

Power to Change the World



Do you ever feel annoyed as you pick up your post, only to find that it consists entirely of holiday adverts, invitations to make use of this or that pizza delivery service and similar information that you don't want? Almost daily I feel irritated by this sort of thing. However, my attention was caught the other day by one leaflet that came through my door with these words on it: "The power to change the world".

There is a great deal that needs changing in this world. Our news is full of wars in various parts of the earth, refugees fleeing and taking enormous risks to find a safe haven, global warming, the harmful side effects of various kinds of spraying on our crops, our failure to deal with plastic waste properly. How much damage are we storing up for ourselves in failing to face up to these things? They are large problems and becoming ever more serious in a world that is growing in population. What, if anything, can be done about it?

Some efforts are being made. However welcome, these are only scratching the surface of the problem. We can see many examples of men and women who are struggling to

improve conditions of life in different parts of the world. Unfortunately, although their efforts may be valiant, well intentioned, and even self-sacrificing, they are counterbalanced by the hate, greed and corruption that hurts so much of the world.

All through history it has been the same. Some people work hard to make the world a better place. Many things have been invented to make life much easier, but they haven't made the world a better place.



What is the basic problem? Mankind is imperfect and fragmented. It is impossible to get total agreement between all nations. There is no one thing that humankind can do to make the world perfect, and we do not have the collective will to take such steps.

The One Person Who Can

However, there are good grounds for expecting this can be achieved. Of the millions of people in the whole history of mankind, there has been one man who offers us real hope. He was brought up as an ordinary craftsman, until he left home and family and lived a wandering, often uncomfortable life



with a small band of faithful followers. Amazingly, within three and a half years he made such an impression that it remains to this day. He was the one man who never did or said anything wrong. That man is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He knew exactly what was wrong with men and women. He understood us. He knew what it was to be uncomfortable, to be without a home, to be hungry and in need of food. He knew what it was like to be tempted, as we are sometimes, to do something mean or wrong. However, Jesus never for a moment gave in to temptation.

In the three and a half years he spent preaching, he did more than any other person to influence the world. With ordinary people, he was popular because he healed their sicknesses and gave them good advice. He was hated by the authorities because he spoke out against their corruption and deceit.

The rulers sought and schemed to bring about his downfall. By manipulation of the crowd they managed to sway public opinion. Their opportunity came after Jesus rode into Jerusalem like a king. The crowd expected Jesus to use his power there and then to release them from Roman domination and set up the Kingdom of Israel. When he didn't do that, the disappointment made it relatively easy for his

opponents to sway the crowd so that in three days they were shouting for him to be crucified. The authorities gave way to the crowd and Jesus was put to death. But his story didn't end there: miraculously, after three days, God raised him from the dead.

The Day He Will Change it

For 40 days after that, Jesus spent time with his closest disciples, telling them that from then on, they were to go into all the world and share his teaching with all who would listen. When he finally left them, there were angels present who spoke to his disciples saying:

Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw him go into heaven (Acts 1:11).

There are many things that were foretold in the Bible years before they actually happened. For example, the birth of the Saviour and prophet was recorded by Moses some 1400 years before it happened:

The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear (Deuteronomy 18:15).

The Old Testament also foretold the place and circumstances of Jesus' birth, as well as his life, death and resurrection.

There is every reason to believe Jesus will return. We have been clearly told to expect it, and there will be a time of great change. For Jesus will have the power to change the world.



This may sound difficult but the New Testament is full of good advice to help us live like the Lord Jesus. The choice is ours.

The Bible gives a very clear picture of what will happen when Jesus returns to the earth. The world will be ruled over by Jesus himself, the only perfect man who ever lived. Those who have made him their role model will be given a place in helping

him. The work will be to establish a world where God will be honoured and His laws obeyed. It will be a world where there will be peace instead of war, and justice instead of lawlessness.

Before that can come about there must be a dramatic change; all opposition to God will have to be eradicated. The world will be populated by people who want to please God, who respect Him and His laws. We can be there.

We cannot change the world, but we can change ourselves.

Power to Change Now

We have the opportunity now to change – not to change the world, but to change ourselves. We all have the free will to make choices about how we live and what we believe. We can refuse to believe the Bible and turn instead to the philosophy of the world. We can take the short-term opportunities which the world has to offer, spending our time trying to have a good time now, but ignoring the future.

On the other hand, we can spend our time preparing ourselves for the return of the Lord Jesus, making sure we are ready for him. The way to do that is to believe his message and live according to the example he left us. It was summed up in this discussion:

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, testing him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:35–39).

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