

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Jude 20-25 (text v. 22)

Minute Lube commercial— “Some men want to change the world; we just want to change your oil.”

God makes a difference! Exodus 11:7— *“But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that **the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.**”*

The local church is here to make a difference. We are not a social club or a game you play. The church is like a military “boot camp” that produces soldiers of Jesus Christ.

We are to be “**change agents.**” We may not change the world, we should be making a difference in the lives of people within our sphere of influence. Jesus said we are *“the SALT of the earth.”*

One of the greatest compliments anyone has ever paid me was in a letter I received from Dr. Ruckman after he concluded a meeting at the church I pastored in Vermont. He wrote, “Keep up the great work Brother Hughes. You’re making a dent!”

My life is different because of men like Gordon Raatz... Dr. Henry H. Parrish II... Dr. Herbert Noe... Dr. Ken Blue.

➡ Are you making a difference for God in the lives of those around you?

**What does it take to MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**

**I. A CONVERSION that is SINCERE** (vs. 17-21).

➡ To make a difference, we must be different.

- Jesus said, *“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven”* (Mt. 18:3).
- *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out”* (Acts 3:19). Repentance involves making a change.
- The Word of God brings about conversion (Ps. 19:7— *“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul...”*).

A. Conversion means “a change in form, character, or function.”

B. Conversion makes us a different person (2 Cor. 5:17). Saul of Tarsus conversion to Christ changed him into the great Apostle Paul. What a difference it made in his life and how he went on to make a difference in the world.

➡ What a wonderful CHANGE has come into my life since Jesus came into my heart! When I got saved my life radically changed.

- From road to Hell to the highway to heaven
- From Darkness to Light
- From Lust to Love
- From Bondage to sin to Freedom in Christ
- From Hopelessness to the Blessed Hope
- From the pleasures of sin to the preaching of the Savior
- From a life of no purpose to a life with purpose.

C. You cannot change the world by being like the world. You must be different to make a difference!

➡ A person who claims to be a Christian, but it makes no difference in their life has reason to doubt if he really is a Christian.

## II. **CONDITIONS that do not SATISFY.**

➡ As long as you are satisfied with the way things are, you will never change anything.

A. We should never be satisfied with our level of devotion to God.

➡ Paul never considered that he had “arrived.” *“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.”* (Phil. 3:13). He was always pressing upwards!

B. We need a vision of something better!

➡ Inventing a better mouse trap.

1. Ways we can have a better church. Life Groups helping.
2. Ways we can do ministry in a better way.
3. Better ways to reach people. G.R.O.W. is one way.

C. We cannot be satisfied with the status quo.

1. Are you satisfied with your own spiritual condition?
2. Are you satisfied with where your family is spiritually?
3. Are you satisfied with your service and ministry for God?

➡ Nothing will never improve if we are complacent and remain content with things the way they are. What will you do to make a difference?

➡ A boy was on the beach when the tide washed in hundreds of small starfish upon the sand. He began picking up the starfish and throwing them back into the water as fast as he could. A grown man walked up and said, "Son there are too many. It won't make a difference." The little boy then picked up another starfish and threw it back into the water and said, "It made a difference to that one."

### III. **A CONVICTION does not SHIFT.**

➡ It makes a difference what you believe. What you believe determines the decisions you make.

- A. Convictions about the power of prayer to change things (v. 20).
- B. Convictions about the coming of the Lord (v. 14).
- C. Convictions about hell (v. 23)
- D. Convictions about the worth and potential of a single soul.

### IV. **A COMMITMENT will not SLIP** (v. 21).

➡ People who have made a difference were people of unwavering commitment. Steve Jobs

A. Commitment to **stand alone**.

➡ Queen Esther stood alone and made a difference.

B. Commitment to **soul winning** makes a difference.

1. A Gospel tract can make a big difference in a person's life.

➡ A tract changed my life.

➡ During WW2, Kurt Wagner was one of Adolph Hitler's body guards. He revered Hitler as if he were a god. When Hit-

ler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker, Wagner's faith in his Feuhrer was shattered and decided to commit suicide himself. Going for a final cup of coffee, he picked up a discarded Gospel tract and read it. After reading it, he sought a godly pastor who lead him to Christ and Kurt Wagner was gloriously converted. His life was transformed, he enrolled in seminary and later became the pastor of a Methodist church in Frankfort that reached many souls for Christ.

2. Waving a Gospel sign can make a difference (Christine Winn).
- C. Commitment to **stewardship**. Money given to missions is making a difference in lives around the world.

#### **V. A COMPASSION that does not STAND STILL** (vs. 22-23).

➡ Compassion should MOVE US (Mt. 9:36).

**SUMMATION:** David Gibbs had been scheduled to preach in a local church for three years. When the time was drawing close, the church pulled out all the stops to get people to church for a special day when David Gibbs would be speaking.

The Saturday before the special day, the pastor of the church called David Gibbs to inform him a tragedy had taken place at the church that morning. Two men had come to the church to go on visitation. They got some visitation cards and set out go invite people to come to the special day. After leaving the church they were in a car accident and both men were killed instantly. The pastor asked Brother Gibbs if he still wanted to come and preach under these circumstances. Brother Gibbs said he would still like to come.

On the next day when Brother Gibbs arrived prior to the service, the pastor met him with great excitement. He told Brother Gibbs something incredible had happened. When the wives of the two men got word of their husbands death, they immediately went to the scene of the accident. They went to the wrecked car and found the visitation cards scattered on the floor. They gathered them up and went out to make those visits.

When they went to a house, they invited the people to come to church Sunday, saying, “Our husbands were on their way to deliver this invitation to you when they were killed in a car accident. They died trying to get this invitation to you. So, would you please come to church tomorrow?” As a result of those two widows making the visits their husbands were going to make, 140 visitors attended that Sunday with over half of them coming to get saved at the invitation.

Those two men and their wives made a difference!

- Has your influence for God made a difference in anyone’s life? If we are not making a difference in the lives of people, we need something to change in ourselves.
- I want to be a man that makes a difference and it will only happened if I have been **changed by the Savior...** have a **compassion for souls...** and I’m **committed to the solution.**

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