

Moses – A Leader Who Wasn't Afraid Of Change (Part 2)
Exodus 18:11-27

Introduction:

1. The church is a living body – the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 5:30
2. Because of this, growth should be a very natural part of the church. Bodies are supposed to grow. Ephesians 2:21; 1 Peter 2:2
3. But there is no growth without change. In Romans 12:2, the key word is *“transformed.”*
4. Therefore, leaders and churches must learn to embrace change – not just tolerate it, but embrace it.
5. Let's examine an event in Moses' life and see how we can become people who learn to embrace change.

First, by realizing that principles stay the same, but methods will constantly change

Second, by refusing to fall in love with forms (the way we've always done it), but rather focus on function

1. What exactly is a “form?” We aren't talking about a piece of paper. It's not that kind of form.
 - A “form” is a non-biblical tradition that many people come to love and embrace. Many churches cling to forms (worship times, choir, how we do the offering, shaking hands, Sunday School, invitation, hymns, style of music, clothes we wear, pews, church buildings, etc.).
2. There is nothing wrong with any of these things in and of themselves, but a potential problem can develop.
 - Many times our “forms” bind us and keep us from functioning. Matthew 15:1-6
3. Back to our text. What was Moses' form? Moses would sit from morning until evening and attempt to meet everyone's needs (vs. 13-16). This is the way they always did it!
 - What was the problem? Their “form” was keeping them from functioning efficiently. vs. 17-18
 - Moses' form may have worked at one time, but as the nation of Israel grew, it was no longer functional, practical, or workable.
 - If they had clung to form rather than function, Moses would have worn out and the people's needs would not have been met. Do you think this ever happens in churches today?
4. Imagine a sailboat on a lake that has stopped moving. Someone suggests that they change the sails so they can achieve their goal of getting to the other side of the lake.
 - Those in love with “form” say, “We have always set the sails this way. There is no need to change now.”

- Those in love with function say, “We have stopped moving. Let’s change the sails and do whatever it takes to start moving again.”
 - The principle stays the same: get to the other side of the lake. But the form that gets you where you want to go (to achieve our goal and purpose) may change.
5. “Forms” simply get us where we’re going.
- **Illustration of a commuter train at Disney World:** Imagine somebody falling in love with that, and riding it all day long, back and forth. It’s not there for you to fall in love with. It is there to get you where you’re going.
 - Many churches are this way – they fall in love with their forms. But remember, we are like that boat.
6. Our guiding principle is to reach people with the gospel and train and equip believers to be fully mature Christians that rely on Christ completely. This should never change.
- But, like the boat, churches can reach a certain point where they stop growing, and their guiding principles are not being fully accomplished and realized. Some of their “forms” are no longer functioning.
 - The churches that continue to grow numerically and spiritually are the ones that learn to adjust their sails and make necessary changes. Change the “forms” that are not working.
7. If the church continues to cling to their “forms,” it will stagnate and eventually dwindle.
8. Sadly, many believers will let their church be destroyed before they will give up their “forms.” People cherish their “forms” as much – if not more than – the Bible.

Third, by humbly receiving advice from others

1. Jethro proposed a change in “form” (vs. 19-23). The leader, Moses, had a decision to make. “Do I cling to the traditional, non-working ‘form,’ or do I dare to change?”
2. What do you think went through the mind of Moses? Put yourself in his shoes. Do you think he was full of pride? Insulted? Threatened? Relieved? Hurt? Fearful?
 - How do you think the people responded when Moses announced the change?
3. Moses humbly received this advice and decided to dare to change.
4. When a person gives us advice, it is usually a call to change. This isn’t easy to take.
5. But here are some biblical thoughts from the book of Proverbs about receiving advice from others:
 - *“Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.”*
Proverbs 4:13
 - When we quit learning, we die.
 - *“Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.”* **Proverbs 8:33**
 - Do you want to become wiser? Become a better listener!

- *“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.” Proverbs 9:9*
 - A refusal to receive instruction is a problem of the heart.
 - A wise man is always open to new ideas and better ways of doing things.
 - *“Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.” Proverbs 12:1*
 - Do you want to get smarter? Don’t just tolerate instruction, learn to love it.
 - *“Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.” Proverbs 13:18*
 - Those that hate instruction seldom excel in life.
 - *“Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.” Proverbs 19:20*
 - Believers who possess great wisdom did not receive it by accident, but through years of humbly receiving instruction from others.
6. How well do you receive advice and instruction from others?
(1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10)
not very well very well
7. How would those who know you the best answer that question? How would those you work with answer that question?