

Volume 4, Day 31: Making a Point or Making a Difference

For as long as I can remember, I have participated in Bible Studies. The vast majority of them were mostly sparring with others about who knew the most or best things. They were information packing meetings intended to make us better Christians. But they were sorely lacking in the main thing. The primary message of the Bible is **what to do** in relationship and **how to be in relationship**. It was the **how to** that eluded me for years.

For over 40 years after becoming a Christian at age 14, I did Bible Studies in this manner. Yet in reflection of the overall effect my faith had on others, I clearly saw that I had made hundreds of points, but almost no significant difference. It was almost as though I had become a stick of petrified wood. Putrefied might be a better way to describe it. And my humiliation stimulated me to seek better ways to live and better interpret Scripture.

I went back to the Old Testament which was packed with rules for living and the consequences of breaking those rules. It also contained myriad stories that reinforced the value in the rules and compliance with them. And certainly without rules, civilized communities could not exist. But is community meaningful with obedience to rules alone?

I purposed to engage with others in Relationship Studies based Biblical truth. As the content of the studies shifted to affection for one another rather than comparing notes, so did the affection. We become more caring toward each other. And we began to notice that the good things we did for each other made a significant difference in how we loved each other. Jesus taught us to do for others because we love them, not out of obligation or duty.

It is love that makes the difference in our eternal destiny and in life. People know when they are the object of a project (charity) rather than the object of true affection. "Love Like Jesus Loves" and you will most certainly make a significant difference.