



Making A Difference

Mark 2:1-12

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- 2. What can one person do?**

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- 1. What type of person must we be?**
- 2. What can one person do?**
- 3. How far will you go out of your comfort zone to make a difference? (Mark 2: 1-12)**





Which are you?

- The first group is the bystanders and onlookers. They are curious and watch to see what happens, they know there is a need but prefer for someone else to get involved.



Which are you?

- The second are your legalists (like lawyers) those who are waiting to assign blame and point fingers. They are also quick to criticize the response of those who are there to assist the needy.



Which are you?

- The third group are the first responders and those who will ignore their own safety just to make a difference. They are the people usually most welcomed by those involved in the accident.
- They could care less whose fault the accident was and they did not engage in lecturing about bad driving habits. Their response was to do whatever was necessary to help those who were in need. They bandaged wounds, freed trapped people, and gave words of encouragement.

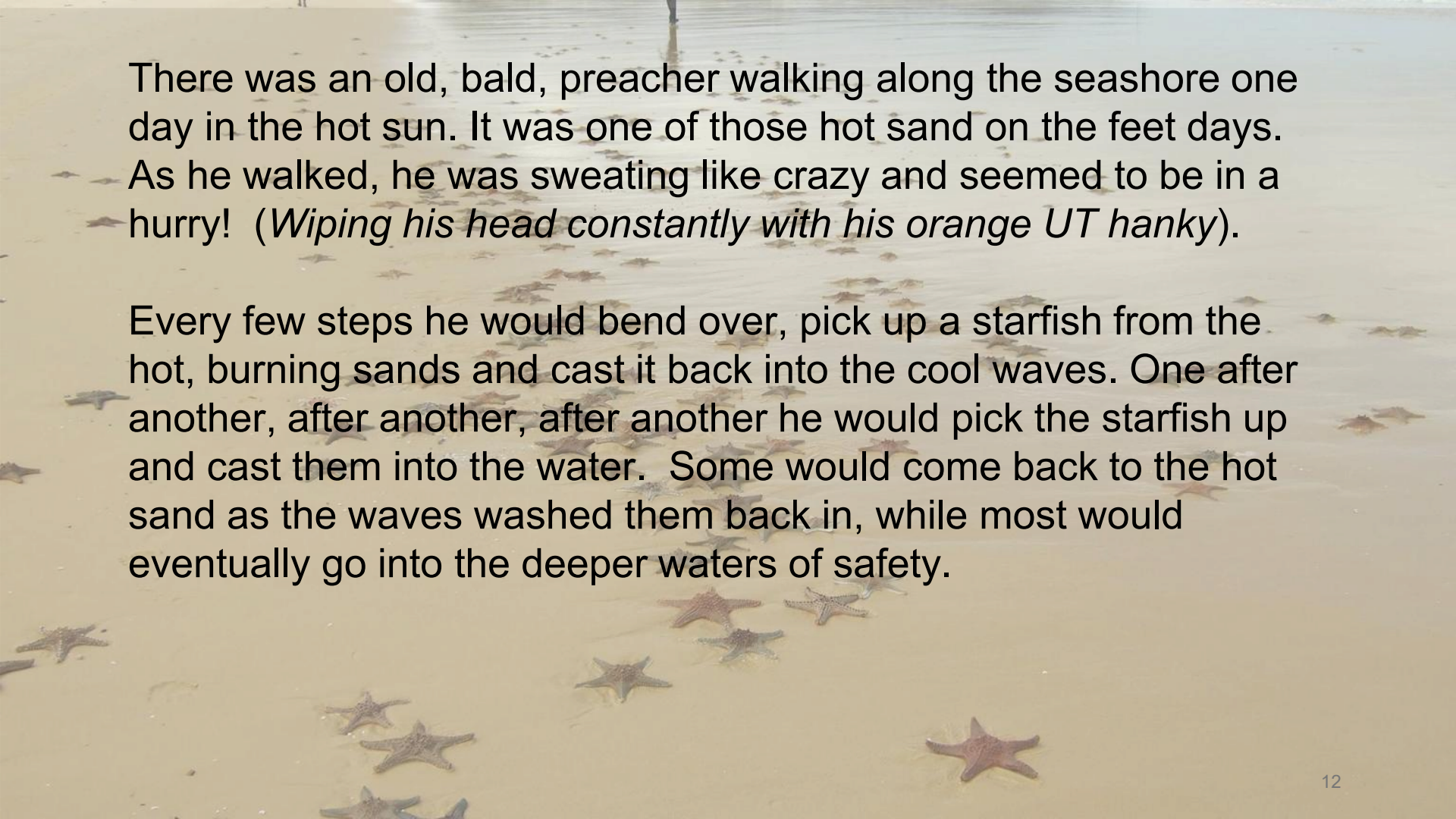


Which are you?

- UNINVOLVED – Bystanders and Onlookers
- LEGALISTS – Assign Blame and Point Fingers
- FIRST RESPONDERS - Helpers

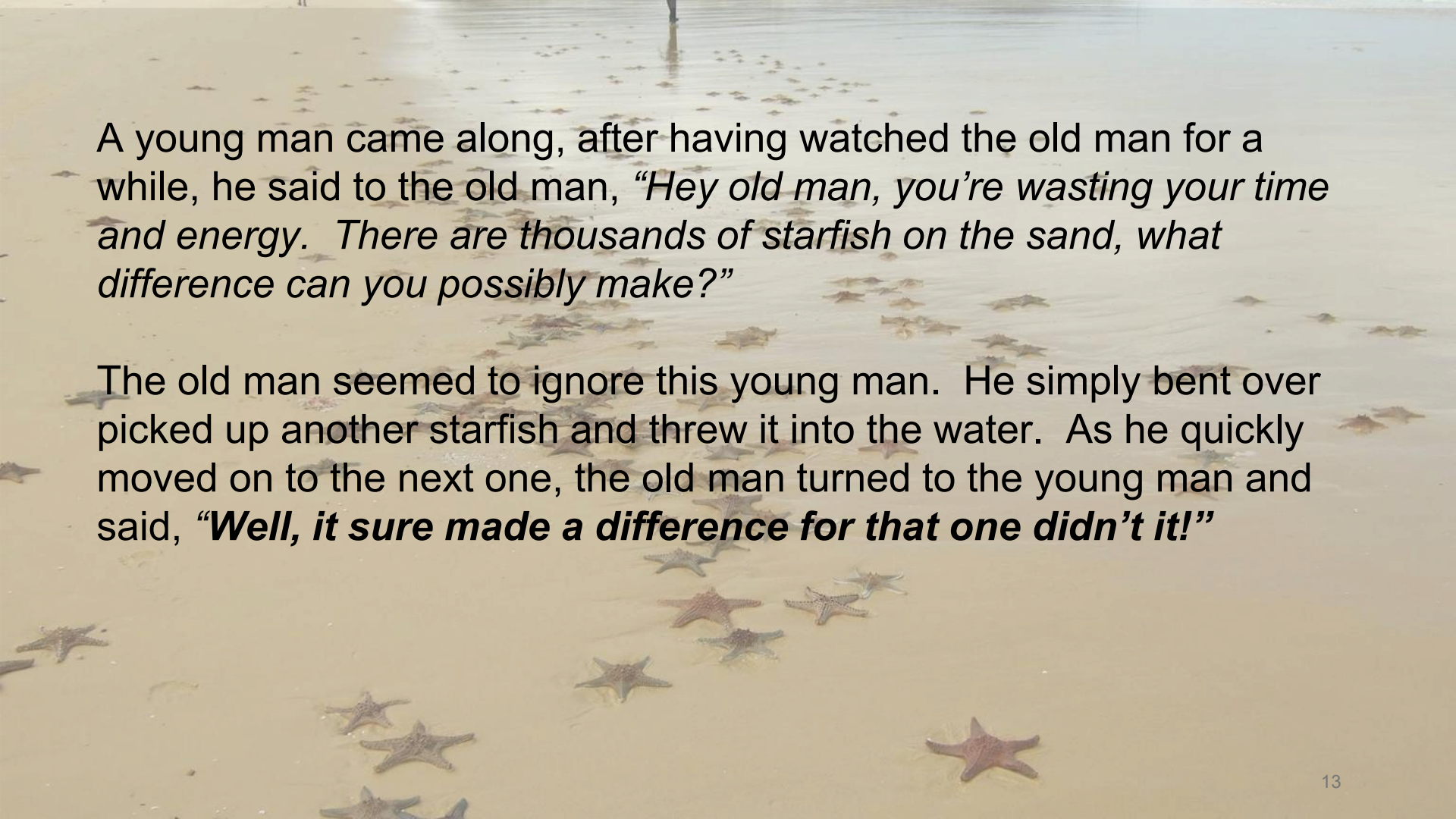
A wide-angle photograph of a sandy beach at low tide. The sand is a light tan color, and the water is a pale blue-grey. In the foreground and middle ground, hundreds of starfish are scattered across the sand. They vary in size and color, including shades of brown, orange, red, and grey. Some starfish are partially submerged in the shallow water. In the background, the water extends to the horizon, and a few more starfish are visible in the distance. A white rectangular box with a thin black border is centered in the upper half of the image, containing the title text.

THE STARFISH ON THE SEASHORE



There was an old, bald, preacher walking along the seashore one day in the hot sun. It was one of those hot sand on the feet days. As he walked, he was sweating like crazy and seemed to be in a hurry! (*Wiping his head constantly with his orange UT hanky*).

Every few steps he would bend over, pick up a starfish from the hot, burning sands and cast it back into the cool waves. One after another, after another, after another he would pick the starfish up and cast them into the water. Some would come back to the hot sand as the waves washed them back in, while most would eventually go into the deeper waters of safety.

A background image of a beach at low tide. The sand is light-colored and covered with hundreds of starfish of various sizes and colors, including shades of brown, tan, and reddish-brown. Some starfish are partially submerged in the shallow, rippling water. The water is a pale, milky blue. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

A young man came along, after having watched the old man for a while, he said to the old man, *“Hey old man, you’re wasting your time and energy. There are thousands of starfish on the sand, what difference can you possibly make?”*

The old man seemed to ignore this young man. He simply bent over picked up another starfish and threw it into the water. As he quickly moved on to the next one, the old man turned to the young man and said, ***“Well, it sure made a difference for that one didn’t it!”***

One day a lady criticized D. L. Moody for his methods of evangelism in attempting to win people to the Lord.

Moody's reply was *"I agree with you. I don't like the way I do it either. Tell me, how do you do it?"*

The lady replied, *"I don't do it."*

Moody retorted, *"Then I like my way of doing it better than your way of not doing it."*

Always try to help whoever you can in any way you can.

(Hebrews 13:2) Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.



12. Public Domain

Mark 2: 1-5 (NASB) *The Paralytic Healed*

1 When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. 3 And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. 4 Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. 5 And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."



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Mark 2: 6-12 (NASB)

6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "**Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?** 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? 10 **"But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"**—He said to the paralytic, 11 **"I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."** 12 And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

1. WALK THE TALK / LIVE WITH INTEGRITY



They knew that their friend needed Jesus. Jesus could not only heal him but could also change his future. They could make a difference in their friend's life if only they could get their friend to Jesus.

And the paralytic trusted his friends.

So, what did his friends do – they just got together, grabbed their buddy and his mat, and went to Jesus.

1. *WALK THE TALK / LIVE WITH INTEGRITY*

For some of us, we have relationships with people who don't know Christ or go to church, but these people trust us and know that we "go to church", sharing our faith is simply a matter of doing it.

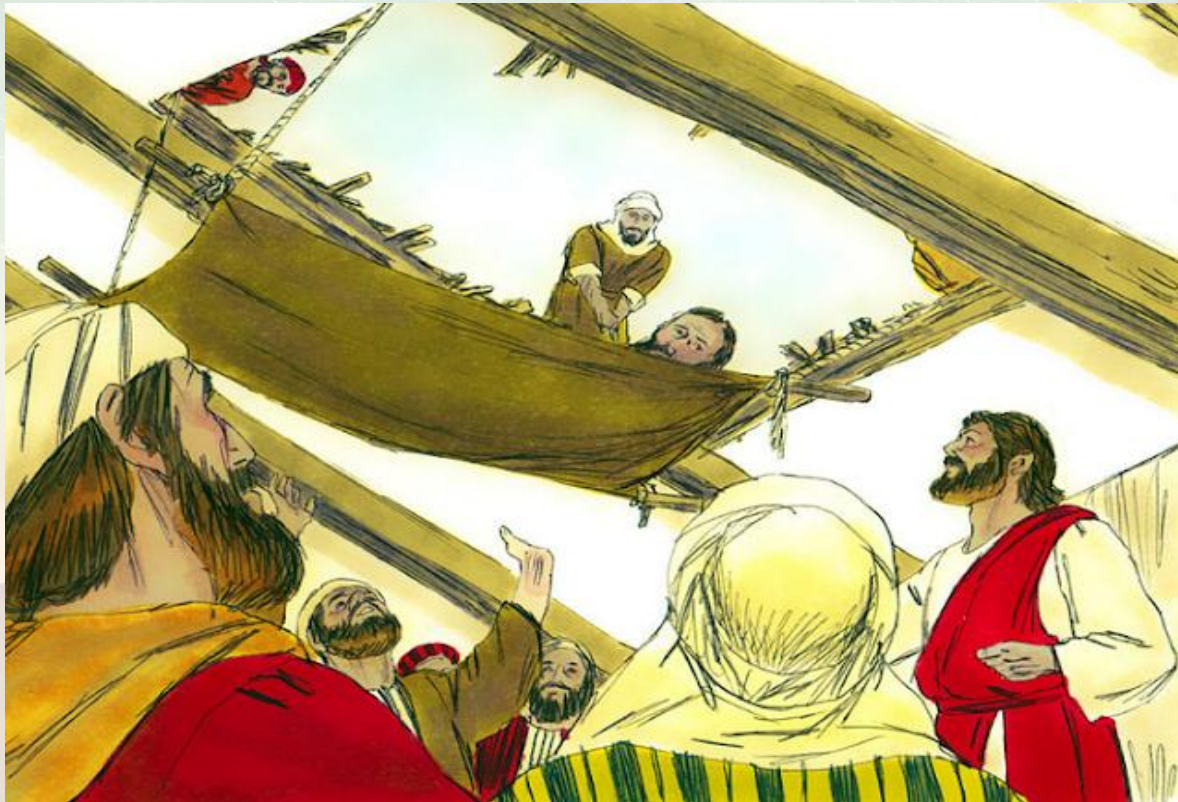
For most others, sharing our faith could be as simple as saying, "*Do you attend a local church?*" or "*We're having a so-and-so event at our church would you be interested coming?*" Pick any lull in any conversation and make that simple statement. And see where it goes...

1. ***WALK THE TALK / LIVE WITH INTEGRITY***

If people know that we are Christians, and they see by the way we live, that we actually live out what we believe, then we have earned the credibility we need to share our faith with them.

So, the first step in making a difference is to live with integrity and just bring God or your faith into your conversations. Like the 4 friends, introduce those in need to Jesus.

2. LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT



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- You’ll know if it was God’s will after you do it, by the results.
- Take a risk. Step out of your comfort zone.



2. *LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT*

Here is the encouraging part – almost all the time, the results will not be catastrophic even if it was your idea and not God's. If these 4 friends had been wrong, they would have had to fix the roof or pay for the damage, then get on with life.

Would the paralyzed guy be worse off? No!

Would the paralyzed guy be upset at his 4 friends for at least trying? I think not.

Most of the time, if you take a risk and ask a question or extend an invitation or express some care and concern, you won't do harm even if it was your idea.

2. *LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT*

When it is the Holy Spirit planting the idea, enjoy the fruit of your labor.

So, try to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit, but either way take a risk...

(Jude 1:22-23) 22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting; 23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

3. BE YOURSELF, AND A LITTLE BIT MORE...



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Some of us could never imagine ourselves sharing faith with a stranger.

It is said that Billy Graham almost quit early on because he lacked confidence in his abilities.

If you can't imagine sharing with strangers, start with your friends, family, or coworkers.

What could you imagine yourself doing?

God gave each of us a unique personality, and all of us the responsibility to be witnesses for Him in our world.

3. ***BE YOURSELF, AND A LITTLE BIT MORE...***

We need to be a little bit more deliberate about witnessing for Christ. Rarely, if ever, will the perfect opportunity present itself. The devil is more active than that – always making sure something is going to make it difficult, or inconvenient, or a pain.

So, we must do a little bit more – we must recognize our personalities and pray/think/plan out ways to be ourselves and a little bit more in deliberately sharing Christ with others.

It is going to take some effort, some deliberation, some strategizing, some courage, even some growth on our parts. But the fruit will be worth it. How far out of your comfort zone will you go to lead someone to Jesus?



Final Takeaways on how to Make A Difference

1. Stop being a Bystander or Finger-pointer but a First Responder
2. Your way of doing something is always better than someone doing nothing
3. Live with integrity
4. Listen to the Holy Spirit
5. Use the personality God has given you (be yourself) and be a little bit more.
6. Share your faith and Jesus