

CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The Truth That Set Us Free
Psalm 46:1–2; Romans 1:16; 4:5



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Most of us know far more about our national heritage or our family roots than we do about our spiritual birthright. Dates like 1492 or 1776 or December 7, 1941, mean far more to us than October 31, 1517. We are even more familiar with the Battle at Gettysburg or the Normandy Invasion than the Council of Constance or the Diet of Worms. Strangely, we can name the little ships that carried men across the Atlantic—the *Niña*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria*—but if our lives depended on it, we'd be hard pressed to declare the contributions of men like John Wycliffe, John Calvin, or John Huss.

To illustrate how God uses ordinary people, let's travel back in time to a period of history called the Reformation. The Reformation's heroes and battlefields may not be as recognizable as the American Revolution's George Washington and Valley Forge. Yet the soldiers who led a religious revolution from the 1300s to the 1500s made a tremendous difference in what matters most to us—our understanding of God, the Bible, and salvation.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. John Wycliffe Struck the Spark

In Wycliffe's day, religion was a polluted mixture of piety, politics, and greed. Historian Stuart Garver explains that during the 1300s:

A vast papal bureaucratic system was moved from Rome to Avignon in France, making bishops civil servants and ministers of the State. The landed wealth of the clergy—estimated at about one-third of the nation's total—was not only tax exempt but immune to any legal action for its often cruel, if not criminal treatment of its poor tenants. . . . Sunday and Holy Day Masses drew large crowds while priests and friars hawked their relics and indulgences as they mingled with the multitudes in the streets—having no higher motive than to increase the wealth of their already rich monestaries.¹

Wycliffe, an Oxford-educated priest, was the first in a long line of Protestants—people who *protested* the corruptions in the established church. As Wycliffe saw it, the priest's role was to communicate God's Word in a way



Quotable

*Today is a
perfect day for
you to dedicate
yourself to the
task of carrying
God's light.*

—Charles R. Swindoll



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MM01

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the people could understand. Driven by this vision, Wycliffe and his followers set out to translate the Latin Vulgate into English—a work that was completed in 1382.

Wycliffe was forbidden to preach and was stripped of his position as a professor at Oxford. The religious hierarchy suppressed his writings, and in 1413—29 years after his death—they ordered his body exhumed, burned, and thrown into the Swift River.

John Wycliffe had struck the first spark. John Huss, from Bohemia, then took Wycliffe's place, kindling the coals until they glowed red hot.

2. John Huss Kindled the Coals

Ignited by Wycliffe's writings, John Huss burned with a passion to expose religious charlatans and proclaim the truth of Scripture. Each time he preached at the Bethlehem Chapel in his home city of Prague, capacity crowds would sit in rapt attention, their hearts stirred by his boldness.

Summoned to appear before the Council of Constance, Huss was accused of "Wycliffism." When he refused to recant because no one could show him from Scripture where his teachings were wrong, his enemies sentenced him to be burned at the stake.

According to Stuart Garver, before the executioner lit the embers piled at Huss' feet, he cried out this cryptic prophecy:

"Today . . . you will roast a lean goose (the name Huss meant 'goose') but a hundred years from now you will hear a swan sing, Him you will leave unroasted. No trap or net will catch him for you!"²

Who was the swan who would sing and never be silenced?

3. Martin Luther Brandished the Flaming Torch

Exactly a century later in Germany, an unknown monk was waging a fierce, private battle of his own. To earn his salvation, Martin Luther was praying and fasting, piling on penance after penance, and working slavishly to attain God's favor.



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Finally, his dark cell was flooded with spiritual light as one phrase from Romans 1:17 shone out: “But the righteous man shall live by faith.” That beacon of truth led Luther to freedom. He saw that righteousness is a gift that comes by faith in Christ alone.

In the years that followed, Luther would become the singing “swan” that challenged the false teachings of the church and proclaimed the good news of free salvation. The flame of truth fit into Luther’s hand as a blazing torch.



LET’S LIVE IT

In the afterglow of the Reformation story, two facts remain impressed on our minds:

- *God used very human people to carry out the Reformation.*

- *The grassroots work of the Reformation was done by ordinary people.*

How would you characterize the church today? What are some of our modern struggles? Your personal struggles?

ENDNOTES

1. Stuart P. Carver, *Our Christian Heritage* (Hackensack, NJ: Christ’s Mission, 1973), 60.
2. Carver, *Our Christian Heritage*, 53–54.



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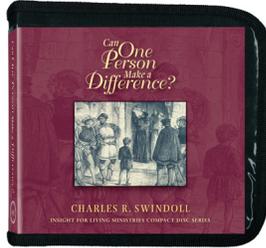
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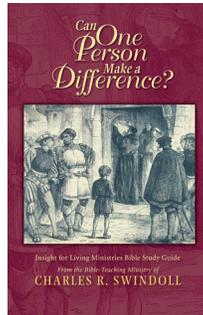
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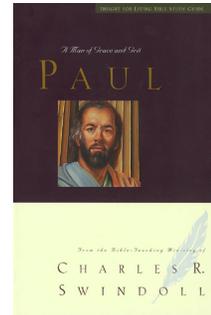
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Monk, a Door, a War, a Hymn

Romans 1:16–17; 3:21–24; 4:4–5; 8:31–34; Hebrews 11:1–2, 6, 32–38



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Walking the hallways of the Capitol in Washington, D.C., is, in itself, a course in U.S. history. Past presidents, in larger-than-life portraits, speak silently about their times and their unique roles in shaping the nation.

A similar collection of portraits lines the halls of Hebrews 11. These influential men and women, though, are not exhibited because of their leadership skills as much as for their courageous faith. Here are paintings of Abel . . . Enoch . . . Noah . . . Abraham. So long is the corridor that the writer of Hebrews was unable to describe all the pictures it contains:

And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets. (Hebrews 11:32)

Even the prophets don't end the list! We could continue the collection with William Tyndale, John Wesley, George Whitefield, and others.

In the previous lesson, we studied several faithful men from the Reformation era. Time failed us, though, to tell the whole story of the greatest difference maker of that period, Martin Luther. Let's pause for a while at his portrait and draw courage from his example of faith.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. A Monk

The son of a poor German miner, Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483, one hour before midnight—appropriately, the eleventh hour.

The church was no friend to Luther. It should have been a shelter, offering comfort and direction for earnest pilgrims like him. Instead, corruption had all but crumbled its ornately carved façade. Luther observed three contributing factors:

- *Hypocrisy and moral debauchery among the professional clergy*
- *Biblical illiteracy among the people*
- *Unabashed materialism among the clergy*



Quotable

*Our motive is
to be right,
true to Scripture,
standing firm.*

*If necessary,
standing alone.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Monk, a Door, a War, a Hymn

Romans 1:16–17; 3:21–24; 4:4–5; 8:31–34; Hebrews 11:1–2, 6, 32–38

Frustrated and disillusioned, Luther found himself drowning in a churning sea of legalism. But through Luther's study of Scripture, particularly Paul's letter to the Romans, God drew him out of the abyss and set him on the solid ground of faith in Christ alone.

At long last, the truth of God's justification of sinners broke through the clouds that overshadowed Luther's life. No amount of good works can earn Christ's righteousness—it is a gift received by faith.

2. A Door

Luther, who had received remission of sin as a free gift from God, could not stand by and watch religious charlatans extort the people by hawking spiritual favors (indulgences) for money. So on October 31, 1517, at noon, he nailed his *Ninety-five Theses* to the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Germany, unwittingly launching the Reformation.

He chose that day, the eve of All Saints' Day, because he knew that people from all over the region would visit the church during the festival.

At first no one challenged Luther, but as the papers were copied and distributed throughout the country, the spark grew into a blaze that neither the world nor the pope could ignore.

3. A War

Luther stood firm as the church pummeled him with artillery fire in debates and councils—called *diets*. At the famous diet in the city of Worms, Luther was called upon to renounce his “heretical” theology. He announced in a clear voice:

I must be bound by those Scriptures which have been brought forward by me; yes, my conscience has been taken captive by these words of God. I cannot revoke anything, nor do I wish to; since to go against one's conscience is neither safe nor right: Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen.²

4. A Hymn

Luther was despised, threatened, and excommunicated. Yet the gospel message never wavered on his lips as the cry of the Reformation sounded forth: *sola fide*, “faith alone.”



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A Monk, a Door, a War, a Hymn

Romans 1:16–17; 3:21–24; 4:4–5; 8:31–34; Hebrews 11:1–2, 6, 32–38

Luther often expressed his faith in God by writing hymns. Of his thirty-seven hymns, his flagship was “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” the victory anthem of the Reformation. Based on Psalm 46, this song of courageous faith declares the reformer’s confidence in God, an unassailable refuge.

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe—
His craft and pow’r are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God’s own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He—
Lord Sabaoth His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.³



LET’S LIVE IT

For years, Luther trembled before the Lord, even as today you might. Then, the light of God’s grace warmed Luther’s heart. May God’s truth also warm your heart and provide you with peace.

How is God’s grace manifested in your life? What steps can you take this week to demonstrate grace to others?

ENDNOTES

1. Martin Luther, as quoted by Philip Schaff in *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 7, *Modern Christianity: The German Reformation*, 2nd ed., rev. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1910), 106.
2. Martin Luther, as quoted by Harry Emerson Fosdick, ed., in *Great Voices of the Reformation* (New York: Random House, 1952), 80.
3. Martin Luther, trans. Frederick H. Hedge, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” in *Hymns for the Family of God* (Nashville: Paragon Associates, 1976), no. 118.



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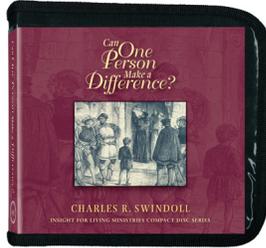
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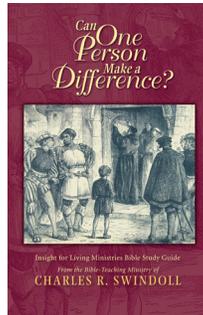
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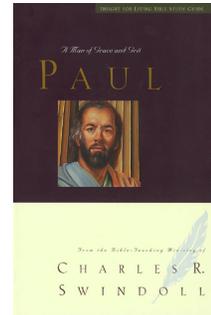
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MM02

CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Being a Church That Makes a Difference
Revelation 2:1–3, 8–10, 12–13, 18–19; 3:7–10, 17



LET'S BEGIN HERE

“You can’t judge a book by its cover” —that’s a phrase we’ve all heard before. It simply means you can’t evaluate people by externals—clothes, appearance, or size.

What’s true of people is also true of churches—you can’t tell the effectiveness of a church by its building. The small church building on the corner with the peeling paint and cardboard taped over broken windows may house a group of vibrant Christians who are making a real difference in their community. And down the street could be a large, ornate church that feels like a mortuary inside.

To discover the traits of an effective church, we have to examine what’s on the inside. Fortunately, Jesus Himself shows us what to look for.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Seven Letters to Seven Churches

In Revelation 2 and 3, John recorded seven letters that Christ dictated to him and addressed to seven first-century churches in Asia. Only once in Scripture did the Head of the church reveal His evaluations about local church bodies. Possibly, He chose these churches because they were located at strategic cultural crossroads and had the most potential for making a difference in their day.

For His searching evaluation, Christ selected:

- The church in Ephesus (Revelation 2:1–7)
- The church in Smyrna (2:8–11)
- The church in Pergamum (2:12–17)
- The church in Thyatira (2:18–29)
- The church in Sardis (3:1–6)
- The church in Philadelphia (3:7–13)
- The church in Laodicea (3:14–22)



Quotable

*Jesus doesn't
look at the size
or location of
a church. He looks
at the mind
and the heart.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Being a Church That Makes a Difference

Revelation 2:1–3, 8–10, 12–13, 18–19; 3:7–10, 17

Tragically, for two of the churches in Asia—Sardis and Laodicea—Christ issued no praise at all. But to the other five, He pointed out several positives. By focusing on Christ’s statements of approval, we will find five difference-making qualities that our churches can emulate.

2. Characteristics of Churches That Make a Difference (Revelation 2:1–3:22)

- ***Ephesus: Persevering Commitment to Orthodoxy***

The Ephesian church was able to think clearly, distinguish truth from error, and pursue righteousness. The apostle Paul had given them solid theological ballast that stabilized them in the seas of persecution and kept them on course when the winds of false teaching started to blow.

- ***Smyrna: Unswerving Courage through Suffering***

Jesus said to Smyrna’s church, “I know your tribulation” (Revelation 2:9). He, too, had borne the weight of suffering. The Greek word for “tribulation,” *thlipsis*, means “pressure.” Under the oppressive weight of persecution, the believers in Smyrna faced imprisonment and even death. But they had a priceless, Christ-given crown—eternal life—awaiting them.

- ***Pergamum: Uncompromising Witness That Remains on the Cutting Edge***

Pergamum was the capital city and cultural center of Asia with a library rivaling the renowned library of Alexandria. Above the lofty city, an imposing altar to Zeus was situated in the front of the Temple of Athena. Christians were indeed living “where Satan’s throne” was (2:13), but with Christ’s sharp “sword” (2:16) of truth, they were slashing a hole in Satan’s kingdom.

- ***Thyatira: Increasing Zeal for Things Eternal***

As with the Ephesian believers, the Lord commended those in Thyatira for their deeds, namely the ones done in love, faith, service, and perseverance—and Jesus pointed out that their deeds were becoming greater and greater. There was no slowing down these Christians! They were on the move, cruising forward, always looking ahead.

- ***Philadelphia: Ever-Enlarging Willingness to Accept Whatever Challenges God Brings***

Jingling the keys of opportunity, Jesus opened a door of hope for this church. The believers may have had only “a little power” (3:8), but that was enough; they had kept His Word and remained devoted to Him, and Jesus honored their faith.



CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Being a Church That Makes a Difference

Revelation 2:1–3, 8–10, 12–13, 18–19; 3:7–10, 17

3. Warnings from Two Churches That Failed to Make a Difference

- *Sardis: Guilty of guarding its public image but denying the reality of its emptiness.*
Warning: We ought not be more concerned about our image than about the reality of what's happening in our souls.

- *Laodicea: Guilty of having a private opinion of itself that was completely unrelated to true facts.*
Warning: To make a difference in the world, we must be wary of false pride and hypocrisy.



LET'S LIVE IT

To be a church that makes a difference takes commitment to orthodoxy, fearless faith in the face of antagonism, advancing into the cutting edge of a lost world, passion and vision for the future, and faithfulness to go through the doors that Jesus opens.

Which of these five characteristics of churches that make a difference seems the most daunting?

How does your church make a difference?



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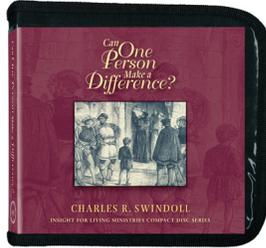
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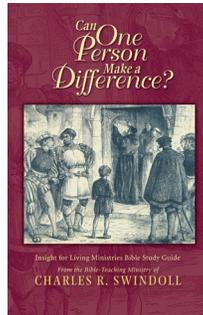
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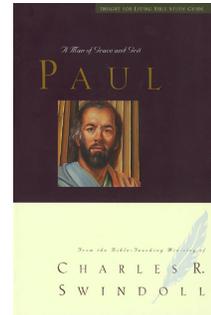
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Ministry: Movement or Monument?

2 Chronicles 26:1–21; Isaiah 42:5–8



LET'S BEGIN HERE

In Isaiah 40:3–5, Isaiah painted a grand mural of God's glorious coming to earth. The word picture of God's glory—His *kabod*—is vivid in Hebrew. In some contexts, this word means “to be heavy, weighty.”¹ God is heavy with splendor and magnificence.

In contrast, humanity's greatness is as insubstantial as a blade of grass that withers “when the breath of the LORD blows upon it” (Isaiah 40:7). Yet, how tempting it is to claim the credit ourselves for the mighty works God does in and around us.

Perhaps no one feels that temptation more than those who serve God in a public ministry—those who have been called to hold His glory in sacred trust. Whether their work becomes a movement of God or calcifies into a monument to themselves depends on one crucial factor: who gets the glory.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. A Simple Formula

In Isaiah 42, the Lord made several promises to His Servant, Messiah: He called Christ, promised to guide Him, and pledged to use Him as a light to the nations. As fellow servants with Christ, we carry on His ministry. We, too, are called, guided, protected, and used as lights to open eyes blinded by sin. But we must always keep in mind the Lord's next words:

“I am the LORD, that is My name;
I will not give My glory to another,
Nor My praise to graven images.” (Isaiah 42:8)

The elements of verse 8 contain a formula for keeping our ministries moving forward:

- First, remember His name.
- Second, reflect His character.
- Third, rejoice in His praises.



Quotable

*Ministry
monuments
result in disaster.*

Stay humble.

*Exalt God
alone.*

—Charles R. Swindoll



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MM04

CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Ministry: Movement or Monument?

2 Chronicles 26:1–21; Isaiah 42:5–8

No matter how gifted we are, no matter how many people hang on our words or listen to our songs or heed our counsel—we have no right to take God’s name lightly or attempt to eclipse His glory or steal His praise. As soon as we do, the movement of God halts and a monument to our glory is erected; and how quickly those monuments come crashing down, taking us with them. A tragic example of this rise and fall is found in the story of King Uzziah.

2. An Example to Learn From

Uzziah made his entrance onto the pages of Scripture with great fanfare. His father, Amaziah, was assassinated after turning away from the Lord, and the kingly mantle fell on Uzziah at age 16.

For many years, King Uzziah was committed to doing things God’s way. Because of Uzziah’s faith, God allowed him to prosper for 52 years—as a captain of the military, as a builder, and as a farmer. With God’s empowerment, Uzziah conquered the Philistines and Judah’s other enemies (2 Chronicles 26:6–8), constructed fortifications in Jerusalem (26:9–10), hewed cisterns and developed farming (26:10), and built a vast, well-equipped and highly trained army (26:11–15).

Slowly and secretly, though, pride had been slinking into his heart, and he had begun to polish his medals more than praise the Lord:

But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly. (26:16)

No longer did he see how the Lord helped him to get where he was. Once a movement of God, Uzziah’s kingdom became a monument to himself, and the Lord was about to remove its foundation of blessing.



LET’S LIVE IT

Five Signs of a Monument in the Making

- *When greater battles are fought within than without*
When any ministry leader no longer battles “Philistines” but becomes more and more self-preoccupied, a monument is starting to take shape.
- *When more attention is directed to the leader than to the Lord*
If people mention the leader’s name more than the Lord’s, if they cater to his or her whims without question, then the ministry is a monument to the leader and has slipped away from God’s favor.

Most prideful leaders don’t even realize what’s happening. They’re so accustomed to people giving them attention that they don’t smell the stink of arrogance rising from their me-first attitude. Egotism desensitizes them to their own foolishness.



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Ministry: Movement or Monument?

2 Chronicles 26:1–21; Isaiah 42:5–8

- *When God's help is nice but not essential*
After preaching one hundred sermons, it's easy to coast through number 101; when the songs have become old and familiar, it's easy to go through the motions one more time. Some leaders get so used to speaking for God that the Lord's glory loses its weight; they start throwing their own weight around.
- *When worthwhile reproofs are resisted rather than received*
According to Proverbs 9:7, "He who reproves a wicked man gets insults for himself." Uzziah's anger pointed to the wickedness brewing inside him. If we truly desire to live God's way, we'll welcome correction with grace and humility.
- *When the consequences of sin are ignored*
Uzziah ended his magnificent reign cut off from the temple and the nation, quarantined as a leper in a separate house (2 Chronicles 26:21). Grasping for glory, Uzziah died in infamy. His story flashes a warning sign: Take seriously the consequences of sin. In arrogance, we tend to blame others for the backlash of our wrongdoing. However, as the New Testament writer James reminds us in James 1:14–15, we have no one to blame but ourselves.

Ministry monuments result in disaster. Movements of God, however, accomplish amazing things.

You may be a minister, a church leader, a Sunday school teacher, or a counselor. God can do remarkable things through you as you depend upon His help. Always remember, though, who gets the glory!

Offer some examples of biblical characters who gave God glory. How were they blessed?

ENDNOTE

1. John N. Oswalt, "Kabod," in *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 426.



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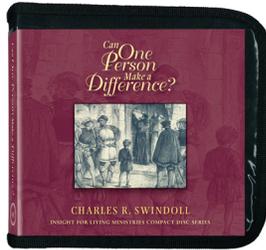
CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Ministry: Movement or Monument?

2 Chronicles 26:1–21; Isaiah 42:5–8

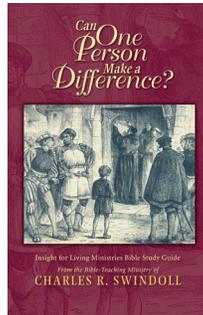


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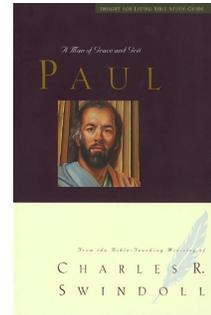
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Thinking Right about the Church *Survey of 1 Timothy*



LET'S BEGIN HERE

In 2 Corinthians 2:14–15, the apostle Paul referred to the body of believers as having a “sweet aroma.” In the past few years, unfortunately, the stench of sin has invaded some high-profile ministries, obscuring the fragrance of Christ. Smelling only the rankness, the world has decided that all the church is that way. But the world’s thinking is wrong; there’s still a lot about the church that is fragrant.

Even so, our reputation has been dealt a staggering blow. The body of Christ has become a punching bag for people eager to poke fun. City governments, school boards, and courts seem to have lost their trust in the church as a positive influence. Even Christians are having their doubts.

It’s time to push aside the negative thinking and draw our attention to God’s perspective of His church. He smells the sin, but He also breathes in the sweet aroma of His body of believers. In his first letter to Timothy, Paul highlighted six fragrant qualities that will help us think rightly about the church.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. We Are a Body That Is Healthy and Balanced (1 Timothy 1)

Emanating from the first chapter of Paul’s letter are the qualities of health and balance in the church. These characteristics are particularly appealing because we live in a world careening out of control, a world of grotesque extremes.

To a world teetering on the brink, the church offers moral health and spiritual balance. In 1 Timothy 1:3–4, Paul exhorted Timothy to make his church a secure place for frazzled people searching for truth.

Only the church offers these three counterpoints to the messages of a lost society:

- *The goal of our instruction—love:* “The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5).
- *The core of our message—the gospel:* “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1:15).
- *The object of our worship—the King eternal:* “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever” (1 Timothy 1:17).



Quotable

*The church exists
to help those
who hurt to
know that their
greatest source of
strength is God.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Thinking Right about the Church

Survey of 1 Timothy

2. We Are People Committed to Prayer (1 Timothy 2:1–4, 8)

We pride ourselves in our high-tech ability to meet our own needs. Need money right away? No problem—slide the card and out comes the money. Need a quick meal? No problem—pop the package in the microwave and out comes dinner. However, concerning the heart's deeper needs, technology turns us cold. As Paul emphasized in 1 Timothy 2, through prayer, the church is ushered into God's presence and plugged into His power.

Prayer is not passive contemplation; it's an active statement of confidence in God's authority over us. The world has nothing to compare with the peace that comes through prayer.

3. We Are a Representation of God's Unchanging Standards (1 Timothy 3)

In chapter 3, Paul listed the qualification for leaders in the church. These standards have not changed since Paul penned them almost two thousand years ago. The church's leadership—namely, the overseers, deacons, and deaconesses described in the passage—represent an unparalleled level of excellence.

In 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul referred to the whole body of believers as “the household of God,” “the church of the living God,” and “the pillar and support of the truth.” The Lord calls *all* of us, not just the leaders, to a higher standard—as Paul wrote, “so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself.”

However, a list of qualifications is not the final measure of our conduct. Jesus Himself is the ultimate standard (1 Timothy 3:16).

4. We Are a Force for Good in Bad Times (1 Timothy 4)

According to chapter 4, bad times will come—indeed, they are here now. Do you recognize in our world the characteristics Paul warned us to watch for?

- Defection (4:1)
- Deception (4:1)
- Demonism (4:1)
- Hypocrisy (4:2)
- Legalism (4:3)
- Asceticism (4:3)

But in the midst of this whirlwind of evil, the church stands as a bastion of righteousness—as long as its members act out the roles Paul described to Timothy:

- Good servants, nourished on faith and sound doctrine (4:6)
- Disciplined disciples, whose goal is godliness (4:7)
- Exemplary teachers, sharing the hope of Christ (4:10–13)
- Don't neglect the spiritual gift within you (4:14)
- Cultivate our spiritual gifts (4:15)



CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Thinking Right about the Church

Survey of 1 Timothy

5. We Are a Model of Compassion and Discernment (1 Timothy 5)

In 1 Timothy 5, Paul addressed the issue of the church's support of widows. In the first century, church members pooled their money to help widows in need, expressing the compassionate side of Christianity. However, there was another side of the church that brought balance—discernment.

The church is one of the few places where moral definitions and the truth about responsibility are taught. In 1 Timothy 5:17–25, Paul gave Timothy discerning counsel on:

- Paying a fair salary (1 Timothy 5:17–18)
- Confronting a church leader who is doing wrong (5:19–20)
- Doing what is right (5:21–25)

6. The Church Is to Be a Source of Reliable Information (1 Timothy 6)

In the sixth chapter, the church assumes its role as an amplifier of truth. Paul preached on at least seven subjects in this section:

- One's occupation (6:1–2)
- Doctrinal truths (6:3)
- Relational conflicts (6:4–5)
- Personal contentment (6:6–8)
- Money (6:9–11, 17–19)
- Priorities (6:12)
- Life and lifestyle (6:13–16, 20–21)



LET'S LIVE IT

The world may resist the truth of God's Word, but the church isn't in the business of tickling people's ears. Our job is to wrestle with the precepts of Scripture and tell ourselves and others what we need to hear—which may be painful at times. But we can be sure that when we do our job well, when we stick with Scripture, the information we dispense is reliable.

What steps can you take to make the aroma of Christ more fragrant?



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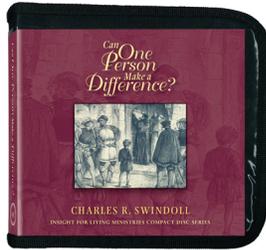
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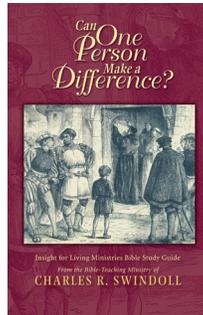
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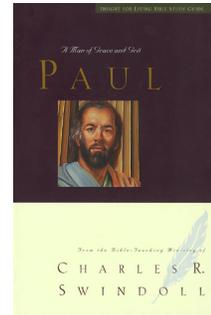
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Flexing with a Future in Flux

Isaiah 43:18–19; 48:6–8; Acts 11:1–5, 9–13, 15–18



LET'S BEGIN HERE

The church has always been known for its resolute spirit. Built upon the solid bedrock of Jesus Christ and reinforced by the granite pillars of the prophets and apostles, the church stands on the plain of history as a fortress of truth.

Problems occur, though, when we think that because the church's *message* is changeless, the church's *methods* must be changeless too. *How* we worship becomes as important as *Whom* we worship. Eventually, we end up guarding our fifty-year-old approaches to ministry with the same tenacity we use in defending Scripture. Viewing new ideas with a suspicious eye, we entrench ourselves in traditional routines and hunker down behind the concrete walls of our closed minds.

While the church stands still, however, the world moves on. How can we expect to make a difference in a rapidly changing world if we're living in the past? Are we ready for the changes the future will bring?



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Questions That Deserve an Answer

So much rapid change can cause us to wonder, where is God in all this, and how does the church react in the face of change?

- *Where in heaven is God in all this?*
With each new universe of knowledge we unlock, God is there, waiting for us to come in and explore His creation. He's not worried about the future. In fact, God looks forward to it and the changes He's going to bring about. Isaiah 43:18–19 and 48:6–7 highlight the fact that God is creating all the time. He's a God of new ideas, of innovation, of change.
- *Who in the church is ready for the challenge?*
Church analyst Lawrence Richards says that when faced with the possibility of change, most people reflect one of three personality types:
 1. *Innovators*: these people enthusiastically embrace change and are willing to try new ideas that offer progress.



Quotable

*Be willing
to be an agent
of change
for God's
unchanging
truth.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Flexing with a Future in Flux

Isaiah 43:18–19; 48:6–8; Acts 11:1–5, 9–13, 15–18

2. *Maintainers*: also called “conservatives,” these people are cautious about change and want all the facts firmly in place before launching a new plan.
3. *Inhibitors*: these people resist change, regardless of the facts and no matter how feasible a plan may be.

Ten percent of the people in an organization are innovators, eighty percent are maintainers, and ten percent are inhibitors, based on Richards’ research.¹

2. Issues Then and Now (Acts 11:1–18)

The main character in the tenth and eleventh chapters of Acts is a man named Peter, who was, by nature, a maintainer. Peter had Jewish roots. He was also a married man, settled down, relaxed, thinking he would spend the rest of his days on the sea, when all of a sudden along came this revolutionary—Jesus—who won his heart and swept him into a movement. Peter became one of Jesus’ early disciples. But Peter hadn’t lost his roots. He’d been trained as a Jew.

Peter was staying in the coastal region in Joppa, a sheet came down out of heaven, and on the sheet were all sorts of foods which up to that moment had been anathema (Acts 10:9–15). And the Lord had to say to him three times, “Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean” (10:15 NLT). So Peter ate.

He was escorted by three Gentiles into the congregation of a Gentile gathering. And Peter shared the truth of God to them. And they believed it (10:44–46).

The issues:

- *Institutionalism* (11:3)
The Jewish leaders were incensed that Peter had the audacity to fraternize with uncircumcised Gentiles.
- *Transformation* (11:4–16)
Peter knew that the Jerusalem believers needed to be transformed just as he had been. So, “in orderly sequence,” he calmly led them across the same bridge of change on which he had journeyed, from the vision to the visit with Cornelius.
- *Fixation* (11:17)
Peter asked, “Who was I to stand in God’s way?” (11:17 NLT). Peter had walked the people across the bridge to something completely new. Now they had to decide whether to keep walking with him or turn their backs on God’s way. If they refused the truth, they would have had what we might call a “fixation” on the past—what *Merriam-Webster’s* defines as “an obsessive or unhealthy . . . attachment.”² Would the Jewish believers loosen their grip on the past and accept God’s new plan for the Gentiles?
- *Alteration* (11:18)
To their credit, the Jerusalem believers got quiet, they got in touch with God, and they were willing to change. Each one of them stepped off the bridge and followed Peter into the future. Once there, they gloried in God’s marvelous grace—the grace that was bigger than any one of them could have imagined.



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Flexing with a Future in Flux

Isaiah 43:18–19; 48:6–8; Acts 11:1–5, 9–13, 15–18



LET'S LIVE IT

Answers That Are Right but Uncomfortable

When faced with change, how should we respond? Five answers emerge from Peter's story:

It is essential that we remain calm.

As we consider the new ways God might lead us, let's do so with a quiet, patient spirit.

It's essential that we glorify God as they did.

Any vision for the future must be for God's glory. We're not in the business of building empires for ourselves but of building God's kingdom.

It is essential that we walk through doors God opens.

Many exciting opportunities await us in the future. And when they open up, we need to push aside our instinct to hang back. Instead, we must step forward with confidence and faith.

It is essential that we willingly flex and adapt.

Don't let no always be the first word out of your mouth. If you tend to be an inhibitor, willingly try to be open to new ideas.

It is essential that we continually evaluate.

What's happening in the world? Is our ministry still meeting people's needs? Should we toss out a certain program that isn't working anymore? What new doors is God cracking open? These kinds of questions keep us flexible and ready to face whatever future God has in store for us.

How is each role — innovator, maintainer, inhibitor — important in the body of Christ? How would you characterize yourself, according to these categories?

ENDNOTES

1. Lawrence O. Richards, *A New Face for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), 43.
2. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2007), see "fixation."



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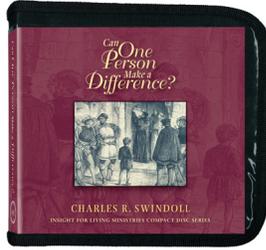
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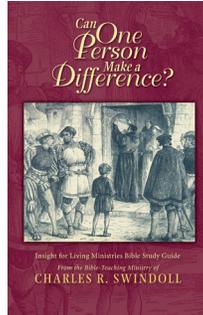
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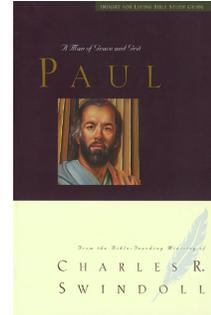
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MM06

CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

How to Help Our Nation Survive

2 Chronicles 7:12–22



LET'S BEGIN HERE

What can we do for our country? We can pay taxes, vote, obey the laws, and defend the nation against invaders. These are worthwhile contributions, but there must be something more — something deeper.

Today, our nation is fighting for its survival. Threatening us, however, are not the “usual” social diseases that torment underdeveloped countries — poor sanitation, poverty, starvation. Ours is a struggle of the soul, with cancerous sin spreading insidiously through our nation’s vital organs. Every day, another family collapses from compromised morality, another business dies from a lack of ethics, another young person falls because of weakened values.

What can we do for our country? How can we help our nation survive? These questions are too personal to be relegated to a president to answer. We must turn to our Maker for His wise counsel.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. A Day of Dedication (2 Chronicles 7:1–3)

Solomon, the son of King David, had just completed the temple that his father had only dreamed about. God’s permanent house was ready for habitation.

While the king and the people were making sacrifices to welcome God’s glory into the new temple, an army of priests carried the ark of the covenant into the Holy of Holies. Solomon then lifted his hands in an ardent prayer, dedicating the temple and the nation to the Lord’s service. And the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

King Solomon’s heart must have pounded with pride as he went to bed that night. What an accomplishment! He had “successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the LORD and in his palace” (2 Chronicles 7:11).



Quotable

*Changed hearts are
not accomplished
through the
marble-walled
rooms on
Capitol Hill.
It takes Christ.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

How to Help Our Nation Survive

2 Chronicles 7:12–22

2. A Night of Visitation (2 Chronicles 7:12–22)

Suddenly, the Lord appeared to Solomon. During this encounter, the Lord chose three subjects to counsel the king about: the temple, the people, and Solomon himself.

- **God's House (2 Chronicles 7:12)**

God called the temple “a house of sacrifice,” perhaps to remind Solomon of its purpose. This was a place of meeting, where contrite souls could find mercy and where God in His holiness could embrace His people. The doors of this house must always be open and the sacrifices always burning—sacrifices of animals, of praise, of prayer.

The temple was where people could come to experience God personally. Centuries later, though Solomon's building was gone, Jesus nevertheless respected the temple for its original purpose—a house of prayer (Matthew 21:13–14).

- **God's Nation (2 Chronicles 7:13–16)**

In the days ahead, the spirit of celebration would most likely fade, and the people would be tempted to start drifting away from the Lord. If that should happen, God might have to test His nation with drought, famine, and plague. How could the nation survive?

God expected four things from His people (2 Chronicles 7:14):

The attitude of a servant—“humble themselves”

A spirit of dependence—“and pray”

A willingness to wait—“seek My face”

A response of obedience—“turn from their wicked ways”

In return, God promised that their prayers would get His attention and that He would forgive their sin and heal the nation as He saw the people changing the direction of their lives.

- **God's Leader (2 Chronicles 7:17–22)**

The Lord offered Solomon two futures, each showing how his spiritual walk would potentially influence the nation: in one hand, the Lord extended a gracious promise; in the other, a serious warning.

Which would be Solomon's destiny? It depended on one thing: his desire to walk with God.



CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

How to Help Our Nation Survive

2 Chronicles 7:12–22



LET'S LIVE IT

Spiritual Survival: Then and Now

Although our situation differs from Solomon's in many ways, the United States is not ancient Israel; God's Spirit dwells within believers rather than in a temple—but the principles are the same. Like ancient Israel, we have enjoyed God's blessings during our nation's more than two hundred years of existence. However, it is clear that we have drifted from our former commitment to be "one nation under God." Could we be in danger of forfeiting God's blessing?

If God paid us an unexpected visit, what counsel would He offer? Probably, it would be similar to the survival instructions He gave Solomon: humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from wickedness. There is healing in that simple message.

It won't be accomplished in the paneled rooms of government, in judges' chambers, voting booths, or city council meetings. It must be done by "My people who are called by My name."

List some specific ways you can pray for your nation and its leaders to seek God and obtain healing.



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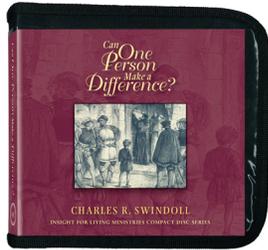
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2 Chronicles 7:12–22

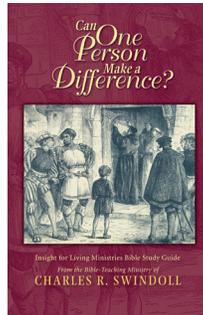


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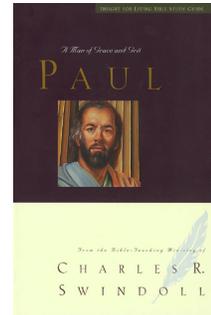
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Passion That Stays Balanced

1 Corinthians 9:16–24



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Passion. Just reading that word can spark a fire within us, but the idea isn't easy to define. According to the dictionary, *passion* has four synonyms: “fervor, ardor, enthusiasm, zeal”; and it has as one of its meanings “intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction.”¹

Jesus certainly comes to mind when one thinks of passion, but so does another person in the New Testament: the apostle Paul. He was a man with intense, driving convictions. His enemies would curse him, beat him, and stone him nearly to death, and he'd keep on preaching the gospel. He refused to run scared, to take it easy, or to play it safe. As long as there was breath in his lungs, the name of Christ would be on his lips, and the passion of God would throb in his heart.

Four particular periods in Paul's life, like four photos in an album, reveal the fire in this man's passionate spirit.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Four Brief Glimpses of Paul

Here is a brief “album” of the apostle Paul's life, as he began as Saul of Tarsus and became the great Apostle of Grace.

Photo 1 (Acts 26:11): *while he was lost, he passionately pressed on in his mission*

- Unfortunately, persecuting Christians
- Single-minded, outrageously zealous, savagely determined

Photo 2 (Acts 9:4–5, 17–20): *as he was converted, he passionately submitted to Christ*

- Instantaneous willingness to hear/change when he encountered Jesus
- Courageous vulnerability when he “went public” with his faith to the disbelief of his peers



Quotable

*We need to learn
to get along with
those of differing
philosophies—
without
compromising the
Word of God.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Passion That Stays Balanced

1 Corinthians 9:16–24

Photo 3: *once he was saved, he passionately pursued his calling*

- Set records in evangelization
- Set an unmatched pace for doctrinal understanding and communication
 - Forged new covenant theology/grace/gospel
 - Wrote more of the New Testament than any other writer
 - Independently established the church in its foundational moorings

Photo 4: *when he was facing death, he passionately finished the journey*

- Admonished his friend to keep preaching the Word
- Requested various books and especially the parchments to keep sharp
- Testified that he'd "fought the fight/finished/kept the faith"

2. Three Balanced Guidelines for Ministry (1 Corinthians 9:4–14)

As God's spokesman, Paul had access to a storehouse of privileges. He had the right to enjoy daily provisions from those to whom he ministered (1 Corinthians 9:4). He had the right to have a wife and family (9:5). He had the right to refrain from working in jobs other than his ministry (9:6). He had the right to receive a salary (9:9–11). Yet Paul refused to help himself to that bounty, so that he would "cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ" (9:12).

Today, with the public's opinion of ministers at a discouraging low, we especially need to follow Paul's example for a balanced ministry. In 1 Corinthians 9:18–23, three guidelines emerge:

- **Having freedom without abusing one's rights** (9:18–19)
Paul did whatever was necessary to communicate the gospel. Yet he never lost his spiritual equilibrium. In one hand, he cradled his freedom under God's grace; in the other, he held the restraints of love.
- **Being flexible without compromising one's morals** (9:22)
Flexibility does not suggest hypocrisy or becoming soft or indiscreet. Rather, it has to do with being adaptable and getting along well with those whose philosophy of life and manner of living differs with the morality and ethics of Christianity.



CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A Passion That Stays Balanced

1 Corinthians 9:16–24

- **Standing firm without becoming aloof/unaccountable** (1 Corinthians 9:23)
As flexible as Paul was, there was one thing about which he would never bend—the gospel. Upon that ground he stood firm. Yet he didn't put himself above his message. He wasn't merely a dispenser of the truth; he was a partaker of it too. The gospel was his soul and substance—the hub around which all the spokes of his life turned.



LET'S LIVE IT

Two Basic Principles to Remember

Those who are passionate about going to all ends to reach the lost must stay flexible.

Are you flexible? Are you able to set aside your differences with people in the world? Are you making an effort to stay in touch with those outside the family of God?

Those who are passionate about doing this by all means must stay available.

Are you available? Is Christ the center of your life—the one in charge of your career, your home, and your relationships? Are you prepared to give your all to save some?

How do you balance your freedom in Christ with your love for the lost and hurting?

ENDNOTE

1. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2007), see "passion."



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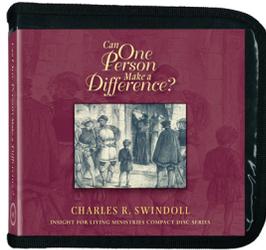
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A Passion That Stays Balanced

1 Corinthians 9:16–24

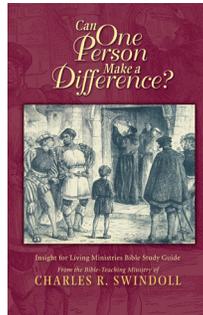


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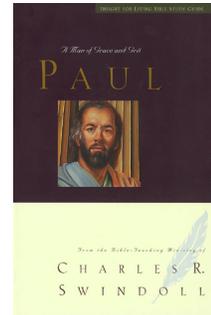
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Can One Person Make a Difference?

2 Chronicles 16:9; Ezekiel 22:23–30



LET'S BEGIN HERE

By now in our study, if you're like me, you want to believe that you can make a difference in the world, but a voice inside keeps protesting, "Be realistic! The river of history is too wide, and the current of evil is too strong. One person can't possibly change the course of the world."

A quick glance at the evening news seems to reinforce that message. Our inner cities have become war zones, our judicial system is a tangle of legal games, and our families are unraveling at the seams. It takes just one step into society's icy waters to feel sin's swift current. The idea of making a difference sounds nice, but for those trying to keep from drowning, is it possible?

From the vortex of pressing problems swirling around us, the task looks too difficult to even try. We need to get to high, dry ground, a place of perspective so we can see that our struggles are not unique but have occurred through the ages. And they've been squarely challenged by difference-making people. There we'll draw hope and strength from some of these individuals who did the impossible — who changed the direction of the world. So, if your seat belts are fastened, let's go!



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Difference-Makers in History

- Martin Luther sparked the Protestant Reformation.
- Leonardo da Vinci opened the age of the Renaissance.
- William Shakespeare was a playwright for the ages.
- John Bunyan guided the progress of countless pilgrims.
- Alexander Pope's intellectual investments still profit today's thinkers.
- Benjamin Franklin invented bifocals.
- Thomas Edison brought us out of darkness with the electric light.
- Henry Ford's Model T broadened the borders to the butcher across town or the grandchildren across the country.



Quotable

*I've noticed only
rarely does
God choose to
do something
on this earth
without us.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Can One Person Make a Difference?

2 Chronicles 16:9; Ezekiel 22:23–30

2. Difference-Makers in the Bible

Many times, God *prefers* to use only one person. For example, during the days of Ezekiel, Israel had become a nation of liars, oppressors, and thieves. What plan did the Lord have in mind for rescuing His people from sin's murky depths? To spare Israel from destruction, all He needed was *one* person willing to stand for what was right.

Let's take a look at some of those ordinary people God used—people who “stood in the gap” and made a difference in their world.

- **Noah:** Without his faithfulness to God and willingness to build an ark, none of us would be here today.
- **Abraham:** He is the father of the nation of Israel. Through him, all the families of the earth are blessed.
- **Joseph:** He was a captive sold by his jealous brothers and became the prime minister of Egypt. He saved his family from famine and kept God's people alive.
- **Moses:** After Egyptian pharaohs forgot about Joseph, enslaving God's people, God selected Moses to live first in pharaoh's house, then in exile as a shepherd, and finally, as the deliverer of the Hebrews.
- **Joshua:** When Moses died, Joshua took over as the general to lead the Hebrews in their conquest of Canaan.
- **The Judges:** Israel, in its affluence, became increasingly indifferent toward God's laws after they possessed the Promised Land. God gave them into the hands of their enemies. Then when Israel repented, He raised up individual judges to deliver them.
- **Samuel:** He ministered as a judge and prophet during a unique period of transition in Israel's history, when the twelve autonomous tribes unified under a central monarchy.
- **Saul, David, and Solomon:** Saul was Israel's first king, preceding David and Solomon. They each impacted the nation, both for good and bad. Overall, their reigns were the golden age of Israel's united kingdom.
- **The Prophets:** After Solomon's death, his kingdom divided into northern and southern factions. God raised up prophets to confront the nations with His truth and model obedience to His words. The writing prophets are accounted in the books of Isaiah through Malachi.
- **Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah:** Despite God's warnings, both kingdoms fell to invaders—the Assyrians captured the north, while Babylon captured the south. After a time in captivity, Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah led the Jews home to Jerusalem in three expeditions. These men had the vision and faith to rebuild the temple, the city walls, and most important, the spirit of the people.



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- **John the Baptist:** During the 400-year gap between the Old and New Testaments, no prophets appeared until John the Baptist stormed in from the wilderness, preparing the way for Messiah.
- **Jesus Christ:** More than any other, the life of Jesus Christ epitomizes the power of one person to change lives. Philip Schaff eloquently describes the difference Jesus has made in history:

This Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science and learning, he shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, he spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of any orator or poet; without writing a single line, he set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise, than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times.¹

- **Peter, Stephen, and Paul:** Jesus changed scores of others into difference-makers, who then flowed into the world like ripples in a pond. Three of the earliest were Peter, the disciple who denied Christ but later became His chief spokesman; Stephen, the first person in the Bible to be martyred for his faith; and Paul, the former persecutor of Christians who became the early church's greatest champion of the gospel.



LET'S LIVE IT

Can One Person Make a Difference?

Based on the precedent of the past, the answer is an overwhelming yes! One person *can* change the world—in fact, this is the way God works. He's still searching for that one man or woman “whose heart is completely His” whom He can use to achieve his purposes (2 Chronicles 16:9). If your heart is His, you can take part in His vision. With Him, you can make all the difference in the world.

Name some difference-makers in your life. What did these people say and do that had such a tremendous impact on your life?

ENDNOTE

1. Philip Schaff, *The Person of Christ: The Miracle of History* (New York: Charles Scribner and American Tract Society, 1865), 48–49, accessed on Google Books, Feb. 13, 2015.



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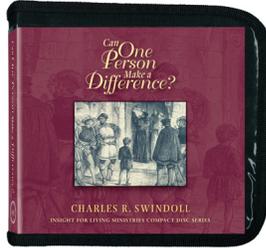
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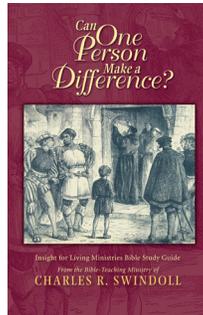


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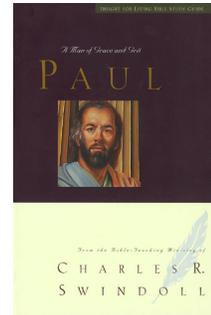
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CAN ONE PERSON MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

This Is No Time for Wimps!

1 Corinthians 15:58



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Most Americans who lived during the Second World War can still remember sitting beside the radio with family members, listening with rapt attention to the voice of a statesman with a British accent who did not know the meaning of the word *surrender*. Winston Churchill's first statement as prime minister to the House of Commons, May 13, 1940, was this: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."¹

In a unique speech to the London County Council, July 14, 1941, Churchill referred to "a comradeship of suffering, of endurance." He told Hitler and his Nazi forces: "We will have no truce of parley with you, or the grisly gang who work your wicked will. You do your worst—and we will do our best." And later, "We shall never turn from our purpose, however somber the road, however grievous the cost."²

And one more: "'Not in vain' may be the pride of those who survived and the epitaph of those who fell."³

As Churchill's words ring in our ears, we find that they actually echo what the apostle Paul wrote nineteen centuries earlier: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

As believers today, we must renew that same spirit of determination and commitment to faithfulness, to constancy, to endurance—no matter how somber the road or how grievous the cost.



Quotable

*The key to
doing something
great? Never be
satisfied with
mediocrity. Give
God your best.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Hard Days Are Ahead

The challenge before us is to aim high, stand tall, be models of integrity and vision and responsibility and purity. Most of us are able to handle greater challenges than we ever place before ourselves. Our problem, which can become our peril, lies not in raising our sights too high but in setting our aim too low.

- Hard times are opportunities to recommit ourselves to the claims and cause of Jesus Christ.
- Tough times can spawn great character.
- Retirement is not a biblical concept.

2. Biblical Character Hall of Fame: When God Speaks, He Aims High

God asks something great of every one of us. Not something easy. Not something that comes naturally or something that will cost us nothing. But He asks of us something great so that we, too, may join the ranks of those in God's hall of faith. Here are some of God's great asks:

- When God spoke to Noah, who stood alone in a decadent generation, He said, "Build an ark."
- When God spoke to Joseph, He said, "Return good for evil. Forgive your brothers."
- When God spoke to Moses, He said to him, "Lead My people out of Egypt."
- When God spoke to David, He said, unequivocally, "Kill the giant."
- When God spoke to Isaiah, He said, "Who will go? Whom shall I send?"
- When God got Peter's attention, after he had fallen and failed, He said, "Feed my sheep."
- When the apostle Paul stood on the westernmost shores of Turkey, wondering what God wanted, He said to him, "Come over to Europe and help them."



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3. Moses: The Disciplines of Durability (Hebrews 12:23–27)

Moses' character and mainspring of service can show us how to aim for greatness. Moses' parents modeled courage; they were not hindered by the king's edict (Hebrews 12:23). Moses' eyes were on God; he endured (12:27). He kept his eyes on the goal and not the obstacles.



LET'S LIVE IT

Our Challenge: Endure!

Moses' example encourages every one of us to endure, to stand firm, to be steadfast, to model faithfulness:

- Even when conspirators seem to endure
- Even when the wicked seem to be winning
- Even when the pressure seems unbearable
- Even when the critics won't shut up
- Even when big people act contemptibly small
- Even when you feel as though you're all alone
- Even when wrong is enthroned and truth is fighting for existence

Name one challenge you are facing in your life right now. How can you demonstrate the principles you have learned as you deal with this situation?

ENDNOTES

1. Winston Churchill, as quoted in *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, 15th ed., rev. and enl., ed. Emily Morison Beck (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1980), 743.
2. Sir Winston Churchill, *Great War Speeches*, comp. Charles Eade (London: Corgi Books, 1978), 128, 129, 130.
3. Churchill, as quoted in *Bartlett's*, 746.



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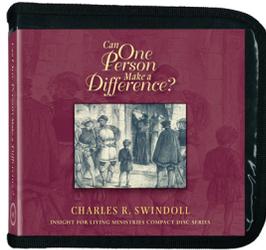
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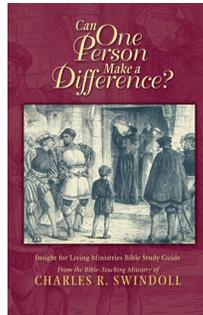


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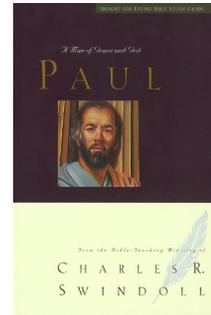
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