

Changing The World

This world we live in is crazy. Violence and hate seem to permeate almost everything. Thinking about changing the world can be very overwhelming. Let's discuss where we can start.

Introduction

It is graduation season and new graduates of high schools, colleges, and universities are looking forward to their future. They are thinking about having an impact in their community, region, and this world. They have ideas and thoughts to make this world a better place.

Speakers at graduation events are sharing dreams and ideals in their speeches trying to inspire the graduates. We all need inspiration and there are some very inspirational and dynamic leaders for people to follow. But there is truly one individual that we can draw all our inspiration from and one that can truly empower us to change this world in ways never contrived before.

Today we would like to speak in part to all the people graduating, but we would also like to speak to everyone about changing the world.

The World Today

Today the world is an example of extremes. Consider this:

- One part of the world is suffering from food shortages while another part is experiencing extreme health crises from overeating.
- One part of the world is in extreme drought, and another part of the world has unending rain causing flooding.
- One part of the world is ruled by fear and intimidation while another part of the world is so open and free that there is no sense of right and wrong.

In other words, our world is in utter chaos and there is no doubt who is truly in charge, the devil.

If you honestly and objectively look around you will see issue after issue after issue that needs to be addressed and solved. If you take your focus off yourself and place it on others you will see the true needs of people all around you instead of your own.

Frankly, it is easy to get overwhelmed by the view and all that needs to be accomplished to make this world better. Unfortunately, many people give up at that point; return their focus on themselves; and live their life in a bubble, ignoring everything and everyone else.

We all want that one person who can come lead the world to be a better place. Some of us want to be that one person or think we are that person. That one person already exists and was born more than 2000 years ago.

Jesus Is That One Person

Ancient Israel was watching and waiting some 2000 years ago, too. The world wasn't in any better shape then either. But Israel hadn't heard from God in 400 years. No prophecies, no instructions, nothing. They



had been overrun and their land had been occupied by foreigners who did not serve God. Their heritage, customs, and sacred laws were being preempted by this occupying government.

They were being held in bondage and desperately wanted to return to the days of their freedom and the ability to worship God freely and completely. They were crying out to God for a savior. And God delivered his son to them to be that savior. But when Jesus was born, there was controversy. There were challenges politically and socially.

Who Jesus was and how he came to them defied the experts in the law, the Pharisees. They could not see the fact that he fulfilled 353 of their prophecies. They were too focused on themselves, and on maintaining their own positions of power and prestige. The people were looking for a great general to rise up and lead Israel to a huge military victory over Rome and to keep them safe afterward.

God gave them a son. A son who was a carpenter. A son who valued peace and meekness over conflict and aggression. A son who knew the only way to change the world was to start with individuals and change their hearts one at a time.

Jesus knew the only way to change this world was one person at a time.

One Person At a Time

Jesus did teach thousands at a time and go through crowds healing the lame and sick. He did bring sight to many blind people and opened many deaf ears. But he invested greatly in 12 people.

He spent most of his time with 12 people. These 12 he poured his life into and taught and explained things to. He shared the meaning behind his parables with these 12. Look at Luke 6:12-13:

Luke 6:12-13

(12) One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. (13) When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles:

We know you want to change the world. We do too. But the best way to change it is not always to work your way up to the tallest stage or biggest pulpit. It is not always to become the great political leader with the most camera time. The best way to change the world is to invest yourself in the lives of a handful of people around you. Teach others that they are not number one. Live like everyone else comes first and teach that to the people around you.

If you truly want to change the world, do what you can for people in your own neighborhood, in your own school, in your own workplace, and in your own family. This is what we here at Cell Life Church call *being the church*.

Be The Church

We want to change the world too. We see all the problems in the world. We see the famine, the wars, the greed, the hunger, the disease, the gluttony, and many other ills of this world. We also know there is one answer for this lost and dying world, Jesus.



Our view of this world is skewed by our perspective, that is by how we see it from where we are. Our view of the world from America is very different from the view of the world from Pakistan, the view of the world from Kenya, or the view of the world from Brazil.

If we only see the world from our own point of view, the solutions we devise will only work from our point of view. Instead, we must believe and trust that Jesus is the son of God. We must believe and trust that he is at the right hand of God the Father right now interceding for all of us. We must believe that Jesus is the savior of this world.

In believing and following Jesus, we must not judge those around us, but serve them in kindness with love and compassion. Let's look at an interaction the Apostles Peter and John had at the temple after Jesus ascended to be with the Father in Heaven. Let's read Acts 3: 1-10

Acts 3:1-10

(1) One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer--at three in the afternoon. (2) Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. (3) When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. (4) Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" (5) So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. (6) Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." (7) Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. (8) He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. (9) When all the people saw him walking and praising God, (10) they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter and John are great examples of *being the church*. They stayed alert and aware of those around them. When the man called out to them they looked straight at him and made sure he saw them. They were about to share what they had received from the Lord with him. They didn't give what he asked for, they gave him what he needed.

Motivation is More Important

Do not get hung up on the miracle. God may not have given you the gift of miraculous healing, but he may have given you some other gift to use to serve others. What Peter and John did is not important. Why they did it is what is important.

They used the power Jesus had given them through the Holy Spirit to bring healing to this man who could not walk. They were *being the church*. That is what *being the church* is all about. Sharing what Jesus has given with you to the benefit of others.

Sometimes there is a cost to sharing Jesus with others. Let us look at Acts 4:8-12.

Acts 4:8-12

(8) Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! (9) If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and



are being asked how he was healed, (10) then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. (11) Jesus is "'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.' (12) Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Peter and John got called in and questioned by the religious leaders. They wanted to stop what was going on, but Peter and John would not be deterred. They were doing exactly what they had been equipped and trained to do by the Lord himself.

Conclusion

We must never lose sight of who Jesus is and the power we receive through the Holy Spirit to act in his name.

If we are going to change the world, we must work on our piece of it, in Jesus' name. If we all started praying for our neighborhoods and serving the needs of those around us, and then those neighbors did the same thing, it would not take long before the world would be completely different.

Let's change this world by serving our neighbors and co-workers. Let's change this world by being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Let's change this world by *being the church*.

