

the back page

by Sheth LaRue, Kairos Editor

Fall in Texas is odd to me because things don't...fall. Back in Colorado there's a pointed shift as autumn approaches: the aspens change their colors, snow begins to dust the high mountain peaks, and the air at night gets cooler. Fall in Texas is so gradual that it's nearly imperceptible; there is no grand show from the trees, no snow dusting the mountains (and no, Mt. Bonnell is not a mountain), and while the temperature does drop, a light jacket overcomes it. I must wait patiently for late November to notice a slight change.

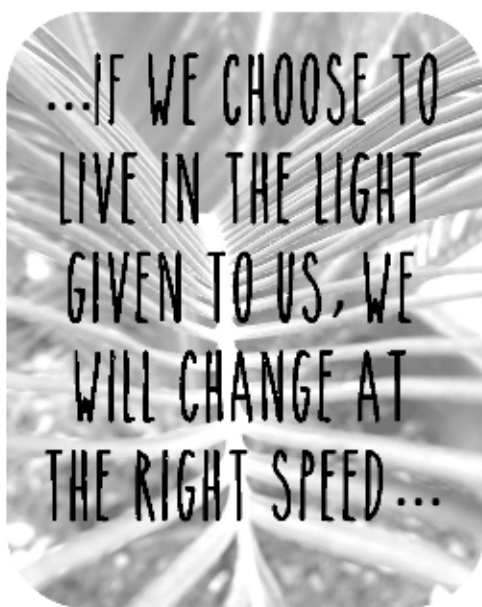
How often do we notice the faint changes in our lives? How aware are we of the changes that we as people go through? On my last trip to Colorado I met with a friend who has lost nearly thirty pounds since I had last seen her. Her physical change was very noticeable to me, but she told me that not many around her had noticed the change. To them it was gradual - with each pound lost over the course of days and weeks, her friends and family's perceptions had shifted and they made adjustments to accept her slimmed-down figure. But because I had not seen her for six months, the change was a happy and unforgettable surprise.

In Acts 9, as Saul was approaching Damascus, a bright light flashed around him, he fell to the ground, and a disembodied voice (turned out to be Jesus) spoke, "Why do you persecute me?" Jesus told him to get up and head on down the road - now blinded - and make his way to Damascus. Long story, short: a guy named Ananias showed up, laid hands on Saul, and called him to work for God. And Saul began to do so. Bright flash. Heavenly voice. Anointing. Saul changed. Mic drop.

Part of this story scares me, part of it thrills me, and part of it makes me jealous. It scares me because God can change people in the blink of an eye. It thrills me because God can change people in the blink of an eye. But it makes me jealous because my own change has not been in the blink of an eye. I've met people who have woken up and knew they'd never drink alcohol again - and they haven't. I've met people who have

given up smoking, never having another craving again. I've met people who have instantaneously done a 180 in life, going from sin and shame to service and love.

I cherish these stories because they point to something greater that has caused them to make these sudden changes. I can bear witness to their life pre-conversion and post-conversion. It truly is an abrupt shift that happens because something...someone other than the self has made this happen.



And this makes me so jealous! *What the hell? All of the sudden their life is peaches-and-cream and I'm here still in the mud and muck? I've been trying to get to where they are for half my life, and they get the light switch treatment? On the outside - utter joy. On the inside - seething jealousy.*

I've been doing this Christian thing for so long and yet feel like I haven't changed at all. I feel like I'm still enjoying sin; still looking for ways to lie, cheat, and steal. I feel like present -Sheth is just the same as past-Sheth.

But when I take a step back and look at where I was last year, or five years ago, there *is* a noticeable change in who I was compared to who I am. But the change isn't so much in what I've stopped doing, it's more in what I've started doing. I love more. I care more. I pray more. I live with God more. I take care of myself more. I honor my word more. The change in me is gradual, like a Texas autumn, but it is still change!

We may not have Sauline moments of change, full of bright lights and booming voices. But if we choose to live in the light given to us, we will change at the right speed. Take stock of your life and where you are now compared to where you were. Notice the changes, however small they are, and rejoice in them, no matter their speed. May God work to change us to be who our Creator made us to be.

much love. sheth.