

Dare to Change Your Life

Extreme Makeover

Introduction

The theme of “Extreme Makeover” is made up of two important words:

Makeover

In our culture when we hear the term “makeover” it usually has something to do with either a home that is going to be made over or a person’s body that is going to be made over.

Extreme

When the word “extreme” is means that it is not just a cosmetic change but something that goes to the core. You can paint a house (A little paint covers a multitude of sins), you can apply serious makeup, but that is only a surface makeover.

An “Extreme Makeover” is much more radical and permanent. It usually carries with it the idea of:

- Radical
- Severe
- Intense
- Extraordinary
- Outrageous
- Extravagant
- Perhaps even excessive
- Outer limits or pushing the boundaries (extreme sports)

When I think of the idea of Extreme Makeover in the biblical or spiritual sense, I think of certain key words including: Change, Growth, Progress, Transformation, Advancement, Development, Maturation, Increase.

All of these words and concepts are very much part of the Christian faith and the Christian experience.

Key Verses:

Proverbs 4:18 “The path of the just...shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

II Corinthians 3:18 “We are changed...from glory to glory.”

Ephesians 4:15 “We are to grow up into Him in all things.”

Romans 12:1-2 We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

I Thessalonians 4:10 We are to increase more and more.

II Corinthians 10:15 Our faith is to continue to grow.

II Peter 3:18 We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Him.

The walk with God is a progressive walk, on and on, deeper and deeper, more and more, right up until we meet the Lord whether through the grave or at the Second Coming of Christ.

Philippians 1:16 (Amp.)

And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing [that good work] and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you.

Nowhere are we instructed to become faint, to relax in our efforts, to settle down, to level off or to taper off as the years go by.

On the contrary, we are to...

- Stir ourselves up
- Press toward the mark
- Take the kingdom by force
- Possess our inheritance
- Lay hold of God's will
- Fight the good fight

Most of us started with this understanding. Our salvation experience was a real turn around. Many began their Christian walk with...

- Great zeal
- Dedication
- Goals, dreams, spiritual aspirations
- Great spiritual vitality
- Hunger for more
- A sincere desire to please God
- A desire to make our lives count for something.

Satan, of course, is worried when he sees Christians like this. So he begins to work overtime. He grabs his bag of tools and goes to work. He uses...

- Temptations (envy, lust, covetousness)
- Condemnation
- Evil Thoughts

All with an effort to cool us down. He will use whatever he thinks will work on us. He fires his best darts at us. His goal is to dissipate the spiritual strength that is moving through us.

And Satan is successful in many cases.

Perhaps because of our ignorance of Satan's devices or an incomplete system of armor Satan has, in some cases, gained an advantage. He has neutralized the effectiveness of many.

Perhaps you are one of those whom Satan has sidelined and taken out of the game.

Something has happened. You started out well, but Satan has neutralized you. How did it happen? What put you on the bench? What apparently (at least in your mind) has destroyed your chances of finishing your race?

It is most likely something different for different people.

1. Some have been drawn away and entices into sin.

These individuals are like Samson. He had a great start but somehow through moral failure he did not live up to his potential. But perhaps like Samson you have come to your senses...

- You have repented.
- You have made things right with God and man
- You have served your time (so to speak)

But...you are still on the sidelines.

Satan has told you that you are all washed up. You will never play again. The hurdle is too big, it can never be overcome. You do not deserve a second chance. You have sold your birthright. It is over.

The sad thing is that you believe Satan! He has convinced you that you are not worthy and of no value to God.

What Satan has not told you is that "God is a God of second chances!"

Samson said, "Give me another chance!" and his hair began to grow.

2. Some have had an experience that they feel has disqualified them from active service in God's army.

It could be anything...A divorce, a child out of wedlock, a criminal record, alcoholism, a child that has turned his back on God, a bankruptcy.

Because of these situations Satan has beat them down (sometimes through the mouth of other Christians) and told them that they have forfeited their future.

I am not saying that God takes pleasure in divorce, or immorality, or criminal behavior or bankruptcy.

But I am saying that if we have truly repented and made things right with God and man that we do have a future in God.

Paul had a future even though he had been responsible for the death of Christians.

Matthew had a future even though he had cheated many people.

David had a future even though he had committed adultery and murder.

God was able to put the pieces of these lives together and get glory out of their lives in the end.

It is true that all of these things leave scars in our lives, but those scars need be nothing more than testimonies and visible reminders of God's grace and healing power.

3. Some have made some wrong choices early on in their Christian life and now they feel that it is too late to change their course.

Perhaps they felt a specific call of God when they were young, but they got sidetracked through other endeavors and worldly cares.

Perhaps they went into a career that has led them further and further from their families and from God and they feel a little like they are trapped and it is too late for them to do anything about it.

You may feel like you are in a whirlpool. Life is out of control. Things are spinning so fast that if you try to jump off now you fear that everything may come crashing down around you.

Satan has convinced you that you are better off to stay where you are than try to change now because it is too late or you are too old to change (Caleb, Moses, Paul).

I am here to tell you that...

You are never too old to change
You can teach an old dog new tricks.

No one is too old for Bible School or technical school if God is in it.

You do not have to settle for the status quo!

You can change your life!

You are not too old to (fill in the blank)...

- Get a new job
- Learn the computer
- Go back to school
- Get involved in a new ministry
- Etc.

We must have a Caleb spirit that says, "Give me that mountain!"

4. Some have experienced a failure of some kind that brought them to a place of personal and public humiliation in ministry of service.

You tried to move into an area that you felt God wanted but things did not go so well and you fell flat on your face in front of witnesses.

The devil has used this experience and has re-run it many times in your mind. He has convinced you that you are a failure and that you cannot excel.

He has led you to believe that all of the successful people that you see around you have never been through what you have been through. They have never been humiliated.

You are afraid to try again. It hurt too much.

The real truth is that every successful person has left a string of failure behind them.

Examples:

A six year old came home from school one day with a note from the teacher in which it was suggested that he be taken out of school because he was “too stupid to learn.” His name was Thomas Edison. Edison was awarded 1,368 separate and distinct patents during his lifetime. He passed away at age 84 on October 18th, 1931 - on the anniversary date of his invention of the incandescent bulb.

Dr. Wernher von Braun, the missile scientist and satellite expert flunked math and physics in his early school years.

A boy was so slow to learn to talk that his parents thought he was abnormal and his teachers called him a “misfit.” His class mates avoided him and seldom invited him to play with them. He failed his first college entrance exam at a college in Zurich, Switzerland. A year later he tried again. In time he became world famous as a scientist. His name: Albert Einstein.

“Some years ago a man over sixty was offered nearly \$200,000 for a restaurant-motel-service station business that he had spent his lifetime building up. He turned the offer down because he loved the business and wasn’t ready to retire yet. Two years later, at age 65, he was flat broke with no income to look forward to but a small Social Security check each month. The state had built a new highway bypassing his business and he lost it.

“Most men would have been crushed by such a blow, but he refused to give up. Instead he took stock. There was one thing that he knew how to do—fry chicken. Maybe he could sell this knowledge to others. He kissed his wife goodbye and in an old battered car with a pressure cooker and a can of specially prepared flour, he set out to sell his idea to other restaurants. It was tough going and he often slept in his car because he couldn’t afford a motel room.

A few years later he had built a nationwide, franchised restaurant chain call Kentucky Fried Chicken. The man’s name is Colonel Sanders.”

None of these individuals accepted failure as God's mandate to stop breathing. They were not going to be thwarted by criticism, setbacks, false starts or bumps along the way.

Conclusion

So how do we respond...

God wants to extend a second chance this morning (perhaps the third or fourth one).

God wants to get us back on the path of the just.

God wants to get the people of God motivated and moving once again.

God wants us to see the devices of Satan and rise in faith to face a new challenge.

God wants us to dare to change our lives. To stir ourselves once again.

God wants us to come back to His perfect plan for our lives.

For some this means considering...

- A career adjustment
- Reaching out again for a ministry that God has laid on your heart.
- Becoming the employer, husband, mother or father that they would really like to be.

Some need to get back to that close relationship with God.

Whatever the change is, it must be consistent with God, His word and His perfect plan for your life.

They say that life begins at 40...

Actually, life begins the moment we begin to respond to God and change. You see, all things that have life change.

Life could begin anew for you today. I wonder...would you dare to change your life.

Altar call—Go back through the four main categories and pray for people