

THE DIFFERENCE

THE POWER OF JESUS IN YOUR LIFE



VINTAGE

THE DIFFERENCE

Have you ever wondered why we spend most of our time either worrying, talking, or thinking about stuff that simply doesn't matter? Far too often we wrap ourselves around things that are unimportant and temporary. Think about it. Over the past week, what has consumed your attention? What has been at the top of your priority list?

It should come as no surprise when questions begin to surface on whether or not we are actually making a difference with this short life of ours. Perhaps you and I are overlooking our deepest needs. Are we completely disregarding our souls? Maybe our souls are left with a deep longing. Empty...Starving...Dying.

Our souls are hungry for the supernatural – to see and experience God's divine activity. Jesus says that he has come to give us a life that is complete and full...pure satisfaction (John 10:10). If Christ has so much to give then why would we settle for anything else?

This is not about earning more from God but instead it's about wanting more of Him. Our souls are craving a deeper relationship.

Jesus stands, arms wide open, with an absolutely mind-blowing offer. He pleads with us to empty ourselves so He can fill us up. If you and I would dare to take such a deep step, then and only then, will we experience the true difference that Jesus can make in our lives.

THE 4 DIFFERENCES

INTIMACY WITH THE FATHER – *I want my life to be different with God.* I am committed to cultivating genuine intimacy with the Father each day by reading and meditating on His Word and responding in prayer, repentance, and obedience. **John 14:23**

CHRIST-LIKE RELATIONSHIPS – *I want my life to be different with others.* I am committed to being a source of truth and encouragement to those around me. I choose to share with everyone the love that I am receiving from my Father each and every day. **Mark 9:35**

SERVING WITH A PURPOSE – *I want my life to be different in serving.* I am committed to furthering the kingdom of God and being intentional about it by serving those around me with my God-given gifts & resources. **1 Peter 4:10**

SHARING MY GRACE STORY – *I want my life to be different in the way I relate to unbelievers.* I am committed to being open and intentional with the people that God brings in my life. I will share with them who Jesus is and how He has changed my story. **2 Corinthians 5:20**





DIFFERENCE 

**INTIMACY WITH
THE FATHER**

[WEEK 1]



INTIMACY WITH THE FATHER

Personal Declaration: I am committed to cultivating genuine intimacy with the Father each day by reading and meditating on His Word and responding in prayer, repentance, and obedience.

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12

This is the foundation piece that starts it all. In order to see a difference we have to experience genuine quality time with God. These moments will be some of the sweetest moments in our journey.

We do not simply read the Bible. In fact, as Hebrews indicates, the Bible reads us. It reveals who we are – how we think and act. Even further, it's God revealing Himself to us, who He is, what He's like, and what He deems important and valuable. This is His conversational piece and without it we have a large void in our lives. We can talk with God through prayer and God will talk with us through His word. We need to read and hear His words each and every single day. The Scriptures breathe life into our souls.

“Believe me, count as lost each day you have not used in loving God.” - Brother Lawrence

WHERE TO START

The Ten

Commit ten minutes every day to spend with Christ. He is always speaking but we are not always listening. We want to listen. We need to hear from Him! In the back of this booklet (p. 34) you will find a reading schedule. Each verse ends with a spot for you to write down a takeaway thought. Don't blow through this opportunity to meet with God. Let these verses resonate with you and allow his teaching to posture your heart.

How Do I Spend Time With God?

Find a place where you won't be disturbed – this is your “sanctuary”. Come with an expectant heart – you are meeting with the Creator of everything.

Take the first two minutes to prepare your heart and mind for this encounter with God. Relax. Think about who God really is. Clear your head of any distractions or stuff that's weighing on your conscience.

Confess sin.

Then take five minutes for reading the Bible. Remember, this is God actually speaking. Take some time to pause; listen to his voice. What does God want you to hear from Him?

Think about how you can apply these verses to your thoughts and actions today.

Now you have three minutes left to speak to God in prayer. Let this

be spontaneous. Unburden some things, pray for the people in your life, thank Him for what you learned, praise Him and share your innermost thoughts with Him.

“Prayer is as vast as God because He is behind it.”

– **Leonard Ravenhill**

ONE STEP FURTHER

Fasting is a spiritual discipline where an individual chooses to spend time with God in prayer and Scripture reading instead of engaging in a typical routine activity. A common practice is taking a meal off and spending that time with Christ instead. Fasting from food can remind us of the hunger we should have for our Father and how He first and foremost is our Provider. Plan a time in one of your days this week where you will skip one of your meals and spend that time with Christ instead. Journal this experience and share it with a member in your eGroup or your eGroup leader.

NOTES:

DIFFERENCE 

**CHRIST-LIKE
RELATIONSHIPS**

[WEEK 2]



CHRIST-LIKE RELATIONSHIPS

Personal Declaration: I am committed to being a source of truth and encouragement to those around me. I choose to share with everyone the love that I am receiving from my Father each and every day.

“This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.”

1 John 3:16

God calls us to be an encouragement to others. It's important that we share what God is doing in our lives so that our friends and family can be uplifted and encouraged. It's amazing how God can use our simple words to touch the lives of those around us.

The Bible describes those who are Christ-followers as being the children of God. All of humanity was created by God but those who identify themselves with Jesus are His kids. This means we're one huge family. As family we need to look out for one another, protect one another, and encourage and lift each other up. This is a team effort and we must do our best to make sure that no one is isolated or left behind. Life is filled with ups and downs, highs and lows. God's desire is to work in and through us on this journey.

“If you haven't poured your life into others, your life ends with a period.” – Chip Ingram

WHERE TO START

Commit to being an encouragement to the people around you in your daily life. You can do this by saying kind words (phone calls, emails, texts, etc.), through acts of service, and through prayers. Choose to take time everyday to focus on others.

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another— and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:23-25

ONE STEP FURTHER

Choose a person in your eGroup or in your daily life and pay close attention to them and their daily routine. Write them a letter that consists of at least five things that you admire about them or their walk with God. Avoid generalities; be specific and be real.

“How shall I feel at the judgment, if multitudes of missed opportunities pass before me in full review, and all my excuses prove to be disguises for my cowardice and pride?”

– Dr. W. E .Sangster

DIFFERENCE

3

**SERVING WITH
A PURPOSE**

[WEEK 3]



SERVING WITH A PURPOSE

Personal Declaration: I am committed to furthering the kingdom of God and being intentional about it by serving those around me with my God-given gifts & resources.

Far too often we overlook the incredible truth that God designed us for something that is much bigger than our own life. It's crazy to think that once we live out Difference 3 we are a part of a divine purpose.

You and I were created to serve. When we neglect to step out and serve those around us we fail to live the full life that God has intended for us. We are to fill the role of Christ by lovingly serving the people around us so that God may make his appeal to humanity through us.

1 Corinthians 12 tells us that in order for the body of Christ to be effective it must be healthy. A healthy body has all of its parts functioning as they should. There is an inherent ability given to each and every person to ensure that the body (and God's kingdom) may be built up. Every person is valuable and to think otherwise would be a big mistake.

"Has your relationship with God actually changed the way you live?"

– **Francis Chan**

WHERE TO START

In your eGroups take some time to discuss things your group could do to serve and bless others. After prayerfully considering some options, decide on one project, outing, or event you could all take part in. Be sure to include as many members in your group as you can. This means picking a time when everyone in the group can come.

Some things to keep in mind:

How will this point to Jesus?

Will this be a repeated or one time event?

What kind of preparatory or follow-up work do you need to do?

After you decide and work through the practical elements, pick a time, a date and a place and go after it for the fame of Jesus Christ!

ONE STEP FURTHER

Take some time to fill out a spiritual gifts assessment online. There is one at The Chapel's website. Once you have identified your spiritual gifts you should find a place to serve at The Chapel.

thechapel.com/discipleship/connection

thechapel.com/downloads/SpiritualGiftTest.pdf

Above all, don't complicate this more than you need to. Figure out what you're passionate about and then do something about it. Serve!

DIFFERENCE

4

**SHARING MY
GRACE STORY**

[WEEK 4 & 5]



SHARING GOD'S STORY OF GRACE

Personal Declaration: I am committed to being open and intentional with the people that God brings in my life. I will share with them who Jesus is and how He has changed my story.

Our grace story is where our messed up lives collide with God's big story. It's where disaster meets beauty. God has reached out to rescue us and now invites us to join Him on a global rescue mission.

There are important pieces that a person must consider when sharing Jesus with the world. First, one must be able to explain, in simple terms, the gospel. Second, we must be able to share with people how we have come to know and follow Christ.

"Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter."

- **Charles Spurgeon**

EXPLAINING THE GOSPEL

WEEK 4

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

- **Jesus**

The Scriptures proclaim to everyone the good news (gospel) of Jesus Christ and His purpose for coming to earth. There is no greater message to be heard than that which we call the gospel. The good

news of the gospel is that Jesus lived a life of perfect righteousness-of perfect obedience to God, not for His own well being but for His people. His sacrificial death on the cross was payment for our crimes and His resurrection conquered both sin and death. Jesus now holds the key to eternal life. He has done for us what we couldn't possibly do for ourselves. Jesus then implores us, as His followers, to go and share this with everyone.

Below are verses from the Bible that illuminate to us the gospel in a simple manner. Referencing these verses does two key things. It helps us fully understand God's plan and it shows that this is not something concocted by man, but comes from God Himself.

ALL HAVE SINNED Romans 3:23 & Romans 5:12

YOU CANNOT SAVE YOURSELF Ephesians 2:8-9 & Titus 3:5

JESUS IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE YOU

John 3:16 & John 14:6

REPENT Luke 13:3&5

RECEIVE CHRIST John 1:12

YOUR GUARANTEE 1 John 5:10-13

YOUR GROWTH 1 Peter 2:2

Marking Your Bible

To mark your Bible for soul winning you'll need your Bible, something to mark verses with, and a pen. Start at the first blank page in the front of your Bible and write down the first reference, Romans 3:23. Then look that reference up and write down the page number that it's found on. Now go to the first reference, Romans 3:23, and underline or mark the verse. Once you have done that, write the next reference on the top of that page (So you would write

Romans 5:12 on the top of the page that contains Romans 3:23). Continue this process until all the verses have been marked. When you are done, every verse below should be marked, and the next verse and its page number should be written on top of that page. This way you don't have to know the order of the books to be able to find the next reference, or if your mind goes blank you can keep the process going.

WHERE TO START

As a group, go over marking your Bible with one another. Follow that with going over and explaining each of the verses with one another so each member fully knows and understands what each verse is saying.

ONE STEP FURTHER

Far too often, we fail in both desire and execution when it comes to verse memorization. The Scriptures are filled to the brim with life, love, and truth but we know so little of them.

Here's your challenge.

Memorize all of the salvation verses that you marked in your Bible – know them word for word!

SHARING YOUR GRACE STORY

WEEK 5

“Therefore, if you are in Christ, you are a new creation; the old is gone, the new has come!” **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Our testimonies are a powerful tool to prove to an unbelieving world that the gospel is true, and that Jesus changes lives. Bottom line: you are simply sharing your story of how you came to know Jesus and how He is changing your life.

It is important to note that our personal testimony is not the gospel but instead testifies to the truth of the free salvation via the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are not trying to point people to us. We are trying to point people to Jesus through us.

The format of an effective testimony generally includes three parts:

1. What your life was like before you knew Jesus...
2. How you came to faith in Jesus...
3. How your life has changed as a result of having Christ...

Remember it's not a formula – it's your story!

Tips

- You should not emphasize the depth of your sin when you were a non-Christian in effort to relate to your hearers. It is a disaster when someone brags about all the bad stuff they've done in order to try to relate. Rather, you should point to your outward "goodness" (e.g. morality, church attendance, helping others) and your inward inadequacies.
- Don't be discouraged or intimidated by other testimonies you

may have heard involving dramatic conversions and radical lifestyle changes.

- Don't overuse Christian lingo. (convicted, converted, saved, etc.)
- Be real, genuine, and seek to testify to the greater testimony: Jesus Christ.
- Write out your testimony.
- Include a verse of Scripture in your testimony.

"We often sabotage our prayers for the lost by the life we live in front of them."

– **Dr. Deone Drake**

WHERE TO START

Take some time and write out your grace story. After you have completed it sit down with someone in your group and share with them your testimony.

Next, begin to pray and ask God who you can share your grace story and the gospel verses with.

Be prepared, an opportunity is right around the corner!

ONE STEP FURTHER

Commit to sharing your grace story, within the following week, with a close friend or a family member that you know is not a Christian. Tell them the difference Jesus has made in your life. After, share the experience with your eGroup.

TAKE AWAY THOUGHTS

Below is a reading schedule that will walk you through scripture related to what we have been learning during this five week series. After you read each verse, write down a takeaway thought. Reflecting on God's word is instrumental in developing a deeper understanding of who God is and who he calls us to be.

John 1:1-14 _____

Colossians 1:15-22 _____

John 20:24-31 _____

Mark 4:30-4 _____

Hebrews 1:1-9 _____

Luke 11:1-13 _____

Matthew 19:16-30 _____

Luke 8:1-15 _____

Mark 8:31-38 _____

Philippians 2:1-11 _____

Philippians 2:12-18 _____

Luke 6:43-49 _____

Mark 10:17-31 _____

Matthew 6:19-24 _____

John 15:1-8 _____

John 15:9-17 _____

Ephesians 3:14-21 _____

Matthew 18:21-35 _____

John 8:31-47 _____
Luke 15:11-32 _____
1 Peter 1:13-21 _____
2 Corinthians 3:18-4:11 _____
2 Thessalonians 1:3-12 _____
Luke 10:25-37 _____
Hebrews 9:11-15 _____
Titus 2:11-14 _____
John 8:1-11 _____
Matthew 8:1-13 _____
Jude 17-25 _____
Matthew 20:20-28 _____
Luke 6:17-26 _____
John 10:11-18 _____
Matthew 6:25-34 _____
Mark 7:5-15 _____
John 14:15-31 _____
Mark 9:42-50 _____
Revelation 19:11-21 _____
Revelation 22:12-21 _____
1 Peter 2:11-25 _____
Ephesians 5:1-20 _____
Matthew 28:16-20 _____

CLOSING THOUGHTS

AS YOU JOURNEYED THROUGH THIS BOOK WE HAD ONE PRAYER FOR YOU IN MIND – that by going through this journey you would experience more of Jesus in your life, and as a result, you would crave more; settling for nothing less than all of Him. Vintage is a community that exists to follow hard after God. We choose to turn from idols and all that is false and empty to embrace the one and only savior - Jesus. We want to serve him with all that we have. May your life be a constant embrace of the One who loves your soul.

*"I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause,
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause,
I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame,
I'd rather be true to His holy Name;
Than to be the king of a vast domain,
Or be held in sin's dread sway;
I'd rather have Jesus than anything,
This world affords today."*

– Rhea Miller



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