The Voice

A Quarterly Newsletter

VOICE OF PRAISE WORLDWIDE MINISTRIES

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Wind of Change

God is calling for change in His people, and every change He calls for brings us back into alignment with Him.

When God gets ready to move His people, He often starts by changing the air around them. Things that felt settled begin to shift. Plans that once fit do not fit anymore, and the places where we got comfortable start to feel a little tight. More often than not, that shifting is the first sign that God is calling us back into line with Him.

Jesus explained the work of the Spirit to Nicodemus by pointing to the wind. You cannot see it and you cannot control it, yet you can hear it and you can see what it moves.

> *"The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*
>
> **John 3:8**

This quarter we want the whole house at Voice of Praise to listen for that sound. God is not finished with us. He is still blowing, still adjusting, and still calling His people to walk where He walks.

Alignment Is the Point

God never calls for change just to stir things up. Every time Scripture shows Him shaking something loose, He is bringing His people back to where they belong. A car that is out of alignment will still drive, but it pulls to one side and wears out its tires before their time. The driver has to fight the wheel the whole way just to stay on the road.

The prophet Amos asked a question that settles the matter.

> *"Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?"*
>
> **Amos 3:3**

If God is going one way and we are going another, something has to change, and it will not be Him. The good news is that He does not leave us to figure it out alone. He sends His wind to turn us.

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When the Wind Blew

The Bible is full of moments when God used the wind to bring about change. Each one shows us something about how He works when He is moving His people into position.

A Road Through the Sea

Israel stood at the edge of the Red Sea with Pharaoh's army closing in behind them. It looked like the end, but God was about to change everything.

> *"Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided."*
>
> **Exodus 14:21**

Before that wind ever blew, God gave Moses a word for the people.

> *"And the LORD said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.'"*
>
> **Exodus 14:15**

The wind opened the road, but the people still had to step onto it. When God moves, He expects our obedience to move right along with His power.

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Bone to Bone

In Ezekiel 37, God set the prophet down in a valley full of dry bones and told him to prophesy. The Hebrew word *ruach* can mean breath, wind, or spirit, and every one of those meanings is at work in this chapter. Before the breath came, something else had to happen first.

> *"So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone."*
>
> **Ezekiel 37:7**

The bones had to come back into their proper place. Then the wind of God filled them.

> *"So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army."*
>
> **Ezekiel 37:10**

One Accord, Then the Wind

On the Day of Pentecost the disciples were waiting in Jerusalem, just as Jesus told them to do.

> *"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."*
>
> **Acts 2:1**

Then heaven answered.

> *"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting."*
>
> **Acts 2:2**

Look at the order. They were together and in agreement before the wind came. God poured out His Spirit on a church that was already lined up with His word and with one another.

What Alignment Looks Like for Us

It is one thing to read about the wind in the Bible. It is another thing to let it move in our own lives. God is not only speaking to Israel or to the early church; He is speaking to His people at Voice of Praise right now.

Coming Back to Him

In the days of Malachi, the people had drifted. They still came to the temple and still went through the motions, but their hearts had wandered from God's ways. So the Lord spoke plainly.

> *"Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," Says the LORD of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'*
>
> **Malachi 3:7**

Notice that God made the first move. He spoke first, and He promised to meet His people the moment they turned.

Joel carried the same message to a nation in trouble.

> *"So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm."*
>
> **Joel 2:13**

Real change starts on the inside. God is not looking for a show. He is looking for a heart that is willing to turn.

A Changed Mind

Paul wrote to believers in Rome who lived in a culture that pulled them away from God every day. His counsel still fits us.

> *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*
>
> **Romans 12:2**

The world has its own way of shaping people, and if we are not careful it will shape us. When God renews our minds, we start to think the way He thinks. Our choices begin to follow, and our walk lines up with His.

Verse for the Quarter

"if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

2 Chronicles 7:14

For Reflection

1. Where do you sense God shifting things in your life right now?
2. Is there an area where you have been walking one way while God has been walking another?
3. What would it look like for you to "go forward" this season, the way Israel did at the Red Sea?
4. How can you help keep our church family in one accord?

Do Not Fear the Wind

Change can be hard, even when God is the one bringing it. Most of us like to know what comes next. Yet God told His people through Isaiah to stop looking back, so they would not miss what He was doing right in front of them.

> *"Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old."*
>
> **Isaiah 43:18**

> *"Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert."*
>
> **Isaiah 43:19**

The same God who sent an east wind to open the sea still makes roads where there are none. If He is moving something in your life, He has already seen where it leads. You can trust the wind when you know the One who sends it.

As a church, we are listening too. We are asking the Lord to show us where He wants Voice of Praise to grow and what He wants us to let go of. Pray with us as we seek His direction for the house.

A Prayer for the Season

Father, we thank You for loving us too much to leave us where we are. Blow on us by Your Spirit and bring every part of our lives back into line with Your will. Where we have drifted, turn us back to You. Where we have been afraid, give us the courage to go forward. Make Voice of Praise a house that moves when You move. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

From Your Pastors

Thank you for walking with us this quarter. We love this house, and we believe God has good things ahead for His people. When the wind of change blows, let us be found moving with Him.

In Him,
Alice L. Martin, Pastor
Craig L. Martin, Co-Pastor

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Gather With Us
Sunday Service: 10:00 AM
Tuesday Bible Study: 7:00 PM on Zoom