

THE WAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Colossians 1:24-29

- **Celebration's Mission -** "Celebration Church exists to lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and difference-makers in the world."
- **Celebration's Vision - We pray God will use the Celebration family to: 1) Exalt Jesus** (Ephesians 3:21), **2) Transform Lives** (Titus 3:3-7), **3) Strengthen Families** (Acts 16:19-34), **4) Improve Communities** (Acts 8:5-8) **and 5) Impact our World** (Matthew 28:19-20).
- ***What is my personal "life mission"?***
- **Paul encouraged Christians in Colossae to "make a difference" in the world, and the Lord wants us to do the same (Colossians 1:24-29).**
- ***What will it take for us to "make a difference" in our world?***

Making A Difference In Our World Requires:

GREAT <u>COMMITMENT</u> FROM GOD'S PEOPLE

- Paul - *"I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for His body, the church. God has given me the responsibility of serving His church by proclaiming His entire message to you."* (Colossians 1:24-25)
- **The Lord wants us to be committed to living, serving and giving sacrificially (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Peter 4:10, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5).**
- ***What should motivate us to sacrificially live, serve and give?***
- **We should be willing to sacrifice because we love *Our Savior.***
    - *"Once we were foolish and disobedient. We were misled by others and became slaves to many wicked desires and evil pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy. . . . But then God our Savior showed us His kindness and love. He saved us, not because of the good things we did, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins and gave us a new life through the Holy Spirit."* (Titus 3:3-5)

    - **It is through Jesus Christ that we experience: 1) forgiveness for our sins (Ephesians 1:7), 2) freedom from our struggles and strongholds (Luke 4:18), 3) godly fulfillment (John 10:10), and 4) the future of Heaven (John 14:1-3, 2 Corinthians 5:1-8).**
- **We should be willing to sacrifice because we love *Other Christians.***
    - *"Those who love God must also love their fellow believers."* (1 John 4:21)
    - **Spending time with other Christians in *Life Groups* and ministry causes us to love them and want to sacrifice for them.**
- **We should be willing to sacrifice because we love *All People.***
    - **Once we were all sinners and separated from the Lord.**
    - *"You who were once far away from God. You were His enemies, separated from Him by your evil thoughts and actions."* (Colossians 1:21)
    - **When we love others like the Lord has loved us, we will be willing to sacrifice to help them and bring them to the Lord.**

Making A Difference In Our World Requires:

GREAT <u>INSIGHT</u> FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

- Paul - *"This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: <u>Christ lives in you.</u> This gives you assurance of sharing His glory."* (Colossians 1:26-27)
- **Since Jesus is in Heaven, He "lives in us" through the person of His Spirit.**
- Jesus - *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. . . . You know Him, because He lives with you now and later will be in you."* (John 14:16-17)
- **Jesus living in us, in the person of the Holy Spirit, gives us the hope that we can truly live a vibrant, victorious and successful life.**
- **Jesus' presence in us brings *Strength* to our lives.**
    - *"I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength."* (Philippians 4:13)
- **Jesus' presence in us brings *Satisfaction* to our lives.**
    - Jesus – *"My purpose is to give life in all its fullest."* (John 10:10)
    - Jesus - *"I have told you these things . . . so that your joy will be the fullest possible joy."* (John 15:11)
- **Jesus' presence in us brings *Solace* to our lives.**
    - Jesus - *"Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28)
- **Jesus' presence in us brings *Success* to our lives.**
    - *"Overwhelming victory is ours through Christ who loved us."* (Romans 8:37)

Making A Difference In Our World Requires:

GREAT <u>EFFORT</u> FROM GOD'S PEOPLE

- ***What must we be focused on if we're to "make a difference" in our world?***
- **As Christians we must always be focused on *Evangelizing Other People.***
    - Paul - *"So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us."* (Colossians 1:28a)
    - **We must warn others about the consequences of rejecting Jesus, and teach them about the abundant and eternal life He offers.**
    - Jesus – *"Follow Me, and I will show you how to fish for people!"* (Matthew 4:19)
    - **We help bring people to salvation in Jesus by: 1) Praying for them (Romans 10:1), 2) Ministering to them (Luke 10:30-37), 3) Inviting them to *Life Groups* and Worship services (John 1:40-42), and by 4) Sharing our faith with them (Acts 8:26-40).**
- **As Christians we must always be focused on *Discipling Other People.***
    - Paul - *"We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ."* (Colossians 1:28b)
    - **We should help people become all God wants them to be so they can live changed lives and have victory over struggles and strongholds.**
    - **We "disciple" others to maturity by 1) Befriending them (Colossians 4:1-6), 2) Encouraging them (Acts 11:22-23), 3) Mentoring them (2 Timothy 2:2), and 4) Partnering with them in ministry (Luke 9:1-6).**
    - **We most effectively "disciple" other people in cooperation with others (i.e. *Life Group*).**

- Paul - *"That's why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ's mighty power that works within me."* (Colossians 1:29)
- **We will be able to make a difference in people's lives and our world as we depend upon Jesus' power in our lives (Philippians 4:13).**
- "If a man hasn't discovered something he will die for; he isn't fit to live." - Martin Luther King, Jr.
- ***What is the Lord communicating to me through this message, and what am I going to do to respond to it?***