

A Parting Conversation with Tommy and Shelley Green

I. Change is a part of life.

“For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to tear down and a time to build up. A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones. A time to embrace and a time to turn away. A time to search and a time to quit searching. A time to keep and a time to throw away. A time to tear and a time to mend. A time to be quiet and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate. A time for war and a time for peace... Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time.” Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 (NLT)

Life Application: We need to be thankful in seasons of change.

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)

II. God will guide us along the best pathway for our lives.

The LORD says, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.” Psalm 32:8 (NLT)

- God guides us through His Word. “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.” Psalm 119:105 (NLT)
- God guides us through others. “Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives.” Colossians 3:16 (NLT)
- God guides us through prayer. “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.” James 1:5 (NLT)
- God guides us through circumstances. “We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps.” Proverbs 16:9 (NLT)

Life Application: We must surrender our lives to the Lord and trust His direction.

“Trust in the LORD and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart’s desires. Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you.” Psalm 37:3-5 (NLT)

III. God is working through us and in us at the same time.

“May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.” Philippians 1:2-6 (NLT)

Life Application: We need to be grateful for the many people God has used to develop us spiritually.

“I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow.”

1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (NLT)

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“I’m in favor of progress; it’s change I don’t like.” Mark Twain

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. What unexpected changes have come your way this year? How did you respond to them?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-11. Do you agree with Solomon that everything is beautiful in its own time? Why? Why not?
3. Discuss the following four ways God guides us:
 - God guides us through His Word. Psalm 119:105
 - God guides us through others. Colossians 3:16
 - God guides us through prayer. James 1:5
 - God guides us through circumstances. Proverbs 16:9
4. How has God guided your decision-making recently?
5. Where do you need God's guidance today? Spend some time as a group praying for each other asking God to grant wisdom and counsel.
6. Read Philippians 1:2-6. How does it make you feel to know that God is working in you and through you at the same time?
7. Where is God stretching you? Where is God using you in the life of someone else?