

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: Red Letter Living—Living the Words of Jesus

Week 5: Helping the Helpless

People can believe they believe something that they may not actually believe.

The truth is that beliefs that have no connection to reality, even if they're sincere, aren't beliefs at all; they're delusions.

Following Jesus is what happens when our lives align with what we say we believe about Him.

Is it possible to take steps of faith that actually lead to God changing lives? Mark 2:1-12. It was their faith, their expectation, their actions, and their willingness not to quit that triggered the miracle in the life of this man.

1. Raise your Expectations

What impresses God? Mark 2:5. Their faith that led to actions that triggered a miracle.

You will never raise people to higher levels until your faith raises your expectations.

2. Anticipate Obstacles

- They didn't become cynical.
- They didn't blame all the people in their way.
- They didn't tell their friend, "Well, it just must not be your day."
- They didn't let obstacles derail them.
- They didn't lose faith.
- Above all, they didn't give in to discouragement. They didn't give up!

Effective people don't stop when they run into obstacles.

The problem is this: **we assume that God is not working when we don't experience instant success.**

3. Increase Contact

There is no impact without contact. In our 21st century culture, contact is on the way out. Jesus connected with real people. Especially people He wasn't supposed to be connected to. **To have impact, you have to increase contact.**

4. Start Lifting People Up (Instead of Putting People Down)

July 16, 1945, New Mexico lit up. 21 days later, the Enola Gay dropped a bomb on Hiroshima called Little Boy. Robert Lewis, the copilot, wrote in his journal, “My God, what have we done?”

Fundamentally, everybody has one life to live. With that life, you are going to destroy people by putting them down or brighten people’s lives by lifting them up.

People never get lifted to a higher level by people who put them down. **The best use of your life is to let God use you to lift people up.**

5. Expect God to Work

God is more ready to work in the lives of people that we think He is.

Did it amaze people when Jesus healed the 4 men’s friend? Yes. Did it amaze the 4 friends?

No. It didn’t amaze them, because the 4 friends expected God to work.

3 Lessons Taught by Jesus in Matthew 9:35-38

Matthew 9:35

Lesson #1: **The Mission—Always Be Compelled to Share the Good News Everywhere**

Matthew 9:36-37a

Lesson #2: **The Motive—Always Maintain a Conviction of Compassion for the Lost**

Matthew 9:37b-38

Lesson #3: **The Method—Never Stop Praying for the Wounded, the Weary, and the Witness**

Big Idea: **Red Letter Living requires Prayer & Faith in God’s Purpose.**