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Gleanings

Real Change Management



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One of the major distinctives of this time in history is the rapid change of technology. These changes challenge organizations to reassess their products and services. For example, electronic news media is replacing printed newspapers and magazines. And VoIP technology is replacing traditional wired phone service. Technological advancements are wonderful but they require organizations to adapt. This adaptation is known as “change management.”

Change management is a disciplined process that organizations use to modify their products and services in light of current and future reality. For many, change is a daunting experience and generally resisted. When given a choice, humans typically prefer the status quo, the tried and true. We embrace maxims such as “don’t rock the boat” and “if it isn’t broken don’t fix it.”

There are some, albeit probably a minority of people, who embrace change. They like the challenge and get bored with the routine. But these people seek change because they want something different, not necessarily because they desire progress.

This begs the question, what is progress? A pedestrian definition might be that progress is anything that improves mankind’s ability to do what man wants to do or, in other words, to do man’s will according to man’s ways. Though many, if not most, would concur with this definition, this is not a biblical definition of progress.

A biblical definition of progress would never be focused on man’s will and ways. It would be focused on God’s will and ways. Consider, therefore, the following definition:

Progress is transformation that facilitates the efficiency and effectiveness of man to bring the rule of God on earth.

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Based on this definition, such progress would be a corollary of the Creation Mandate (Genesis 1:26–28).

If you accept a biblical definition of progress, this suggests that change management is about transformation, that is, human transformation. Clearly technological advances are a factor in change management, but not the seminal factor. The greatest factor is the need for transformation of sinful man, which will empower man to fulfill the Creation Mandate. Therefore man must expect and accept change as a positive part of life.

Interestingly, Rabbi Daniel Lapin, in his book titled *Thou Shall Prosper: Ten Commandments for Making Money*, says that change should not be feared but embraced. He states that fear is only about the future. If you see the present as an opportunity to turn the future into the past that you wish, then there is nothing to fear. Note his comments about how to use the present to effect positive change.

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Another key to how Jews view the role of past and future and how they impact their experience of the present is provided by the total absence of any present verb *to be* in Hebrew. Anyone speaking a grammatically and Biblically correct Hebrew can say,

“I will be here tomorrow.” He or she can also say, “I was here yesterday.” Although there are phrases that are accepted to mean “I am here now,” in actuality the verb *to be* doesn’t exist in a usable form.

... In reality, the present is no more than an experiential mechanism by means of which humans can convert the future into the past. That’s right; the present is not so much a time as it is an action. The present is the activity I am currently engaged in during every instant, with the purpose of turning the infinitely malleable future into a better past.





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Daniel Lapin, *Thou Shall Prosper: Ten Commandments for Making Money* (Wiley, Kindle Edition, [2009-10-02], p. 235).

Lapin's insight into how to see the present offers a key thought for how to view change management. Given that no one can change the past and that the future can only be changed by decisions and actions in the present, then change management is about working in the present to transform the future into the past that one wishes.

What then is the future that one wishes? For Daniel Lapin, a Jewish rabbi who is spiritually minded and committed to the Jewish view of the Old Testament Scripture, his future is not defined by Christ. It is defined largely by a humanist, though seemingly altruistic view of reality. In other words, Rabbi Lapin's definition of highest good is largely of his own invention but he uses the Old Testament Scripture as the basis for gleanings his principles of wealth formation. Note his words.

The Torah, which is the basis of my knowledge of this subject, comprises 613 separate principles. These are categorized into 10 broad headings that we refer to as "the Ten Commandments." I have arranged the material that you need to be prosperous into a similar format of 10 broad headings, each of which encompasses many separate but related permanent principles.

Lapin, *Thou Shall Prosper: Ten Commandments for Making Money*, (p. 18).

Notwithstanding the attempt to base his view of business and wealth generation on Scripture, it is not a Christian view of Scripture. Therefore the approach of Rabbi Lapin is simply man's will being executed, at least in part, according to God's ways. This will produce some change but not profound change, that is, his worldview does not have a satisfying answer to the ultimate issues of life, namely, sin and death.

On the other hand, a Christian worldview is shaped by the reality of Jesus Christ. Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scripture and only in Christ does one have a satisfying answer to the ultimate issues of sin and death. Consequently, change management is about progressive transformation into alignment with the will and ways of God. This is a life of obedience to God that stems from a genuine relationship with the Creator based on the work of Christ alone.

Therefore, from a Christian worldview, real change management is much more than simply responding to changes in technology in the natural world, it is rooted in an adroit understanding of God's universe, which transcends the natural dimension and includes the spirit realm.

In fact, the spirit realm actually drives the physical realm. God, a spirit being, created the material universe and made man as his agent to rule his universe, therefore, natural reality came from spiritual reality.

Sin and the resulting death of fallen man impede man's ability to carry out his rulership assignment. The only solution for sin and death is Christ. Through Christ man has the potential to progressively be transformed from the state of doing his will according to his ways into alignment with the will and ways of God.

This transformation impacts individuals first and organizations second. Therefore real change management begins with individuals and flows from those individuals into organizations. Real change management is a process of discipleship that should be the culture of every organization. Until individuals are freed, through Christ, from the curse of sin and death they will never be able to realize their potential, which will limit their future and the future of the organizations that they are connected with.

For organizations that want to build multi-generational success, there must be alignment with the will and ways of God through Christ. Real change management begins with individual transformation, which leads to organizational transformation. This is profound change management because it is rooted in the only profound answer to the ultimate questions of sin and death, that is, Christ. Furthermore, real change management is complete, that is, it transcends the natural realm and includes the spirit realm. Therefore the only way to use the present to transform the future into the past that pleases the Lord is to embrace true change management. If you do, you will live your life holistically based on Christ and fruit will be evident in everything you do, including your work.

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