

Change and Innovation Part 1: Be Prepared to be the Change

We may not have control over a change that impacts our life but we can decide on how we respond to the change. Knowing that the only constant in life is change means that we need to be proactive by anticipating possible changes in our environment and planning strategically for the future.

In Mark 2:18-19, people asked Jesus why his disciples were not fasting like disciples of John and Pharisees. Jesus made it clear that fasting is required of disciples but for his disciples a change would happen when he is no longer on earth and at that time his disciples will have to fast.

The disciples realized they needed to be prepared for changes after Jesus' departure. After observing Jesus and John's disciples praying, they asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Lk.11:1). Jesus told them after they could not help a demon-possessed boy that they need to add fasting to prayer (Mk. 9:29; Mt. 17:21). Jesus' disciples embarked on prayer and fasting after his departure from earth to the point that they were referred to as people who "turned the world upside down", that is, they had tremendous impact in their society.

The disciples anticipated changes and responded appropriately to the new world they found themselves after Jesus' departure from earth so they are good models for us. We are encouraged to conduct environmental scan of our industry, market, workplace or profession to identify what we need to change to be successful, make positive impact or maintain our competitive edge as individual contributors, leaders and organizations. It may start with careful observation of what our mentors, senior colleagues or supervisors are doing or have done ethically that has worked well for them or their organizations. It could be embarking on a study session on trends in the industry, market or profession that can give a clue as to what the future may hold. Remember Jer. 33:3 – "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." God is faithful unto his word and so he can make us change makers not people who are just impacted by change.

In Mark 2: 21-22, Jesus spoke about change that is completely new – not half-hearted change, patchwork or holding to a past (way of doing things) that cannot support and affirm the 'new' way. Jesus is a change maker and an innovator so should his disciples be.

We are called to be salt and light to impact our communities, families and workplaces for good for Christ. Some questions to ponder are:

- Have I brought new ideas or innovations to the way I work or my team works?
- What does the future look like and what do I, my team or my organization need to do to be prepared for changes?
- What are the things, skills, knowledge or attitudes that I, my team or organization need to overcome challenges?
- What is it you have now in your business/workplace that assures protection or success today that may not be there tomorrow? Just like Jesus had to leave the disciples. What can you begin to do now to prepare you for the future without your 'Jesus'-like item/person?