



HERES YOUR CHANGE

From the series *Changeology*

[00:00:00]

We're continuing on our series in Changeology, the theology of change. This week, we wanted to finish the series in Romans. We won't quite make it. And then next week, I want to come back and I want to kind of look at the whole Romans 5, 6, 7 and 8 and highlight for us what I think is one of the most important truths in all of this passage specifically for our church because of where we are in Orange County. So next week, we're going to look at Romans kind of as an overview. We're going to mostly finish it and then -- and we're going to finish it next week. So it'd be a great series.

[00:34]

I told you that I'd tell you a joke on change. You e-mailed me a bunch of jokes. Here is the one that most of you sent on change. Observing a light across the water, a captain got his communication officer to instruct the vessel to change his course 15 degrees south. The response came back prompt, sir, change your course 15 degrees north. The guy says, you know, I'm the captain, he said sternly. He said, change your course 15 degrees south. The reply came back, I'm Seaman First Class, change your course north. The captain was furious. He said, I'm a battleship. Change your course 15 degrees north. The reply came back, I'm a lighthouse. All right, that's a bad joke, but you know, I'm here for you. So if you've got a better joke on change, you can tell me.

[01:25]

You know, we're going to talk about spiritual change specifically about spiritual metabolism. You know what your metabolism is, right? That's the process in your body that converts food into energy that you need to move forward. And so it gives you the nutrients and the energy that you need. I have a friend that I run with, you know, pretty regularly. He is a great friend. And he works out way more than I do. He actually does weights. He rides a bike. He plays tennis. And he runs with me when we run about six miles. And he's a substantial guy. He's kind of girthy, he's big. And he hasn't lost any weight. And he's always frustrated because no matter how much he works out, there are times that he'll play tennis, he'll do weights or ride a bike and then he'll run with me six miles. And he just doesn't lose weight.

[02:11]

So he's always saying, you know, I have a metabolism problem. My body just isn't processing food to create, you know, the energy that I need to sustain my life right. You know, I've got to go see a specialist. To which I say, because I'm around him a lot, you don't have a metabolism problem. You have an eating problem. He eats and he eats a lot of all the food groups, you know, and especially fat. And so -- and he, you know, he says fat eats good and sugar eats good. So he, he does it. So he spends all this money to go to a nutritionist, hundreds of dollars. And the nutritionist says, your metabolism is just fine. You have an eating problem. Because the problem is our system can work just fine, but if we don't put the right thing into our system, then it won't work.





[02:59]

We have a spiritual metabolism. This system that's being talked about in Romans 5 through 8 and the system works great. The key issue now we come to at the end of Romans is what is it that we have to put into our system that God uses to convert to the energy that we need for spiritual life? What is the one thing that you need in your life that will -- your spiritual metabolism will use to convert to the energy that you need? What's the one thing you need? Okay. And so, it's good you're here because you have no idea, all right? You know, we put in performance, we put in good works. We try to put in, you know, success. We put lots of things into our system, but there is one thing that you need that God uses to convert to the spiritual energy that you need. You've got to metabolize one thing. That one thing is God's love. All right, God's love through Jesus Christ as it's revealed through God's word. If you do not have God's love in your hearts metabolized, if you don't understand it from God's word, if that's not the one thing that's feeding your soul and you metabolize it, you'll never have the energy that you need to go to places that you want to go, to do the things that you want to do without understanding God's love. And it isn't just understanding it in your mind, it's metabolizing it. It is to get it into your system so that it literally becomes the energy you need to go to places that you need to go. Look at what it says, the five greatest questions in all the Bible to help you understand God's love, Romans 8. Listen to God's word.

[0:04:42]

[Begin Media]

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? Since He did not spare even His own son, but gave him up for us all, won't He also give us everything else? Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for His own? No one, for God Himself has given us right standing with Himself. Who then will condemn us? No one, for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and He is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? As the scriptures say, for your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep. No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow, not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below, indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

[End Media]

[06:17]

Powerful passage, isn't that good news? That is good news. And if you can get that in your spirit, metabolize it into your soul, it will give you the energy that you need, the spiritual energy you need to do the things that you want to do.

[06:31]





On your outline, you can see we've talked about God's love for us. Last week we talked about how my bad things will be turned out for good in Romans 8:28. We know that God causes everything to work together for good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. And the one reason we know that's true that our bad things turn out for good is because we talked about last week, how your very worst thing, think about it, what's the worst thing in your life? If you can be convinced that that worst thing became the best thing, you can believe that God can take our bad things and turn them out for good. What is the absolute worst thing in your life? The worst thing in your life is the part you played to put Jesus Christ on the cross because of your sin, the darkness in your heart. We put Jesus on the cross. And in that worst moment, because of our sin, it absolutely became the best moment in our life. Because Jesus went to the cross, there is forgiveness, there is life, there is love, there is an eternity in heaven with God.

[07:33]

So the worst thing became the very best thing. Our bad things are going to become good things in our life, it will turn out for good. Then the best things will never be taken away. Why are the best things never taken away? Because they are gifts from God, God knew His people in advance. He chose them to become the son. So not only did He choose us, but then He called us and then He made us right and ultimately, He'll glorify us. And all of these are gifts from God. They're not something that we earn. And so they'll never be taken away. Then, the last thing that we look at is that we are loved. And this is what we need to understand.

[08:09]

And the way that He teaches this is He asked five questions. And if you get these five questions and answers in your spirit, this will change your life. So the five questions, the first question is, is God for us, who can separate us? What shall we say about such wonderful things? What's your response? What are you going to say about God's wonderful love? That your bad things will be turned into good, the best things will never be taken away, that God loves you. What do you say to this? How does it change your life? Then he says, if God is for us, who can be against us? Or is it enough that God is for me? Do I need somebody else for me? Or you know, is God really for me? So the question, the first is who can be against me? Who can be against you? Satan, well done. The world, good, the world can be -- you don't want to play? Not enough coffee this morning? The world will be against you. Satan will be against you. Friends sometimes are against you. Parents sometimes are against you. Teachers can be against you. Life can be against you. Old age can be against you. Are there a lot of things that are against you? Yeah. And are they real and substantial? Yes.

[09:21]

And so, the question is, whom is God for? Is God for everyone?

[Audience Response]

No. God is not for everyone, all right? God loves everyone and He proved it by sending His son, Jesus to die for them. But everyone who stands outside of God's love through -- you know, doesn't accept Jesus, it says that God opposes the proud, and when people say, I don't need Jesus. I don't need a savior. I'm going to stand in my own righteousness and I'm good enough. Ultimately, God opposes the proud and the wrath of God will go on them. God is not for everyone. God is for His





children. In Romans 8:28, it says for those who love Him and those who love Him are the ones who say, I believe, to Jesus, who trusted Jesus to be the exclusive savior of the world. God is for them.

[10:11]

God is for His children. So if you are a person that has said yes to Jesus, you can say, God is for me. Say it with me. God is for me. And that's the most powerful thing. You go, God is for me. And if you can metabolize that one statement -- say it again.

[Audience Response]

And if that gets deep in your spirit, it will change your life. How will it change you? With you just having that sense that God is for me? First of all, there will be a boldness and courage to your life that is just uncommon, different from other people. You'll move at life with this sense God is for me. And so there will be courage, you'll move at life.

[10:52]

When I was in sixth grade, in junior high, we would stay after school and we'd play football. And you know, you'd choose teams and as a sixth grader, you're never really picked first because there is eighth graders. And the best athlete in our school was named Bill Armand [ph]. He was the biggest kid, the fastest kid, the most talented when it came to sports. And I remember one time, we were playing after school and Bill Armand chose me to be on his team, as a sixth grader, kind of, you know, earlier than sixth graders were being picked. And so, you know, I was like, I'm on his team. And so this eighth grader started to pick on me, you know, I caught a pass or something and he started to pick on me and he's pushing me around and I'm thinking, you know, this guy is going to beat me up. And all of a sudden, right when I think he's going to, you know, beat me up and I'm standing there going, this isn't going to go well for me. Bill Armand steps in between and he says, leave him alone. Leave Kenton alone. He's on my team. And I'm standing behind Bill Armand and I'm going, yeah. You want a piece of me? Come on. You know, it's lucky, Bill's standing there, I'll come after you, you know. So the rest of the game, this guy didn't give me any grief because, you know, Bill goes, you leave him alone. And so I played with courage. In fact, I played the best game I ever played because Bill Armand was, you know, he was for me.

[12:09]

And so when you move in life, and you have this sense that God is for me, you move -- it's your job, you move in your marriage, you move in your relationships and you say, God is for me. And you live with this sense of courage. You face decisions and you live with no fear because God is for me. And even if you move forward and you make a decision that's wrong, it doesn't concern you. It's not that you're cavaliering, you just go, I can make wrong decisions. But you're not fearful to make a wrong decision because --

[Audience Response]

And that God is for me is expressed in that verse where God causes everything to work together for good. So I might not get it right this time but it's okay because God is going to work for me





and He's going to cause everything to work together for good. I'm not paralyzed when it comes to making decisions, I move forward. God is for me.

[12:58]

And then as I move through life because He's with me, all of a sudden, when I see some of my friends starting getting things -- you ever lived in your life at a point where it seems like everything you need, the friends around you are receiving and God seems to bless them and you go and say, God, I think you want to bless me but You're missing and You're hitting my friends. And the question is, is God going to give to somebody else the blessing that He wants to give you?

[Audience Response] Why? Because God is for me, He's not going to give somebody else a blessing that He has for me. He is for me. And when you metabolize that and you start to understand it, it changes your life. And when you forget it, and all of a sudden, just because of the events of life, the circumstances of life, the things of life, the pain, the sadness, the difficulties knock you around and all of a sudden, you're wondering, I'm not sure that God is for me, all you have to do, is turn around and look back at the last year of your life, and what's the one thing that you're going to absolutely see? That God was for you.

[14:00]

There are a lot of people in your life that said, you'd never make it here. There were people who were committed to not letting you make it here. And you're here today because God's for you. That's why. And there were people who promised that they would stand with you and they would love you through all the events of life and they walked away. But you're still here because God never walked away, because God is for you. And there are people who say, I love you, and you thought it meant something a certain way, but it doesn't mean exactly what you thought. And they let you down. And there's pain and there's sadness related to that, but you realized that you are where you are today because God is for you in every step of the way. When you look at your marriage, when I look at my marriage, boy, I made it because God was for me. When I couldn't even see, and I wasn't sure that I could make it, God was for me. And in my parenting, even as a pastor of the church, there is a lot of things that I wouldn't be here today if God wasn't for me.

[15:01]

But the one thing that you know is that you're here today because --

[Audience Response]

You don't get it. You don't believe that, do you? I mean, you think about it. You're here today because God is for you. Do you believe that?

[Audience Response]

And when you believe that, when you really believe that and you look over your life and you go, I am where I am today and I'm doing the things that I'm doing today because God is for me. And He is going to sustain me. It's the thing that gets you up in the morning, it keeps -- it gives you a spring in your step. When you face enemies and they start, you know, difficulties and challenges, your boss starts to oppose you, you go, that's all right because God is so for me. You might get





mowed down because He is so for me. And at the end of the day, it causes you to put your head on the pillow with a sense of peace because God is for you.

[15:50]

At what point in your life, what do you face in your life that you think, I don't think God's for me in this. God is for you. Do you believe that?

[Audience Response]

I don't think you do. And when you move out and you don't have a sense that God is for me and you forget that, what are you focused on? Everybody that can be against you and you live in fear and you're saying, oh no, these people let me down. Oh God, I've got this obstacle, I've got that, and you live with this sense of dread because you're going, these things stand against me. But when you focus not on the things against you, but that God is for you, you got courage. You believe that? I'm not moving until you get this, all right? So you're going to have to get -- do you believe that God is for you?

[Audience Response] Okay, now I think you do. And so you've got to metabolize that and have a sense of every day, you're going, God is for me today. And He's going to cause everything in my life to work together for good.

[16:48]

The second question, will God's generosity give me everything I need? Essentially, will it really give me everything I need? Will God's generosity run out? Is there a limit to God's generosity? That's the question. Since God did not spare His own son, but gave him up for us all, won't He give you everything else? So the question is, what do you need? You need health, peace, security, food, shelter, love, set of golf clubs, a car, stuff and things. You know, we need a lot. The question is, is God going to give you everything that you need?

[Audience Response]

How do you know?

[Audience Response]

Because He said so? How do you know that God is going to give you everything you need?

[Audience Response]

Because He promised? How do you know? It's not an objective thing. I mean, it's not a -- it's not - - opposite of subjective is -- it's not an abstract thing. It's a real thing. How do you know -- the answer is in the verse, by the way. How do you know that God is going to give you everything you need? It's on your outline. Because He gave His son.

[18:07]





That's why anytime you start to think, I don't think God's going to give me everything I need. I think He's going to withhold. You just need to hold this one thought. He gave His son. When we face the crisis moment of sin and we had amassed a mountain of moral debt and the only way we could pay for it is to die. I mean, eternally die, to be separated from God, it was a crushing debt that we couldn't pay, God didn't hesitate. He gave the life of His son. Would you do that for somebody? Would you give your child so somebody else might live? Nobody would do that. But God loved you so much that He gave His son. And His generosity, was it based on your cleverness? Was it based because you were a good person? That you're a faithful person? Was it even that you wanted it? When God gave His son, it wasn't when you wanted it, it wasn't when you were looking for it, it wasn't because you cried out for it, it's simply because God was aware that you needed it. Even before you needed it, He gave His son.

[19:11]

Here is a question. If you loved your child and it was appropriate and you gave them a car, put it in their name, paid for insurance, filled up the tank with gas, if you gave them the car, would you give them the keys also? It'd be -- it's ridiculous. Here is the question. If God gave His son, the greatest gift that's ever been given, is God going to withhold any good thing from you?

[Audience Response]

Okay. About eight of us have it now. If God gave His son, the greatest gift that's ever given, is He going to withhold any good thing from you?

[Audience Response]

Because He's already given you the greatest single gift; you -- in every request, no matter how big it is, it's as small as the keys, it's never the car. He's already given the single greatest gift that can be given.

[20:06]

And so God is saying to us, He goes, look it, I've given to you. Do you think God is going to act on your -- you know, is God going to be reluctant? Is God going to withhold? Is God someday going to look at you and say, you know, you haven't been very thankful for the gifts that I've given you. I've given you so many good things and you've kind of taken it for granted. That's it. I'm taking them all out. You're going to be the guy standing, holding the sign at the corner and broke. Do you think God is going to do that to you?

[Audience Response]

So you're not so sure on that one, all right? Because do you need to be grateful for God to continue to bless you?

[Audience Response]

Do you need to -- no, you really don't. Do you need to -- because here is why. Did God give His son because you were grateful?



[Audience Response]

Did God give His son because you were faithful?

[Audience Response]

Did God give you His son because you really wanted it? No, God gives generously because that's who He is.

[21:01]

And He's not going to withhold any good thing and when you start to metabolize the fact that God loves you that much, you're not going to live in fear that, you know, all of a sudden at some point, God hasn't been paying attention and He's going to notice that you got more than you should get. And He's going, whoa, hey, hey, hasn't anybody been paying attention? That one's got enough. Cut it off. Take some back. They're not grateful, enough of you. Sometime in your life, all of a sudden, God's going to take it back? No. Why? Because --

[Audience Response]

No. God gave His son is the right answer, all right? He's not going to take it back because --

[Audience Response]

That's right.

[21:42]

And when you're praying and you got a need and you're praying for a kid, that's wayward and getting a little loose in the turns, you're praying for a business deal, you're praying for a financial turnaround, you're praying for some health in your life, you're praying for something in your life and you're thinking, God, I don't think you're listening. God, I don't think you care. There is one phrase that's got to come to your mind that shifts your whole thinking and it is God gave His son. And even in that moment when you're praying, saying, oh God, would you -- could you -- would you give me one more thing, could you help me in this moment? It's a startling fact all of a sudden say, God, You gave Your son. And so if you don't grant this, it's because I don't need it. Or at least I don't need it today. And you're doing something else in my life. And I might need it tomorrow and You'll give it to me when I need it. But if I don't have it today, it's because You're a loving Father who is excited to give me every good gift. You're generous to the core and excited to do what is helpful for me. You're going to give me every good gift because You gave Your son. And because You gave Your son, I can be confident that at any moment, You're going to give me everything I need. It's not going to turn off. You're not going to stop. You're not going to withhold something that I need.

[23:05]

God is generous and when I understand that, at the very core of my being that God is a generous God, it changes everything in my life. It means I can trust Him. If I don't have it, I don't need it. I



have the courage to go to Him every day and ask Him for everything that I need, but would have the confidence to say, but God, if you haven't given it at this point, you are a loving Father, I don't need it because You gave Your son. And if You love me so much that you would give me Your son, wouldn't You give me -- you know He'll give you every good thing that you need in your life, because He gave His son. And automatically, then it means we don't clutch and hold on. We're not fearful, saying you know, this could stop at any day. God tomorrow might turn it off. So I have to hold on to what I have. We go, everything I have is a generous gift from God and because He's so generous to me, I can give generously. I can live with open hands. I can trust Him with every good thing that He's given me.

[24:05]

And the one mark of a person who's internalized this, metabolized that God is a generous God, what's the one word that they say every day? The right answer is, thank you, all right? What's the one thing they say every day?

[Audience Response]

Every day. They can't help, but look at their life and say, thank you. They look at all the good gifts that God -- thank you. God, You gave Your son, thank you. You gave me health, thank you. You've given me these things, thank you. You've given me these challenges and I'm not sure, but I know they're a good gift from a loving Father, thank you. You haven't even answered some of the prayers and I'm not sure why, but I'm already grateful because I know that if I don't have it, I don't need it, thank you. And every day we say thank you. First thing to understand God's love is to say, God, You are so for me. The second thing is to say, God gave His son, every day, God gave His son. You got it? All right.

[24:58]

Third question, all right? Who will accuse us -- on the back of your outlines, look at what it says -- who will accuse us? Who dares accuse whom God has chosen as His own? No one, for God Himself has given us right standing. So who accuses us?

[Audience Response]

Is that true? No one accuses you? It sure feels like they do. All right, so -- well, he says no one. What does he mean? No one can accuse me and it works. No one is successfully going to accuse me. But who tries to accuse me? Friends, Satan, enemies, family, teachers, parents, there's all sorts of people. I accuse me, all right? And so we are all accusing ourselves at different times. But ultimately, who's the judge? God. And so it's a picture of a courtroom. So you have all of these accusers coming into the courtroom and ultimately they say, this guy is small, this guy is weak, this guy is not courageous, he's not faithful, he's not loving. There is all these people coming to accuse us, but ultimately the judge is God. And He's on our side. And ultimately, He is the one who chose us. Look at Romans 8:29 and 30. That's on your outline later.

[26:11]

But it says I chose them. You were God's first thought. And He chose you to be His loved child. And He called you to be His very own. And He is the one who's changing you right now and





making you right. And so, God is the one who's saying, I chose them. I love them. But they're small, they're weak. I love them. They're cowardly. They don't act -- it's okay, I love them and I'm making them right. God chose you. That's what He says. And so, say it. God chose me. Say it.

[Audience Response]

What's the hardest thing, the answer is God chose me, so just get ready. You won't believe this. What's the hardest one so far to metabolize?

[Audience Response]

It's the hardest one to believe. Because you look around and go, I can see why God might choose some other. But I'm not faithful and I'm not loving, I'm not good to the core. I'm not sure God would choose me. I mean, why would God choose me? And the most amazing truth, even when you're accused for being small, being weak, being frail, is this overwhelming truth, God chose me. God chose you. God chose you. You are His. You belong to Him.

[27:18]

And then the fourth one is just like it. And look at what it says. What's the fourth one? Who will condemn us? Who then will condemn us? No one, for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us. And He is sitting at the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us. So the question is, who or what will condemn us? Same answer, critics, enemies, Satan, detractors and ultimately, what do they condemn us for? The bad stuff that's inside of us. And the question is, will the bad stuff inside of us ultimately separate us from God's love, the bad stuff in you? And you know, you know the bad stuff inside of you that all of a sudden springs up at certain moments in your life and absolutely mortifies you. It stops you in your tracks and you realize that something happens in life and you see this darkness, this just absolute ugliness in your life and it surprises you. And it frightens you.

[28:14]

And in that moment, you hear all the critics going, look at you, you are unloving. You are unfaithful. Look at the hate in your heart. Look at the impurity in your life. Look at what you did. And in your own life, what do you even do? Huh, how could God love me? Who's condemning you at that moment? You are. We are the most powerful people to condemn ourselves. The critics come in and accuse us. And then all of a sudden, we see the darkness. And the question is, will the bad stuff in your heart ever separate you from God's love? Will it allow you to be condemned? Romans 8:1 says there is no condemnation to those. Why is the bad stuff in your life not going to condemn you? Because of Jesus, there it is. Look at on it -- because Jesus defends me. What does it say in your outline? Now, this is just the verse. Look at the verse. How do you know that it ultimately you'll never be condemned? Because Jesus died for us, was raised to life, and is sitting at the place of honor. Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

[29:15]

How do we know that God accepts the penalty that Jesus died on our sins? It's the second phrase, because Jesus was -- because Jesus was -- it's the second phrase --



[Audience Response]

Good. One of us has it, but the rest of us need it. Okay. Look at Jesus died for our sins and was raised. So how do you know that God accepted the gift, that Jesus' death on the cross? Because God raised Him from the dead. And then not only that, but He put Him on the seat of honor; He put Him in the highest place, the supreme place. And so Jesus is sitting in a place of honor, He is in the most powerful place and what does He do every day?

[Audience Response]

He defends you. He intercedes for you. So every day, when that darkness kicks up and you're going, how could God love me? Jesus speaks on your behalf and says, it's okay because I died for them, to make them right, to extend forgiveness for them. There is no condemnation. At the darkest moments in our life, every day, Jesus speaks and say, that's who I died for. They're forgiven. God loves you. God loves you. And so, you can go through -- what is the statements? God is for me. God gave His son. God chose me. Jesus defends me.

[30:36]

Here is the question. Why does God love you so much? I mean, why does He love you so much, really? Why does God love you? Every once in a while, I tell Laurie, my wife, how much I love her. And she smiles. I go, Laurie, I just love you. And she smiles at me and she wants more. So I go, I love you because you're just knock-dead gorgeous. I love you because you are -- I love your personality, I love how you make me laugh at life. I love -- you're a great mom. I love -- I love the person that you are. You're incredible. And I say all those things. And every once in a while, she staggers me because she says, well, what if I got in a car accident and I wasn't those things anymore? Would you still love me? And at the end, the only thing I can say is, I love you because I love you.

[31:41]

Do you know why God loves you? Because that's who God is. Do you know why the Bible says He loves you? Because that's who God is. He doesn't love you because you're quick or clever or bright or faithful or good, because none of us are any of those things all the time. And there are things in life that bump us and we're not that anymore. The good news is God loves you because He does. He just does. Every day when you wake up, He looks at you and goes, I love -- I love them. I, I just love them. And I'm going to pour grace on them. And I'm going to defend them. And I'm going to be for them. I just love them. And there is nothing you can do, there is nothing that you can do to ever separate you from God's love. We're going to talk about that next week. Let's pray.

[32:38]

Father, we are so grateful that you're a God who loves. We don't love like that. We don't even understand that, but You do. We don't -- that You would choose us, that You would defend us, that You would graciously give to us, that You would never allow us to be accused. What an amazing thing. Oh God, we are so grateful. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

[33:04]



Roy wrote the song we sang earlier today. And I don't want you moving around, all right? Because he wrote this song and it would hurt Roy's feelings. And I'm totally serious here. So you can join Roy in this. But listen to this song as he sings it over to you. Sing it with him. This is a powerful song about God's love.

