

Youth – A City set on a Hill or Making a Difference.... Pilgrim Youth Institute August 2, 2020

Could tell you how youth shine, but have chosen to focus on how you can shine...)

Unless our parents allowed us to grow up completely selfish and self-centered, there comes a time in life, usually in the teens and into the early twenties, when we begin to think and feel that surely there has to be some solution to life and the problems of life that others have not yet discovered.

Along with this thought, generally comes a desire to make our life count. To make a difference in the lives that touch our own, and yes, even the desire to change the world and the problems as we know them.

This idealism is one of the things I admire in youth. In fact, I would much rather see a youth that is a bit over idealistic than one who has no idealism at all. Yet, with idealism come dangers, the dangers of overwhelmed responsibility and a disappointed disenchantment of life. When untried idealism hits reality, it has the potential of wiping out and morphing into cynicism.

How many of you have had what was, seemed, or felt like an impossible job or situation?

What feelings and thoughts come when facing the impossible? Hopelessness, despair, lethargy...

What is the one thing to do when facing an impossible task?

*A life pattern? 1. Conversion 2. Jonah time 3. Acceptance of call 4. Seeking to answer the call
5. Obstacles encountered 6. Discouragement – Disenchantment 7. Loss of focus*

It Couldn't Be Done (by Edgar A. Guest)

What is the one thing to do when facing an impossible task?

Begin with what can be done... Take heart! The world can be changed for the good. But, remember, true and lasting change occurs on a personal level, one small step at a time, one person at a time...

Focus on the small: Do what you know how and can...

As we seek to make a difference in the lives around us, I love to look at the way Christ made a difference to those who touched His life. Luke 7:36-50

A few things to consider as we look at this passage.

1. Women were rarely if ever present with men as they ate in a formal setting like this.
2. They were much more class conscious in being aware of who touched them and what their social standing in the community was.
- A. Christ associated with all who God brought His way. (*the banker and the hillbilly...*)
 1. Simon, the somebody. (Religious leader, up and coming man of the community.)
 - a. Accepted invitation to eat with him.
 - b. He asked questions rather than arguing His point.
 - c. He spoke honestly and frankly to the need in Simon's life and to Simon's lack of action.
 2. The woman, the nobody, the social out-cast. (The down and out. The fodder for the gossip mill.)
 - a. He looked at her motive and heart, rather than at the cultural propriety of what she did and how that might affect His reputation or standing. Christ did not let the cultural sensibilities of His time hinder His ministering to social out-casts
 - b. He commended the desire of her heart: thereby encouraging her to continue seek the good impulse that had caused her to do what she did.
 - c. He touched the real need in her life, forgiveness, and the associating change of life this brings.

Parable of the Starfish

Three ways you can make a difference to "one" in your life...

1. Only shoot the bears you can see: and take them one at a time. Christ said it this way: **Mat 6:34**
Focus on and care for the people with you right now, right where you are.
2. Be real and genuine: don't try to impress. (*While I do not think it is wrong to understand a bit about the religious thinking and the resulting culture of those we are seeking to witness to: be careful in this.*)
Your knowledge of their religious teaching and thoughts and your ability to argue against it and point out the fallacies in it IS NOT WHAT WILL WIN THEM TO CHRIST!
(A heart of caring that is honest enough to say, "I don't know" is much better than a display of ignorance and pride.)

3. Seek to see people as Christ did and would.

At home: Do you see a bothersome and maybe even brattish child or sibling? Or do you see an eternal soul? (Sam...)

In church: Do you see someone who has hurt your feelings, someone whose theology you disagree with, someone who you could well do without? Or do you see a brother or sister in Christ who is here to bless you and who you are to bless?

Shopping: Do you see a greedy and thoughtless hindrance to your shopping experience, and schedule? Or do you see a person who in their greed and thoughtlessness is showing an eternal soul on the wrong road?

On the street witnessing: Do you see someone who is showing off their bodily assets, do you see the repulsive un-washed tramp, do you see the impatience they have towards someone who breaks their rush in serving self? Or, do you see the souls of men and women, crying out in a multitude of ways, who desperately need to know that Christ died for them?

On the mission: Do you see one more person you have to deal with today, one more decision to make as how to best help a need, one more visit to cross off the long list?

Or, do you see through the ignorance, through the constant begging, souls for whom Christ died? Souls, that with His help, you may touch and potentially affect for eternity?

D.L. Moody, "I see is countless thousands of souls headed for eternity."

What do you see?

Matt 5:14-16 A candle has two uses:

1. To give light in a certain area.
2. To give a point of reference as a guide to those outside.

Most if not all the people we will meet this coming week, and throughout life, will not allow us the privilege of lighting their lives to into the glorious Gospel of Christ. But, let us not be discouraged: we can serve as a guide, a point of reference that points to the real purpose and meaning of life as you give all and live all for Him. No one can stop you from doing that!

From how far away can you see the light of a candle?

What do people see in me?

Jud 1:20-25 Make a difference.... To one!

I would like to commit myself to two things:

1. To wholly living for God
2. To wait on God