What Really Makes a Difference?

In today's world *feelings* often reign supreme. That is *not* a healthy, mature approach to life, but it is a modern-day problem. God warned us through Jeremiah's pen that, "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9, NASB). Yet the heart is absolutely necessary for God's plan. When Jeremiah 17:9 is compared to Romans 6:17 we see a more complete picture, "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to *that* form of teaching to which you were entrusted…."

We should understand that the heart (seat of the emotions) is for *dedication* and the brain (seat of logic) is for *education*. When a person tries to decide doctrine (*education*) with the heart we see the deceitful part of the equation. The heart will most often confuse doctrine with whatever pleases itself. Likewise, if a person attempts heart-filled dedication with only logic, he or she becomes like Spock on Star Trek – logical, but cold. We need both the heart and the head, both properly working as God intended, to become spiritually mature, happy adults.

The things that make a genuine, positive difference in life happen when we process God's word with the logic He designed into us, then become dedicated "from the heart" to the things He has gave to us in His word, (Romans 6;17).

A prime example of something in God's word that really makes a difference is Matthew 7:12, the so-called "golden rule." To do unto others as I would have them do unto me, is usually not an act born of the emotions. In fact, it is commonly the opposite of our natural emotions. The natural, emotional response to being verbally attacked is to attack in return. But God's word teaches us to treat the verbal attacker with kindness - as we want to be treated (usually the opposite of our emotions). We could add Proverbs 15:1, "A gentle answer turns away wrath." We can consider Matthew 5:44, "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who **persecute** you."

Perhaps the one verse that would make the *most* difference in daily life on planet earth would be Matthew 7:12**, "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets,"** (NASB). Jesus is about to finish the Sermon on the Mount and gives us this precious truth that would change the world! Literally applied, it would mean no more theft, no more violence, no more verbal attacks, etc.

Give some thought this week to things that would *really make a difference* in the daily life of you and your network of family and friends. My studied guess is that most of your answers would be found in the Sermon on the Mount – perhaps in chapter 7 verse 12!

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