Son, who communicates to us today.
- And this will never change.
- Our inclusion in our Savior, Jesus Christ, does NOT change.
- We will never see on the Holmes & Rahe stress scale that Jesus has left us, or that He's no longer a part of us, or that He no longer includes us, or He doesn't love us as much as He once did.
- In this, we can place our identity in.
- And when we place our identity in something that does not change, we don't set ourselves up for failure, but we set ourselves up for a positive perspective on the things that will change around us.
- Now the message of Hebrews is that we are included and loved and identified by a God who will never ever let us go.
- Our identity is, "I am a beloved child of God and that will never change."
- Pastor Craig had the members repeat this phrase several times.
- Pastor Craig wants this thought to get rooted into our soul.
- Jobs come and go, bank accounts come and go, retirement plans come and go, Ford T-Birds come and go, but one thing that will never ever come and go is the fact that you and I am a beloved child of God.
- And our God is a God who owns all the wealth, all of creation and He welcomes us and leads us into an eternal life. And that will never change.
- Sanctuaries come and go, meeting halls come and go, but God's love for us is always constant.
- And the people, whom we share that love with, is always constant.
- And us, as a family together, we're still together despite the sanctuary or meeting hall changes.

3) And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- Did we catch that? Jesus purified sin – which means that none of us here, who believe this, exist in our sin, from God’s point of view, because the Father looks at us through the eyes of His Son, who says we are purified.
- We are a beloved child of God because number one – God created us, number two – He purified us, number 3 – He reconciled and redeemed us and thus we are included in His love and He will never ever go back on that.
- Now, we can change and get snarky, so to speak, with God and that’s our choice.
- But do you what – no matter how snarky we get with God, He still keeps on loving us and loving us. And that will never change.
- God is constant in the midst of the change we face.

3b) When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4) having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

- Jesus accomplished what we could not accomplish on our own.
- And our theology tells us that as a believer all the characteristics that Jesus has belongs to us as well and that the Father looks through Him and sees us in the same way.
- He does this in spite of the problems we face because of our humanity, in spite that we still fall, and are still subject to the pains of life.
- What Jesus accomplished wasn’t temporary, it was forever.
- And so during the changes we face, we can always say that there is one anchor we can hang onto – I am a beloved child of God and God will never ever let me go and my status as a beloved child of God will never ever change.

5) For to which of the angels did He ever say, “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”? And again, “I will be a Father to Him And He shall be a Son to Me”? 6) And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, “And let all the angels of God worship Him.” 7) And of the angels He says, “Who makes His angels winds, And His ministers a flame of fire.”

8) But of the Son He says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. 9) “You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness above Your companions.”

10) And, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the works of Your hands; 11) They will perish, but You remain;

- Scripture tells us that even this world, this earth as we know it, will change and go away.
- But what doesn’t change? “I’m a beloved child of God.”
- No we need to remember that everything we face is temporal except for the fact that we are a beloved child of God.

- And if we can just let that sink into our soul and create a paradigm of how we view life and live it, then the changes we face become less severe.

11) They will perish, but You remain; And they all will become old like a garment, 12) And like a mantle You will roll them up; Like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end.”

- So, in this life change is inevitable just like death and taxes.
- Now, we got one great hope, we've got one great anchor – that great anchor is the fact that we have a Savior and Judge who came to this earth to die for all of us, to purify our sins and to set us on a plain to know where we are headed.
- Between here and eternity, Monrovia will be a pretty small blip – but I can be joyous blip.
- And it's a new experience and we're going to meet new people and will be able to share that same love and anchor of knowing that we're a beloved child of God with those who God brings to us.
- And that's a great thing.
- So, while we are leaving here, it's only the beginning of a new chapter that will unfold next week in Monrovia.
- See you all there.

Closing prayer