



# CHANGE

by Vincent M. Newfield

Change—for many of us, October opens the door to a significant shift in seasons. The sizzling summer heat is swallowed up by the cool crisp, Canadian air of autumn. Brilliant colors begin to cover the countryside as trees transition from deep green to rustic hues of fall foliage. Ah, what a sight!

Now seasons don't just change in nature—they also change in our lives. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, *For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven* (NLT). We can be satisfied in a certain job, church or ministry for months or even years, when suddenly, we begin to feel *uncomfortable*. What was once wonderful and rewarding doesn't supply the same jolt of joy it did before. "What's going on?" we ask ourselves. But there are no answers to be found. We just can't seem to shake the feeling that we don't **fit** anymore.

Does this scenario sound familiar? God really helped me understand it one night while folding clothes with my wife, Allison. She mentioned that a pair of pajamas no longer *fit* our two-year-old daughter Eleanore. This was really nothing new. Our children are constantly growing into and out of clothes. As the seasons change, so do the sizes. But the Lord showed me something powerful through this situation.

**What Happens When You Grow Out of something?** It doesn't *fit* anymore. It's too tight and too constricting—we have no more room to grow. In a similar way, when you and I grow out of the place or position God has planted us, it no longer *fits*. It's uncomfortable, awkward and constricting. Like a pair of shoes we've grown out of, we have maxed out every inch of available room. With no more room to grow, our potential is prevented from progressing any further.

I remember a time when I was desperately seeking God for direction about a ministry I was involved in. I had come to a point where everything seemed flat and unfulfilling—I was emotionally numb and just going through the motions. I pulled away for a time of prayer and fasting, asking God to confirm if what I was feeling was from Him or from my flesh. When I least expected it, He answered and said, "You are confined, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is *freedom*. It's okay to go."

Almost immediately I felt His peace flood the fibers of my soul. In His loving kindness, He confirmed that the uncomfortableness I was sensing was from Him. Spiritually speaking, the place I was in didn't fit me anymore—I had no more room to grow. Like a root-bound plant in a container that's too small, I was confined. God's Spirit in me was not able to freely move through me like He wanted to. It had nothing to do with the people or the place around me—it had *everything* to do with what God was doing *in* me.

**A Word of Warning to the Wise:** If God is moving you into a new season, *You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace...* (Isaiah 55:12 NIV). You will not be angry, bitter or offended toward anyone. If you've outgrown the place you're presently in, your departure will more than likely be marked by a mixture of bitter-sweet emotions, including sadness and joy, excitement and uncertainty. Nevertheless, deep inside you'll *know* it's time to move on and embrace the new place God has for you.

Beware of biting the enemy's bait of negativity and criticism. Satan surely doesn't want you to enter a new season of growth in your relationship with God, so he'll do whatever he can to poison your spirit on your way out. Don't look to find fault with those around you to confirm your leaving. Go with your gut feeling from God as reason enough. Ask Him to help you keep a positive attitude toward the people around you. Remember: the way you leave one place is the way you enter the next.

Once you know God is moving you, make a decision and stick to it. *Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. [God's] about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! Don't you see it? There it is!* (Isaiah 43:18,19 The Message).

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