

Faith Inside Out Series

4. Make a Difference

September 13-14, 2008

1. We are looking at the book of First Peter through the lens of a faith that we live inside out: If we have faith inside, it better affect our outsides too! One of the ways we do that is through serving others to make a difference in the world around us. Begin your time with prayer asking God what he wants to say to you as you study his word today. How does he want you to be different because of what he will tell you? 1 Peter 4:8-11 is our base text for this week. What stands out to you as you read it? Write down one thing that you think as you read it: maybe a part of a verse that jumps out at you, maybe a situation it reminds you of, or maybe an action you have done or need to do. Ask God how he wants to speak to you through what you wrote down.
2. As Pastor Rick Warren said, the secret to living a purpose-driven life is that “it’s not about you”! Our life needs to stretch beyond our own wants and desires to serve other people. Turn to Philippians 1:29-2:18. In the first verses (through 2:4) we hear Peter challenging us to live for each other. Pick out one of the things Peter tells believers to do, and ask yourself, “What does that look like for me?” Think of something you can do for someone this week in response to this challenge, and commit to doing that this week.

The next 7 verses (2:5-11) give us the example of Jesus. What did it mean for Jesus to “take the very nature of a servant?” How far was Jesus humbled? Are you willing to be humbled that far for him or for others? Look at the end result of Christ’s humiliation for the sake of others (2:9-11).

Read the last 7 verses of this passage: 2:12-18. What is the first word in verse 12? In most translations it is something along the lines of “therefore.” That means that what comes next comes *because of* what was just said. What is the “therefore” here? What are we supposed to do? And then, why are we supposed to do it? Christianity is not a religion of things we’re “supposed to” do. It’s not about filling a long checklist of being “well-behaved.” It is a life lived in response to the amazing things God has done for us. We live to serve others because Jesus—God himself—served us. *Because* Jesus loves you and others, and *because* he is exalted (v.9), and *because* he suffered a humiliating death for us (v.8), *therefore* we live a life of service to him and to others (v.12-13). This will stand out in the world (v.15) because we will hold out the word of life to them (v.16).

3. Jesus saw the world differently than those around him (and than us!). Read Mark 10:32-45. What was Jesus’ response to James’ and John’s request? Now read John 13:1-20, which happens the night before Jesus’ death. Compare and contrast these two scenes: What is similar? What is different? How does Jesus see the world in a way that shapes his actions? How does your view of those around you need to change in order to be more like Jesus’?