

Merry CHRISTmas to you and yours! Jesus, is the reason for this season, this season of giving. He is the perfect gift, given by God!

Depending on how old you are, the world today is not the same world as it was when you or I were a youth, not even the same as a decade ago, or even four years ago. In many ways, I believe our world, and country in particular is going in the wrong direction, on many fronts, to include economics, morals, values and most importantly, on a spiritual front. God's Word, The Bible, however, gives us hope that there are things that can be done to change the world and make an impact in the environment in which we live. It is commonly said in the secular world today that if you want change, then be the change. I submit, that without first changing our hearts, and that change only comes about when we humble ourselves and accept God's perfect Gift, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit indwells us, then can real change occur. In other words, we must first be changed, from the inside out, before we can be the change. I am reminded of Paul's words in his second letter to the Corinthians: **"Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** (2 Corinthians 5:17)

So what can we do to change the world? The Bible gives us several examples and guidance on what we can do. Most of these examples involve action, so the following action verbs are emphasized. Lighten, (or be a light), love, preach, teach, encourage, and others. For sake of time, we will limit the focus to these.

Jesus in his famous *Sermon on the Mount* (**Matthew 5:14-16**) tell us that we are to be the "light of the world." Look around you, it is fairly dark out there, and in many instances, getting darker. Jesus goes on to tell us in **Matthe w 5:16**

to **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father in heaven."**

That light is Christ in us, and our light is to shine to bring glory to God. We have a world today that wants to take God out of everything. Friends, if God is gone, there is nothing left. So we do, more than ever, need to be that light.

In addition to being a light, we need to love, and love unconditionally, which is how God loves us. John records Jesus' words in (**John 13:34-35**): **"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye love one another."**

How has God loved us? Unconditionally!! He does not put conditions on his love. Why are we to love? He commands us to, for one. But keeping with the message, verse 35 tells us **"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples: if ye have love one to another."** Love is one way we can change the world!

We have mentioned to be a light and to love. We are also to preach! Who are we to preach to and why? (**Mark 16:15-20**) gives that answer. We are to go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature. What is the purpose? In verse 16, Jesus records

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**“he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”**

Luke, in

**(Luke 4:18)**

, also records that we are to preach. “

**We are to preach the gospel (**

**Good News)**

**to the poor, ..... and preach deliverance to the captives.”**

We are to be that voice that can help change the world.

Light, Love, Preach. I also said Teach. Many of you reading this are parents, grand-parents, and even great-grandparents. As such, you are leaders in your family. You have spent your life teaching your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. You have many years of stored experience which has given you wisdom. A problem today, is not so much with the teaching but with those who listen. Do not be discouraged, continue to teach. **(Matthew 28:20)** tells us that **“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen”**

The last way that I am presenting is through encouragement. This is just as important as the others. All of us can be an encouragement to each other. We can by what we say, for sure. Even more strongly, by what we do! James reminds us that we can have faith, but faith without works is dead. These are not works that save us, because there was only one work that could accomplish that, and that was done over 2000 years ago, when the good Lord died on the cross and shed his blood for our sins. A work of encouragement goes far. My dad use to pick up the newspaper for someone and hand it to them when he went to go visit them. As a youth, I often wondered why he did that. Now, being older, I have a better understanding and that was one way my dad, in action, could be an encouragement to someone. Jesus tells us, whatever you do to the least of these, you have done also to me. That action of doing involves encouragement.

Lastly, so who overcomes the world? **(1 John 5:4,5)** gives us that answer. **“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”**

As Christian leaders we need to take action to make a change we need to first be changed by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Once we are changed, we must be a light to the world, we must love, preach the Gospel, teach, and encourage both verbally and in deed. The military has always had as one of its principles to “praise in public, and when needed, reprimand in private.” A kind word in public about someone goes a long way.

If you have not yet accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, won't you do so today? Paul says today is the day of Salvation, now is the accepted time. Ask Jesus for that courage, you have not because you ask not.

## Christians In Leadership -- What The Bible Says That You Can Do To Change To World

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Born in Toledo, Ohio in 1964. Lynn Petersen graduated in 1986 from the United States Naval Academy and commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy. I Married the dream and love of my life, Alena, in 1987. Became the daddy of two great children in 1988 and in 1990. In April of 1990, my wife's uncle, a "Completed Jew" shared the Gospel of Christ with me, and I trusted in the blood atoning work of Jesus, and asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins and save me. In July 1991, Alena and I were baptized. Fast forward to 2012, having served as a church deacon, Sunday School teacher, and congregational song leader, we started ALL four HIM, a Southern Gospel Quartet. Lynn sings bass for the quartet and also plays the clarinet. It is a joy to sing unto the Lord to glorify HIM, and to encourage others with the Gospel of Christ.

My desire is to reach as many men, women, boys, and girls with the Gospel of Christ in message and in music so that they, like I have, can experience the rich joy and peace that passes all worldly understanding; that joy that is only provided by faith in Christ.

My life verse is Philippians 4:13. *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* Prov 3:5,6, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalms 41, Ephesians 2:8,9 and John 14:6, among others, are all verses that strengthen and encourage me.