



## **Be Ready to Make a Difference**

I want to encourage you to prepare and take action to make a difference. I'm going to give you practical steps of how prayer and fasting, knowing the Word of God, and obedience to God's will are *foundational* for difference making.

Series Scripture: Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.  
Matthew 28:19-20\*

## **Prayer and Fasting Makes a Difference.**

"They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire." Nehemiah 1:3

**Nehemiah's first instinct when struck with tragic news is too fast and pray.**

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. Nehemiah 1:4

In Nehemiah 1:5-10 we see his prayer to the Lord.

-He prays with intention, for forgiveness and favor while bringing the Lord's words back to Him.

-In the midst of his mourning, Nehemiah strives to make a difference in the Kingdom of God

-The Lord grants Nehemiah favor with the king, and he would go on to be successful in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem

**How many of us feel like our loved ones, friends, or even strangers have been scattered to the furthest horizons? They're *not* too far from God. They need invitation, to be prayed and fasted for.**

**Prayer and fasting makes a difference in *us* as well:**

-Fasting for deliverance - Mark 9

-Fasting for clarity - Acts 13

-Fasting for spiritual strength - Matthew 4

**All of these stories show preparation to make a difference in the Kingdom through prayer and fasting by making a difference *within themselves***

In Matthew 6 Jesus tells us "**when** you pray" and "**when** you fast" not if.

-Prayer and fasting doesn't just prepare us to make a difference outwardly, and it doesn't just make a difference inwardly. It's *foundational* to our faith, it's necessary to make a greater impact, to have a deeper relationship, to make a difference.

## **Knowing the Word of God Makes a Difference**

Your Word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

**When we feel lost in darkness, His Word will guide us. And we KNOW this. How much more precious is this point to those that don't know the Word**

### **What God's Word says about YOU:**

You were created in His image - Genesis 1:27

You are forgiven - 1 John 1:9

You are loved - John 3:16

You are a new creation - 2 Corinthians 5:17

You are a child of God - John 1:12

**You will know the Word when you spend time in the Word.**

## **Obedience Makes a Difference**

-Isaiah was a mighty prophet, a difference maker in the old testament. Before he could make a difference, he had to be obedient. Isaiah 6 tells us of his cleansing and his call, to share the Word of God.

Then I said, "It's all over! I am doomed, for I am a sinful man. I have filthy lips, and I live among a people with filthy lips. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord of Heaven's Armies." Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. He touched my lips with it and said, "See, this coal has touched your lips. Now your guilt is removed, and your sins are forgiven." Then I heard the Lord asking, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me." Isaiah 6:5-8

**Isaiah recognized and dwelled on his faults. After he understood his freedom, he was obedient to his calling.**

**-YOU are free. Be obedient to your calling!**

"Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" And they left their nets at once and followed him.

A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind." Matthew 4:19-22

**These men would go on to be apostles of the early church, write books in the new testament, and make a difference in the Kingdom of God. YOU are capable and called to make a difference, and it starts and ends with obedience.**

## **My Next Steps:**

- ☐ **Invite Someone to Family Feud Big Day Next Sunday**
- ☐ **Sign up to be Baptized Next Sunday**

## **Tithes and Offerings**

I really don't need to write to you about this ministry of giving for the believers in Jerusalem. For I know how ready you are to help.

1 Corinthians 9:1-2

**We have watched God save souls through this church.  
God has broken addiction off people. Given people hope.  
I know you're ready to help today. Give generously.**