

Five Ways To Change Your World 05
Change The World The Way Jesus Did
By Bill Denton

INTRODUCTION

A. We've been talking this month about ways to change your world

1. Begin by accepting the truth that the only person you can change is you
2. Understand the power of attitude
3. Get rid of the terminal disease of bitterness
4. Learn how to live with people – golden rule is a good summary
5. You'll notice something important running throughout all these lessons
 - a. changing your world is less about changing others, more about changing yourself
 - b. these are thoroughly biblical concepts – something that you must wrestle with if you're going to make good on your claim to be a follower of Jesus
 - c. I've been pleased to hear from several people how helpful and practical these lessons have been

B. But we have one more lesson in this how-to-change-your-world series, and ultimately, it might be the most important of them all

1. We might forget this, but Jesus came to change the world
2. From the fall of Adam and Even in the garden of Eden until Jesus came, the world was under the condemnation
 - a. Genesis 6:5 (NAS) – True of more than that one generation
 - ⁵ Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
 - b. Romans 3:10 (NAS)
 - ¹⁰ as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one;
 - c. Romans 3:10 (NAS)
 - ¹⁰ as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one;
3. Had Jesus not come to change things, all mankind would suffer eternal condemnation and punishment

C. As followers of Jesus, we need to see how Jesus changed the world

1. First, because his method is instructive – we can learn a lot from him
2. Second, because we're part of the process of that change

I. LOVE THE WORLD

A. Immediately, I'm sure someone is going to remind me that the Bible says that we are NOT to love the world

1. 1 John 2:15–17 (NAS)

¹⁵ Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

2. But this begs us to learn to read in context and not make illogical arguments

- a. that passage is warning us against loving the world in a way that causes us to want to be like the world, or to have the things of the world
- b. it is telling us we need to see the world as a temporary place, filled with temporary things
- c. it warns against adopting the mind, attitudes, desires, etc., that cause us to yearn for destructive things

3. So, yes, don't love the world that way

B. But it is also true that we are to love the world in a very different way

1. We are to love the world the same way God loves the world

- a. God isn't interested in becoming like the world, nor is God enamored by the temporary things of the world
- b. but no one can deny that God loves the world

2. John 3:16 (NAS) The Bible is clear about God's love for the world

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

3. Romans 5:8 (NAS)

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

4. Ephesians 2:4 (NAS)

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5. God has never loved man's sins, but God has always love men who sin

- a. God's love is the greatest motivation for him to act in loving, kind, and beneficial ways toward us, even when we didn't deserve it
- b. as followers of Jesus, we must all about becoming like God - that is, we must learn to live by divine principles
- c. God loved the world, not to become like it, but to change it
- d. if you want to change your world, try loving it this same way

C. This even applies to the most difficult of people to love

1. Matthew 5:44–48 (NAS)

⁴⁴ “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. ⁴⁶ “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ “If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

2. You want to be a child of God (son or daughter) – then learn to love like God

D. Watch what happens to us most of the time

1. We experience something negative, some pain, something that offends us
2. We immediately begin to hate whatever has hurt us – especially people!
3. Hate moves us to behave in hateful ways, all designed to take revenge, dispense a little “justice”, or cause a little hurt of our own
4. That doesn’t change the problem – it magnifies the problem
5. Only love can change the world – a lesson we learn from the God of the universe
 - a. God can condemn and punish all day long, but it’s not effective to bring about the change he wanted
 - b. only when he loved the world and sent his Son to die for the world did the change he wanted happen

E. You want to change your world – love the world, like God loved the world

II. SERVE THE WORLD

A. We really must ask these simple, but powerful, questions

1. If God, the Father, and Jesus, the Son, both loved the world, then in what specific way did that love manifest itself?
2. Philippians 2:3–8 (NAS)

³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in

appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

3. Because Jesus loved the world, he was willing to act in the most loving way possible

B. Jesus wanted his disciples to learn to serve the world the same way he did

1. Mark 10:41–45 (NAS)

⁴¹ Hearing *this*, the ten began to feel indignant with James and John. ⁴² Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, “You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. ⁴³ “But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; ⁴⁴ and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

2. Galatians 5:13 (NAS)

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brethren; only *do not turn* your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

3. We spend too much time being like James and John (and the rest too)

- a. we don't want to serve anybody, we want others to serve us
- b. we are constantly in a battle with each other to be one up on the other
- c. the competition to be in charge pits one against the other
- d. and the whole time, we're moving in exactly the opposite direction from where the Lord wants us to go

C. In our effort to change the world, we spend most of our efforts trying to get the world to bend to our will, to cater to our desires, and be what we demand of it

1. Jesus would say, “Quit trying to rule the world. Instead, take up the role of the servant and figure out how to serve the world”
2. Being human, we resist that with all our strength
 - a. “why I'm not going to be run over by anybody”
 - b. “I don't want anybody telling me what to do”
 - c. “what am I going to get out of this”
3. I don't know how to answer those things, but I know Jesus wants us to become servants, to help people, to give what we can to help them in God-honoring ways

D. You want to change your world – God would have you serve the world

III. SAVE THE WORLD

A. You have to put some things together here to understand God's ultimate purpose

1. Galatians 5:13 (NAS)

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brethren; only *do not turn* your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

2. Philippians 2:5–8 (NAS)

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

B. Divine love expressed through the servant Jesus was to save the world

1. Saving the world demanded change

- a. people had to understand the problem of sin, and turn from it to God
- b. people had to love God instead of rebel against him
- c. people had to yield to the rulership of God instead of insisting on running things themselves

2. So love and service worked together to bring grace and mercy into a world that desperately needed change

C. I don't know why Christians can't see this more clearly

1. We sometimes act like we just don't get it, yet we claim to be the saved

2. You can't be saved unless you have been loved by both the Father and His Son, and until you've been served by the Son

3. So what is it you don't get about what you should do for the world?

D. When Jesus sent his disciples into the world, he sent people who should understand two things

1. You have to love the world, or you will never have the motivation to do a thing positive for the world

2. You must serve the world, just as Jesus served the world

3. When you love the world, and are willing to serve the world, you're now in position to save the world by the good news of Jesus Christ

CONCLUSION

A. Here's what I know – this is one of the most difficult lessons to preach because people are hard to convince

1. It just goes against what we think we know, and what we know we feel
2. But I also know it is solidly biblical
 - a. God loves you – not your sins, but you
 - b. Jesus came into the world as a servant
 - c. As a servant he died for you that you might be saved
3. As his disciples, we're sent into the world with the mission that flows straight from the cross and the empty tomb
 - a. we must love the world – same world that rebels against God and often hurts us pretty badly
 - b. we follow Jesus, who was the servant of the world, and we do that by becoming servants to the same world he served
 - c. we preach and teach salvation in Jesus, not forcing the world into our mold, but by making a servant's appeal that the world might hear and respond

B. I suspect there is a lot that needs to be changed in your world

1. First, I would urge each of you to take a look at yourself
 - a. do you allow God to love you
 - b. do you allow Jesus to serve you
 - c. are you saved
2. If that's all true, then do you understand how you are to change your world?
 - a. love the world like God loves the world
 - b. serve the world like Jesus serves the world
 - c. save the world

C. Invitation