



Changed Plans

Jude 3



Has God ever changed your plans, unexpectedly?

- Don't just say yes, but bring one or two of them to your mind
 - Maybe it's that third child
 - Maybe a career change
 - Maybe what you thought about someone or something

Has God ever changed your plans?

- **Jeremiah 29:11 NIV** For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.
 - I’ve yet to receive a text or email from God saying, “Sharp turn ahead, get yourself ready.”
 - But yet as I look at my life, I can see His hand repeatedly over the course of my life

Gideon

- God sent an angel to prepare Gideon to be a powerful warrior as he was threshing wheat in a wine press because of the Midianites
 - It still amazes me how quickly God can change our plans
 - So Gideon gets an army together

Gideon

- **Gideon 7:1-3 NIV** Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. 2 The Lord said to Gideon, “You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, ‘My own strength has saved me.’

Gideon

- **Gideon 7:1-3 NIV** 3 Now announce to the army, ‘Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.’” So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.
 - Gideon started with 32,000 men and now has 10,000 men remaining

Gideon

- **Gideon 7:4 NIV** But the Lord said to Gideon, “There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, ‘This one shall go with you,’ he shall go; but if I say, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ he shall not go.”
 - God is telling Gideon, “I will select the ones who will fight for me.”

Gideon

- **Gideon 7:5-7 NIV** 5 So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, “Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink.” 6 Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink. 7 The Lord said to Gideon, “With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home.”

Gideon

- Fighting the entire Midianite army with 300 men was not Gideon's plan
- But God was doing a work in Israel, through Gideon, that he could never imagine
- To God be the glory, great things He has done

Gideon

- **Isaiah 48:10 NIV** I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'
- God has plans for his children's lives, plans that will prosper us spiritually and give us a future
- Do you trust Him to change your direction in life and move you forward?

Scriptures

Jude 3 NIV Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.

Paul's Plan Changes

- **Acts 16:6-8 MSG** 6-8 They went to Phrygia, and then on through the region of Galatia. Their plan was to turn west into Asia province, but the Holy Spirit blocked that route. So they went to Mysia and tried to go north to Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus wouldn't let them go there either. Proceeding on through Mysia, they went down to the seaport Troas (*and stopped*).

Paul's Plan Changes

- Even the Apostle Paul, a great man of faith, was treated to unexpected changes
- Noticed he was blocked from proclaiming Jesus in Asia province by the Holy Spirit
- He was also blocked from proclaiming Jesus in Bithynia by the Spirit of Jesus
- Now Paul is blocked by the sea and waiting further instructions

God knows where He wants you, and how He wants you, and when He wants you

- You can almost hear Jude's mind working here
 - He has heard about the struggles some churches are having with the false teachings about Jesus
 - “What these churches need is encouragement.”

God knows where He wants you, and how He wants you, and when He wants you

- So, he was going to, “write to you about our common salvation we share”
 - Great topic
 - Who Jesus is, What Jesus has done, The foundational bedrock teachings left by Jesus and the Apostles
 - I will cover God’s love, grace, forgiveness, acceptance, promises

God knows where He wants you, and how He wants you, and when He wants you

- But God would not let Jude write it
 - He probably started the letter 3-4 times without any inspiration
 - Maybe there was a heaviness in his spirit he tried to talk himself out of
 - “I guess Satan does not want me to write this.”

God knows where He wants you, and how He wants you, and when He wants you

- Then he prayed about the letter and asked God what He wanted to say to His churches
- God changed Jude's thinking which changed his direction

God knows where He wants you, and how He wants you, and when He wants you

- Was there anything wrong with a letter of encouragement to the churches?
- That is essential at times
- Was there anything wrong with Paul trying to proclaim Jesus in the Asian province or in Bithynia?
- But what the church really needed was a short letter about “contending for the faith given us”, struggling for the foundational truths about Jesus Christ

Sometimes it is a radical change of direction

- We find Peter in Acts being instructed by God to take the Gospel of Jesus to a Gentile family
- **Acts 10:9-15 NIV** 9 About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners.

Sometimes it is a radical change of direction

- **Acts 10:9-15 NIV** 12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. 13 Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.” 14 “Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” 15 The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”
- This was a massive challenge to Peter’s Jewish mind, and he didn’t have a clue what it meant

Sometimes it is a radical change of direction

- What is the worst thing God could ask you to do?
 - This was Peter's
- Sometimes God lets things like this set and soak for a while, but not with Peter
- This vision happened 3 times and on the third time Cornelius's men were at Peter's door telling him an angel had sent them for him

Sometimes it is a radical change of direction

- We find Peter inviting these Gentiles into his home (Jewish Yuk) and then spending a few days in a Gentiles home (Jewish Yuk) after seeing the Holy Spirit come upon them in salvation
- This was such a massive Jewish issue, Peter had to explain himself to the others when he returned to Jerusalem

Sometimes it is a radical change of direction

- Peter didn't hear the voice of the Lord saying, "Go to Gentiles and proclaim Jesus"
- But Peter was open to the events that God was allowing in his life
- He trusted God with the next step and kept saying, "Yes Lord" all the way to something so massive he would have said, "No" to if he had known ahead of time

Sometimes it is a radical change of direction

- This is how God teaches us to love those we find unlovable
 - This is how He moves us from one life direction to another
 - A small step at a time
 - A small tug at the heart at a time

Not just the big or massive changes in our lives but the small, seemingly insignificant changes as well

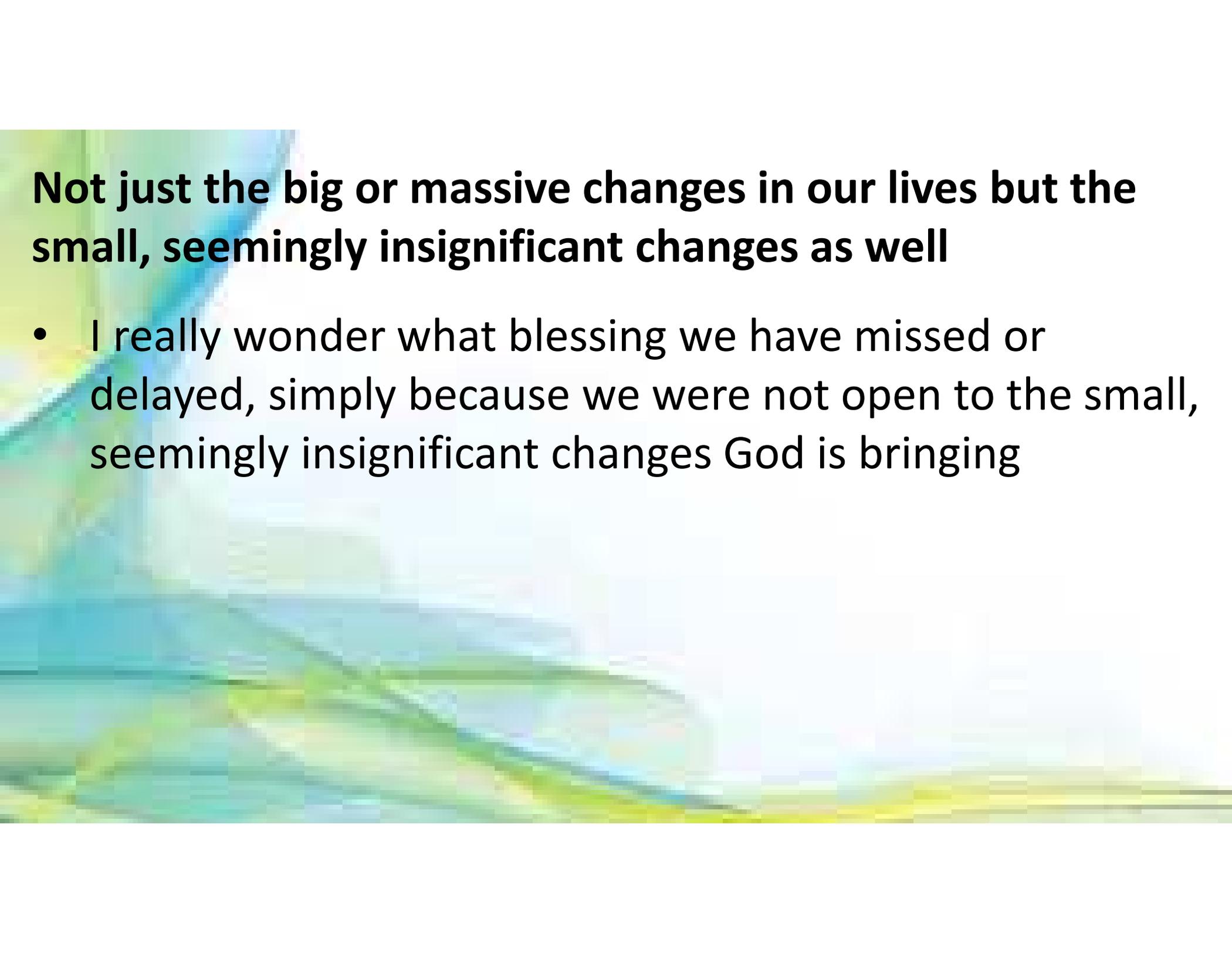
- Randy, does it really matter if Jude wrote a letter of encouragement or a letter sounding an alarm
 - It did to God, so it needs to be for us
- We identify easier with testimonies of how God moved people to higher and greater things
- But normally, it is the small, insignificant things He uses

Not just the big or massive changes in our lives but the small, seemingly insignificant changes as well

- Think of it like steering a canoe in a river
 - Large course changes take us from one bank to the other
 - There are times for that, but mostly it is the small corrections that keep us in the middle of the river

Not just the big or massive changes in our lives but the small, seemingly insignificant changes as well

- And as we look back on our lives, we see how His hand has guided us gently to where we are today
 - This is assuming you are not fighting Him along the way
 - You're not accepting His discipline
 - You're not folding your arms over your chest and saying, "Not me God!"



Not just the big or massive changes in our lives but the small, seemingly insignificant changes as well

- I really wonder what blessing we have missed or delayed, simply because we were not open to the small, seemingly insignificant changes God is bringing

What does this all mean?

- Peter didn't say "No" and salvation started moving toward you and me
- Paul did not say "No" and salvation came to Europe then to you and me
- Jude did not say "No" and we have a strong letter about not letting the world redefine our Savior
- Do you see a trend?

What does this all mean?

- We are blessed today because someone did not say “No” or “Not me” or “Send someone else” to God
- We will be blessed tomorrow when we do not say “No” to God and we will bless others along the way
- Be open to the changes God is bringing into your life no matter how small they appear
- And trust His direction and timing since He knows the beginning to the end



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