

## Am I Making A Difference?

*by Ken Malmin*

We all want our lives to count for something. We'd like to think that our contribution matters; that we've made a difference. Do you ever wonder if you're really making a difference? Here are some thoughts that might help you answer this question.

### **Why God Needs You**

Does God really need me? Wouldn't He do better without my help? Couldn't He accomplish His purpose without me? Well, of course with His infinite power and wisdom He could do anything much better than we could. But He has chosen to work in partnership with us, sharing both the responsibility and the fulfillment. Why?

Part of the answer to this question can be illustrated with an incident from my parental experience. When my son was four years old, we were living in a house that we had remodeled. Once the inside was finished and the outside was painted I decided one Saturday morning to paint the picket fence that was surrounding the back yard. It was supposed to be white but was far from it. As I was getting the paint ready my son came bouncing out the back door. When he saw the paint his eyes lit up and he said excitedly "Wha'cha doin' dad?" For a brief moment I paused, but then said, "I'm getting ready to paint the fence." Immediately, he eagerly asked, "Can I help?" Thoughts raced through my head of how much a 4 year old could really "help" with a paint job. But my father's heart won out and I said "Sure you can. Go in and have mom get some old clothes for you." He raced inside to change.

I found an old brush, put some paint in a Cool Whip dish and then positioned him in front of the fence. He grabbed the brush and dunked it in the paint. When he picked it up the paint ran down off the brush over his hand. He smiled and then proceeded to brush the slats in the picket fence sideways, slapping from one to the next leaving paint running down each one. Because the handle was getting slippery from all the paint on it, the brush was jerked out of his hand by the force of hitting another slat, falling into to the bark-dust below. He then picked up the brush with the bark-dust clinging to it & dunked it back into the bowl of paint.

This pattern repeated on and on. I had to go along behind him picking paint covered pieces of bark-dust off of the fence and brushing the slats in the right direction. By the end of the project he was pretty well covered in paint but we had made a special father/son memory. As I started to clean the brushes I heard him triumphantly announce to his mom as he entered the back door of the house, "Me & dad painted the fence!"

At that moment the Holy Spirit spoke to me and said; "Now you know how the Father feels about you?" I realized that the Father isn't always scrutinizing my performance to determine if it measures up but rather is just enjoying the fact that I'm trying to "help."

Why does the Father let us "help?" Couldn't Jesus have saved the world by now by Himself? He certainly could have personally visited every people group by now, doing some miracles, showing His scars, telling the story and giving an altar call. What made Him decide to let us "help?" It was for the sake of relationship. He wanted us to know the

joy of working with Him. Certainly the glory goes to Him. But, that doesn't mean that we don't at least fulfill something in His heart when we "help."

**Your serving matters!** The Lord enjoys the opportunity to work with His kids. You have no idea how much He appreciates the work you do for Him.

### **Check Your Attitude**

It's also time that we recognize the significance of what we're involved in. What a high privilege it is to be doing Kingdom work.

Years ago a friend of mine toured a Toyota factory in Japan. Near the beginning of the tour he saw a man in a white coat standing in front of a machine. When a car moved along the assembly line to a position in front of him, he would simply push a button and the machine would do its work on the car. Through an interpreter he asked the man what he was doing. The man answered glumly, "pushing a button." After touring the whole plant he ended up back near that same machine. A shift must have changed because there was another man standing there ready to push the button. He asked the new worker what he was doing. His eyes lit up as he replied through a big grin, "making Toyotas!"

What is your attitude toward your function in the body of Christ? Do you focus only on the seemingly small task you've been given or do you realize what an awesome thing it is that you get to be a part of? Are you just "pushing a button" or are you "extending the Kingdom of God?"

Your serving matters! No matter how small the task, you are participating in the greatest enterprise the world will ever see. You are a part of the glorious body of Christ, the victorious army of God and the eternal purposes of the Father.

### **Let Him Use What You Have**

Offer your talents to the Lord. You never know how He may use you. A pastor from Texas shared with us the amazing story of a man in his congregation. The pastor had been preaching a series on how God wants to use everyone's talents. A simple-minded man approached him after one Sunday's message and asked, "Pastor, what do you think I could do for Jesus?" The pastor was hard pressed to think of something so he told the man to pray and ask Jesus for an idea.

The next week the man came back with a smile on his face and announced to the pastor, "I've got an idea. I think I could learn to give haircuts." The pastor encouraged him to try. The man did just that and a few months later opened his barbershop in the converted garage of his house on a main street in town. He put a sign out front that read, "Haircuts: \$1" and he shared the Gospel in his own simple way with every person that sat in his barber chair.

He had found his ministry and was very fulfilled. One day some time later he was standing in his barbershop looking at a razor in his hand when an idea came to him as to how the razor could be significantly improved. He ended up taking out a patent on the new design and became a very wealthy man. However, he still lives in the same house, drives the same car and still gives \$1 haircuts. He also gives more money to missions than his 3,000-member church combined!

You never know what God will do with the things we put in his hands. A basketball in my hand may be worth about \$40, but in Michael Jordan's hands is worth millions. A golf club in my hands may not be worth much but in Tiger Woods' hands it is worth millions. Five loaves and two small fish in my hands is just a couple of fish sandwiches but in Jesus' hands they can become a feast to feed thousands. It all depends on whose hands they're in. Why don't we just offer to God what we have and let Him decide what to do with it?

Your serving matters! Everything done for the Lord counts. It takes every member functioning for the body to be complete. Don't let the enemy convince you that your contribution is insignificant. In His hands your potential will be realized.

### **Being Faithful**

If you're faithfully serving the Lord and His house, then square your shoulders and feel the sense of fulfillment that comes from giving your life to a cause that really matters. You are a world-changer, a history-maker, and a citizen of eternity.

If you're not as involved in the things of God as you know you should be, then stop making excuses, ignore distractions, shake off lethargy, rise above your fears and report for duty. Why waste the resources the Lord has given you on things that won't matter much later in this life, not to mention the life to come?

### **You Can Make A Difference!**