

Are You Ready for Life's Big Changes?



SABBATH—APRIL 13

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: 1 Corinthians 10:1–13; 1 Corinthians 13:4–8; 1 Samuel 1:27; Psalm 71; 1 Kings 2:1–4.

MEMORY VERSE: “God’s holiness leads the way in front of him. It prepares [gets things ready] the way for his coming” (Psalm 85:13, NIV).

LIFE IS FULL OF CHANGES. Things change all the time. The only thing that does not change is change itself. Change is part of what it means to be alive. Science teaches us that change is a basic part of life.

Many changes happen with no warning. We are going along in life, and then, boom! Everything changes in a second. We never even saw the change coming.

But sometimes we do see change coming. God in His mercy gives us warnings that things in life will be different very soon. When this happens, we must start to get ready as much as we can. Many changes are big: getting married, having children, growing old, and dying.

Most of us have a lot of other people in our lives. So, big changes can make life very different for our families too. Also, not every family member will think or feel the same way about the changes that happen.

This week, we will look at some of the big changes that are part of life. Sooner or later, these changes will happen to most of us. We will look at the important ways these things can change our lives.



Science teaches us that change is a basic part of life.

**ARE YOU READY FOR LIFE'S MANY CHANGES?
(1 Corinthians 10:1–13)**

The Bible does not hide the truth about life. It shows us that life can be hard at times. Yes, life can be very sad and full of pain. Really, if you think about it, the sad parts of the Bible fill most of the Book. Only the first few pages in the Bible and the last few at the end show us times free from pain. All the pages in between show us that humans behave in awful ways. Paul was right when he said: “Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to [can match] God’s glory [goodness; holy life]” (Romans 3:23, NIV).

Read 1 Corinthians 10:1–13. What do these verses warn us about? What promises do these verses give us too?

In many ways, our behavior shows the choices we make when change happens. Change will always come. As Christians, we must meet life’s changes with faith. We must trust in God during times of change. We show our faith by obeying God. We must trust Him even when that is not easy to do.

“What do people on this earth need to see more than anything else? They need to see an example of people who will do what is right every time. These people will never do wrong. Not even if someone offers them a lot of money. People who will not do wrong are true and honest. They are not afraid to show other people that sin is evil. The lives of honest people always point us in the right direction. Honest people will always do what is right even when no one else will.”—Ellen G. White, *Education*, page 57, adapted.

Read about the people in the verses below. What mistakes did the people make? What can we learn from them?

Acts 5:1–10 _____

Genesis 16:1, 2, 5, 6 _____

Matthew 20:20–22 _____

Change can make us feel afraid. It can lead us to do the wrong thing. So, we must be ready. We must put on God’s battle suit to help us stay strong (Ephesians 6:11). Then we can fight against the devil’s sneaky tricks and evil plans.



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ARE YOU READY FOR MARRIAGE? (1 Corinthians 13:4–8)

One of the biggest changes in life is marriage. Of course, not everyone gets married. Jesus never did. Many other people in the Bible also did not get married. But most people do marry. So, the Bible has some important things to say about marriage.

Did you know that marriage is one of the first things the Bible talks about? That is because marriage is very important to God. God told Adam and Eve about His special plan for marriage: “That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife. In this way two people become one” (Genesis 2:24, ERV). God’s plan for marriage is so important that it gets said again in three more places in the Bible: Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7; and Ephesians 5:31. When you are married, your husband or wife should be the most important person in your life. You should love your husband or wife even more than you love your parents. Marriage shows the love between Jesus and His church. The church is Jesus’ bride (Ephesians 5:32).

Before you build a house, you must figure out how much money it will cost (Luke 14:28–30). So, how much more should you think about what it costs to start a family? We build houses with brick, wood, metal, wires, and glass. But we make a **home** with things we cannot see and touch.

What things do we need to start a good marriage? Why do we need these same things to be a success in life too?

1 Corinthians 13:4–8 _____

Galatians 5:22, 23 _____

How do you get ready for marriage? You must first start with yourself. At the same time, you need to look carefully at your future husband or wife. Will he or she make a good life partner? Is he or she a hard worker (Proverbs 24:30–34)? Does he or she get mad easily? (Proverbs 22:24). Do you both share the same beliefs? Do your family and friends like this person? (Proverbs 11:14). What things control your choice? Is it your faith? Or is it feelings? (Proverbs 3:5, 6). The answers to these questions can help you have a happy marriage.



Your husband or wife should be the most important person in your life.

ARE YOU READY TO BE A PARENT? (1 Samuel 1:27)

Few things can change our lives as much as a baby. Nothing in the family will ever be the same again!

“Children who are born to people when they [the parents] are young are like [the same as] arrows in the hands of a soldier. Blessed [happy] are those [people] who have many children. They won’t [will not] be put to shame when they go up against their enemies in court” (Psalm 127:4, 5, NIRV).

As parents, we do not get children with a book that teaches us how to take care of them. Even parents who have a lot of experience with kids do not always know what to do. That is why it is important to get ready to become good parents.

The Bible tells us stories about babies. What important rules can you learn from these stories about becoming good parents?

1 Samuel 1:27 _____

Judges 13:7 _____

Luke 1:6, 13–17, 46–55, 76–79 _____

The parents in these Bible stories have a big job! Three of these babies will be future leaders and special messengers, or prophets, for God’s people. One child will grow up to get Israel ready for their Savior. One of the babies is the Savior Himself. But what if our babies do not grow up to be prophets? Parents should do everything they can to get ready to be good parents anyway.

“Even before a child is born, parents should start to get ready. They should do everything they can to help their child fight and win the war against sin.

“But what happens if a mother is selfish, bossy, and mean before her child is born? These same feelings and behavior will be seen in her child. In this way, many children are born wanting to do evil things. They have almost no control over the evil wishes in their hearts.”—Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, page 256, adapted.

How can we help our children grow up to be better people? What can we do to show our children how much God loves them?



“What happens if a mother is selfish, bossy, and mean before her child is born? Then these same feelings and behavior will be seen in her child.”—Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, page 256, adapted.

ARE YOU READY FOR OLD AGE? (Psalm 71)

“Our lifetime is 70 years. If we are strong, we may live to be 80. But the years are full of hard work and pain. They pass quickly [very fast], and then we are gone” (Psalm 90:10, ICB). Moses wrote this psalm. His words show us that time passes very fast. As the years come and go, we see and feel changes in our bodies. Our hair turns gray or falls out. We start to slow down. We may feel pain every day. But maybe we are married and have children. Our children may have babies too. Then we can enjoy our grandchildren at this time. The life we have lived already helps us get ready for the last part of life too.

Read Psalm 71. How does this psalm teach us to get ready for old age? What does this psalm also teach us about life?



God is a rock and a strong tower.

An older person wrote Psalm 71. He talks about getting old. But he also is happy. Why? Because he always put his trust in God. The best way to grow old is to put our trust in God when we are young. The writer of Psalm 71 shares three important lessons. These lessons helped him get ready for old age. They can help us too:

1. Learn who God is. Learn to trust in God when you are young (Psalm 71:17). Make God your place of safety (Psalm 71:1, 7). Accept God as your Savior (Psalm 71:2). God is a rock and strong tower (Psalm 71:3). God gives us hope (Psalm 71:5). Tell other people about all the wonderful things God does for you (Psalm 71:16, 17, 19). Trust in God’s strength and power (Psalm 71:18). The writer of Psalm 71 shouts: “O God, who is like [the same as] You?” (Psalm 71:19, NKJV). Pray daily. Study God’s Word. Think about all He does for you. Then your love for Him will grow deeper.

2. Form good habits. Eat a healthy diet. Exercise. Drink plenty of water. Get enough sunshine and rest. These things will help you enjoy life longer. Trust in God (Psalm 71:3). Praise Him (Psalm 71:6). Do not give up hope (Psalm 71:14).

3. Serve God with your whole heart. Continue to serve God in your old age. Keep praising Him and telling other people that God is wonderful (Psalm 71:15–18)!

DEATH (1 Corinthians 15:24–26)

We all hope we will live to see the Second Coming. But if we do not, then we can expect to die. Death is the biggest change of all. Nothing can change a family more than the death of a family member.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:24–26. What do these verses teach us about death?

Of course, many times death happens with no warning. So, what can we do to be ready when it comes? We must make sure we stay connected to the Lord by faith. We must ask Him to cover us in His holy life every second of our lives (Romans 3:22). But in the end, we really cannot get ready for death if we do not see it coming.

What can you do if you know you have only a few months to live? We may not know for sure when death will come. But we may know when we are nearing the end of our lives. So, it is very important to get ourselves and our families ready.

First Kings 2:1–4 shows us some of the last words David spoke to his son Solomon. What lessons do David’s words teach us about getting ourselves ready for death? What can we do to help our families get ready too?

David tells his son to obey God. Yes, David made many mistakes in his life (read 2 Samuel 11). He did not always follow God. But he learned the hard way that we should put God first at all times. David’s past sins and mistakes made his words to Solomon very powerful. David wanted to warn his son not to do what he did. David’s sins caused him a lot of pain and sadness in life. He paid an awful price for his sins. No doubt David wanted Solomon to learn from his mistakes.



David told his son Solomon to obey God.



We must remember the things the Lord does for us. What is the best way to remember? We can teach other people about God.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: When you read about Israel's time in the desert, what do you see? Many changes happened in their lives. They made so many mistakes. Even so, God showed His people that He loved them during every big change in their lives. Do you remember what happened before Israel entered the Promised Land? They met another big change. Moses told the people: " 'You have seen what the LORD did at Baal Peor. The LORD your God destroyed all your people who followed the false god Baal at that place. But all of you who stayed with the LORD your God are alive today. I taught you the laws and rules that the LORD my God commanded me. I did this so you could obey them in the land you are ready to enter and take for your own. Obey these laws carefully. This will show the people of the other nations that you are wise and sensible [smart]. They will hear about these laws and say, "Truly, the people of this great [wonderful] nation are wise and sensible [smart]." The LORD our God is near when we ask him to help us. No other nation has a god like that! And no other nation is great [wonderful] enough to have laws and rules as good as the teachings I give you today. But you must be careful! Be sure that as long as you live you never forget what you have seen. You must teach these things to your children and grandchildren' " (Deuteronomy 4:3–9, ERV). We must remember the things the Lord does for us. What is the best way to remember? We can teach other people about God. We can share with them all the wonderful things God does for us. Look again at Moses' words. Do you see how important Moses makes the family? Moses told Israel that they must teach their children about God's laws. We also can see that the sin at Baal Peor was very bad for family life. "God punished Israel for their awful sin at Baal Peor. The people were guilty of sex sins. These sins showed that they did not care about God's holy law. The women were very bold. They used sex to trap the men of Israel in sin. Sadly, it was not the last time that God's people sinned against Him in this way."—Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, page 326, adapted.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Share with the class some things you did to get ready for the big changes in life. How did these things change the lives of your family members? What did you learn that can help other people?
- ② Think again about David's sin against Bathsheba. This sin hurt his family very deeply. Later, many awful things happened. How do David's words to Solomon show us God's mercy at work in David's life?