

Study Series: Difference Makers

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Lesson Title: “What the World Needs” (pp. 67-79)

Session 6

January 9, 2022

**The main point of this lesson is:** The world needs difference makers with spiritually healthy hearts.

**Focus on this goal:** To help adults acknowledge that God desires to use them as difference makers in the world

**Key Bible Passages:** Isaiah 1:2-18; Matthew 5:13-16

Before the Session

**Provide** index cards for each participant. (Step 7)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

**Invite** the group to identify recent natural disasters. **Ask:** *What were your initial thoughts after those catastrophes?*

**Remark:** *Many wonder, “What can I do? Can I really make a difference?” What might some conclude are the answers to those questions and why?*

**Relate** from the introduction (p. 66) the affirmation that Jesus’ church can make a difference. **Issue** the author’s challenge to commit to the Difference Maker Declaration (p. 66). **Request** adults follow along as you read that declaration as a corporate prayer for this study (change “I” to “We”).

Step 2. Healthy Hearts, Part 1

**Ask:** *What kind of labels do you look for on the food you purchase?* [**OPTION:** Display food products that display the American Heart Association certified Heart-Healthy label.] *Why do you look for these labels?* **Determine** evidences of physically unhealthy hearts.

**Discuss** Day One, activity 1 (p. 67). **Determine** evidences of spiritually sick hearts.

**Lecture** briefly on Israel’s refusal to trust God in Isaiah’s day (pp. 68-69).

**Discuss** Day One, activity 2 (p. 68).

**Encourage** adults to underline the last paragraph of Day One (p. 69) as you read it aloud.

Step 3. Healthy Hearts, Part 2

Isaiah identified what it would take for Israel to be labeled “Heart-Healthy.” **Invite** a volunteer to read Isaiah 1:16. Briefly **explain** God’s holiness means He is serious about both sin and love.

**Ask** a volunteer to read Isaiah 1:5-9. **Examine** how this passage shows God’s seriousness about sin and love. **Ask** why we must be serious about sin.

**Note** difference makers don’t just stop doing bad, they start doing good. **Read** Isaiah 1:17. **Discuss** Day Two, activity 2 (p. 70). **Ask:** *Why might we want to check religious boxes rather than love our neighbors?*

**Read** the Day Two pull quote (p. 70) and **explore** what that looks like on a practical basis.

Step 4. Healthy Hearts, Part 3

**Ask:** *Why might the simple commands to stop doing evil and start doing good cause us to feel exhausted or frustrated?* **Read** Isaiah 1:18. Declare God is offering an exchange.

**Brainstorm** exchanges we might make to have physically healthy hearts (Sample: water for soda, vegetables for chips, fruit for cookies.) **Discuss** Day Three, activity 1 (p. 71). **Declare** Jesus’ cross makes that great exchange possible.

**Invite** a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 5:21. **Request** adults look at 2 Corinthians 5:17 and state what occurs when we experience that “double exchange.”

**Read** the Day Three pull quote (p. 72) and 2 Corinthians 6:1-2. **Urge** adults who want Jesus to give them a new heart to talk with you after the session.

Step 5. What Does the World Need?, Part 1

**Invite** the group to complete the phrase of the old song, “What the world needs now is…” (love, sweet love). **Ask:** *Would you agree with that? Why or why not?* **Note** the author says what the world really needs is difference makers.

**Ask:** *According to the world: what is the “good life”? What do lives that make a difference look like?* **Request** adults consult Matthew 5:3-11 and state what blessed lives that can make a difference look like according to Jesus.

**Discuss** Day Four, activity 1 (p. 74), adding to the discussion with remarks from Day Four.

**Request** a volunteer read the Day Four pull quote (p. 74). **Ask:** *What’s so important about living together on the same page? What does it look like, and not look like, for believers to be on the same page?* **Urge** adults to privately consider Day Four, activity 2 (p. 75).

Step 6. What Does the World Need?, Part 2

**Invite** volunteers to share responses to Day Five, activity 1 (p. 76).

**Encourage** adults to underline the second paragraph of Day Five (p. 76, beginning, “First things first”) as you **read** it aloud. State: *Our response to that may be, “How?”*

**Invite** a volunteer to read the paragraph (p. 76) beginning, “For us to be difference makers ….” **Ask:** *What are practical implications of that truth for us?* Emphasize the importance of knowing and living God’s Word.

**Ask:** *What’s amazing to you about the truth that God makes a difference as He works through His people? What does that truth require of each of us?*

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

**Request** adults consider Day Five, activity 2 (p. 77). **Explain** one way we can live out our identity as difference makers is to consistently pray the Difference Maker Declaration.

**Distribute** index cards. **Urge** adults to write the italicized prayer from page 66 on the card and place it somewhere they can see and pray it daily. **Close** in prayer.

After the Session

**Follow up** with any adults who indicated a desire to learn more about receiving Jesus as Lord and Savior.

