

Be the One who Makes the Difference
(By Rev. Anthony Menzel, July 25, 2021)

You may think that your faithfulness doesn't make much of a difference, but God sees everything. What you even in secret makes a big difference to the Lord Jesus.

Matthew 10:24-26

24 “A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. **25** It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house [g]Beelzebub, how much more *will they call* those of his household! **26** Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

There are people who think that if no one else sees what they are doing, God doesn't see it either. But you can't fool the Lord Jesus.

Psalms 139:7-12

7

Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?

8

If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there;
If I make my bed in [c]hell, behold, You *are there*.

9

If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

10

Even there Your hand shall lead me,
And Your right hand shall hold me.

11

If I say, “Surely the darkness shall [d]fall on me,”
Even the night shall be light about me;

12

Indeed, the darkness [e]shall not hide from You,
But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light *are* both alike *to You*.

Noah made the difference for his family, and by extension, he made the difference for all of humankind.

Genesis 6:5-9, 11-14, 17-22

5 Then [c]the Lord saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent[d] of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil [e]continually. **6** And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. **7** So the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” **8** But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Noah Pleases God

9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, [f]perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. **10** And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. **11** The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. **12** So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

The Ark Prepared

13 And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. **14** Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make [g]rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. **15** And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred [h]cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. **16** You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it *with* lower, second, and third *decks*. **17** And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which *is* the breath of life; everything that *is* on the earth shall die. **18** But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. **19** And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every *sort* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female. **20** Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every *kind* will come to you to keep *them* alive. **21** And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them.” **22** Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

Noah even made the difference for the terrestrial animals. He was a blessing to the whole world, to all of God’s creation.

We are all descendants not only of Adam but more specifically of Noah...

What are characteristics that we see in Noah that contributed to him making a positive difference?

1. He was perfect:

We can't be perfect in terms of never making mistakes.

1 John 1:9-10

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

However, we can keep ourselves clean spiritually by walking in repentance.

The other way in which we can be perfect is by loving everyone.

Matthew 5:44-48

44 [o]But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, **45** that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. **46** For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **47** And if you greet your [p]brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the [q]tax collectors do so? **48** Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

What does love mean?

It means helping people as the Holy Spirit leads:

1 John 3:16-18

16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. **17** But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

It means never wishing anyone harm; instead we pray for those who are involved in wickedness so that they will change.

Proverbs 17:5

He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker;
He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

1. He walked with God: He had a relationship with God...

God wants us to be close to Him, more than anything else...

Revelation 21:6-8

6 And He said to me, "It[c] is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. **7** He who overcomes [d]shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. **8** But the cowardly, [e]unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

I believe that God makes the consequences for disobedience really bad to show us that choosing the right path is much better than choosing the wrong path...

The consequences for walking with Him are simply amazing...

Psalms 16:11

You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

1. He was obedient to God...

1 Samuel 15:22-23

22 So Samuel said:

"Has the Lord *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.

23

For rebellion *is as* the sin of [d]witchcraft,
And stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,

He also has rejected you from *being* king.”

Walking with God is often about making daily decisions to do good things on a relatively small scale...

Romans 12:18

18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

We all have a cross, but most of our crosses are not the size of Mother Teresa’s...

Luke 9:23

23 Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [b]daily, and follow Me.

For many of us, at least part of that cross includes being a good parent, a good son or daughter, a good church participant, a good employee, and a good neighbor...

The importance of family and local ministry are supported by passages like

1 Timothy 5:4,8

4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is [a]good and acceptable before God. **5** Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. **6** But she who lives in [b]pleasure is dead while she lives. **7** And these things command, that they may be blameless. **8** But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

So we have to make sure we are doing the little things that the Lord Jesus is calling us to do.

If we don’t, that can really damage our relationship with Christ.

Song of Solomon 2:15

Catch us the foxes,
The little foxes that spoil the vines,
For our vines *have* tender grapes.

The importance of obedience often brings me back to

Matthew 7:21-23

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **22** Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ **23** And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’