



Jesus: The Difference Maker

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Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.
Psalm 124:8 (CSB)



Across our country, our county, our church family, our world there are people who are broken, bruised, bound, bereaved, bitter, bewildered, and burdened. It is not unusual to encounter people who are destitute, damaged, dismayed, distressed, down, defeated, disillusioned, discouraged, or disheartened.

Many people thought the person they married would meet their every need. They believed that a wife or a husband would bring wholeness and fulfillment, that they would fill the empty places. But, as wonderful as that spouse might be, there are some places in our lives they're unable to fill. Perhaps some have said, "If I can just get that promotion or salary increase, then I will be fulfilled." But when they receive it, fulfillment still eludes them.

If any of these terms or situations describes you, there's some Good News. In fact, there is Good News for all people who find themselves in such dire conditions: Jesus is the Difference Maker. Things can be different for the desolate and the disillusioned, the broken and battered, the calloused and cold. No matter what your circumstance may be, Jesus is the Difference Maker.

There are four things that Jesus is, brings and offers which distinguish and qualify Him as the Difference Maker in your life.

Jesus is the Difference Maker because **He is the Light**. In John 9:5, Jesus is identified as the Light. Every human is born into darkness and stands in need of this Light, this Life-Light (John 1:4). Only Jesus and the light that He brings can conquer darkness. Let's take a look at how He does this.

Jesus *dispels the prevalence of darkness* in our world. Darkness has reigned over the earth and all forms of life since the tragic fall in the Garden of Eden. Left to ourselves, we do not have the power to overcome or escape it. But, through Jesus Christ, we have become children of light and bearers of light throughout the world.

Jesus *displaces the power of darkness* in our world. Because darkness is everywhere, it has an impact and influence on how we feel. It impacts our emotions, our comfort, our confidence. When we have to go somewhere in the dark, we don't approach it the same as when we are in the light. Varying degrees of insecurity, uncertainty, instability, and discomfort accompany us along the way. Jesus has proven authority to displace the power that the prince of darkness exercises in this world. Where He dwells, darkness departs.

Jesus *discloses the presence of darkness*. He uses light to reveal darkness within us that we did not even realize was there -- dark desires, dark deeds, and dark passions. Because we are all born children of darkness, there is darkness in everyone. As Jesus exposes this, He helps us see ourselves more clearly. He is the Difference Maker.

Jesus is the Difference Maker because **He is the Lamb** (John 1:36; 1 Peter 1:19). Before Jesus came, many lambs, doves, bulls, and goats were slain as sacrificial offerings to God. But these sacrifices provided only temporary atonement for our sins. When Jesus comes into our lives, He deals with things permanently. He deals with our *confinement to sin*. No matter what we do, we seem unable to free ourselves from our deceptive thoughts and desires. But when Jesus died on the cross, He dealt with this confinement. Through one Lamb's precious blood, we were liberated from the shackles of sin that held us captive. Jesus is the Difference Maker, because He alone can deal with our bondage to sin.

Without Christ, not only are we confined to sin, we are condemned by it (Romans 6:23a). Jesus, however, deals with our *condemnation because of sin*. Once the Lamb's blood covers us, the condemnation is removed. Although we were destined to receive the wrath of God for our sins, Jesus received it instead (2 Corinthians 5:21). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus..." (Romans 8:1).

Jesus deals with the other *consequences of sin*. Because of sin, we were separated and disconnected from God. But through Jesus, God reconciled us back to Himself. Sin breaks our fellowship, not our relationship, with God. It creates a distance between us and the Father. But because of the blood of Jesus, we can confess, repent and be restored to full fellowship once again.

Jesus is the Difference Maker because **He is the Life**. There are many people who are searching for life. Some are searching at the casino. They may think they are searching for riches, but what they really want is life. Adulterers think they are seeking satisfaction, but they are really seeking life. People who rob others steal because they are trying to find life. John 10:10 records Jesus as saying that He came so that we may have life abundantly. He is the Life (John 11:25-26).

As the Life, Jesus makes the difference in how we deal with death. Jesus handled death so we do not have to fear it. We know that believers who transition are eternally with Christ. Yes, we know that Jesus *disarmed death*. He allowed death to grip Him; but death could not hold Him. God raised Him from the dead, freeing Him from its vice, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him (Acts 2:24). Jesus demonstrated that He is greater than death. Hallelujah, He lives today.

By disarming death, Jesus *discredited death*. No longer, friends, do we have to fear death. We have this assurance: "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). Furthermore, death does not come to get the believer. Jesus promises His followers that He will come for us (John 14:3). Death can only take the body; the spirit is safe and secure with Jesus.

Jesus *defeats death*. Let's get this in our heads: death is a defeated foe! However, it still wants to keep us running, ducking and dodging. And if we are always ducking from death, we may never go serve Christ where He sends us to serve. The truth is, if I am worried about dying in His service, I might just turn down His assignment. We do not need to be afraid of death any longer, because Jesus is the Difference Maker.

Finally, Jesus is the Difference Maker because **He is Lord**. He is not a self-proclaimed Lord. Because He died on Calvary in full obedience to His Father, He has been given a name above every other name. At this name, JESUS, one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord (Phil 2:10).

Lordship speaks to Jesus' authority. He can do what He wants to do. While He has the ability to do anything, Lordship speaks to Jesus' sovereignty, His Kingship. We have a sovereign King in Jesus. Not only does Jesus have the power to do what He wants, He has the right to do so. If we have the Lord on our side, He can cause disease to dry up. He can cause people in discord to come together. It's His Lordship which *determines our destiny*. We know where we will spend eternity, not because we defined it, but because Jesus as Lord defined it. He did not need approval from anyone else, because He is Lord. Even as He hung on the cross, Jesus had the sovereignty to determine the destiny of the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43).

Jesus *designs our destiny*. Even when I go left when I should go right, it does not change my destiny. He can take my missteps and somehow still get me to where He wants me to be. Jesus can work it out (Romans 8:28).

Jesus *defends my destiny*. When I stand before the Lord on that day, I will have to defend the charges that the devil throws at me. But after the devil rests his case, I will have another Defender, not a public defender, but a private Counselor, my Advocate, my King. He is the Son of the Judge. He speaks no words on my behalf. Instead, He shows the Judge the scars on His hands and feet, and the Judge declares, "Case dismissed. Charges Dropped. Payment paid."

Jesus makes the difference. And He wants to make a difference in our lives today. As the Light Lamb, Life and Lord, Jesus is the Difference Maker for all of us.