

Making a Difference

#0063

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 27, 1971

It is a solemn responsibility, friends, to take the time of this many people. And we stop to think that we're all going to meet one another at God's judgment bar, and someone can be on God's side when that hour strikes because of this meeting tonight, and someone can lose his soul because of this meeting tonight. Part of it depends on the message that I give. Part of it depends upon your reaction to it. There's a great battle on over every soul, and I have been much impressed this week that we're right in the thick of the great controversy. I'm of good cheer because I know that if we're with God, we're on the winning side. But somewhere in the study tonight there's going to be something for *you*. Watch for it.

I want to study some very practical things with you tonight. I'm not going to read my text to start with, but I'm going to read a text before the text. That's Isaiah 57:14. You who have watched these great earthmovers preparing the way for the super-highway which now brings the traffic right through our place here, we can appreciate more of the meaning of this verse:

"Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way" Isaiah 57:14.

There's been a lot of casting up. Filling valleys. Mountains had to be torn down to fill those valleys and make a plain, straight path. But now notice there's something else:

"Take up the stumbling block out of the way of My people"
Isaiah 57:14.

With God's help, that is what I want to do tonight. I want to get some stumbling blocks out of the way. The subject I'm going to talk with you tonight I've never spoken about before. My mind has been greatly impressed with these things that I'm going to share with you tonight, and I know someone is going to get a blessing.

Is there any stumbling block in your road? Maybe we can move it tonight, with God's help. Or perchance, have you been putting a stumbling block in someone else's road? Maybe you didn't know it. God says, "Take up the stumbling block out of the way of My people." That's the preliminary text. Now we're going to have our text. It's over in the little book of Jude:

"And of some have compassion, making a difference:
And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;
hating even the garment spotted by the flesh"
Jude 22–23.

Making a difference. That is my subject. Every now and then I hear expressions that make me conscious of the fact that many people have the idea that everyone ought to be treated the same. Maybe you have that idea. If you do, you can make a stumbling block, or you might stumble over something that someone else did or said. That idea is widespread and deep-seated—that everyone ought to be treated the same. So you will hear people say, “I wonder why they did this with this person, but they don't do it with that one. What's the matter?”

Even the president of the United States comes in for a bit of criticism now and then. And if he does, it isn't strange if people who don't know as much as he should sometimes be criticized. Did you ever criticize an institution, a church, a parent, a teacher because they didn't treat those under them just alike? Our text says, “Some have compassion, making a difference.”

How would you feel about a doctor who treated all his patients exactly the same? Wouldn't that be something? Why you say, “That would be foolishness.” Yes, it would be. And most people wouldn't go near a doctor whose reputation was that regardless of any examination or diagnosis, maybe even without it, he'd said to all his patients, “Take this bottle home and take a teaspoon full before each meal three times a day.” You would say that fellow's a quack. I would agree with you. But isn't it strange, friends, that we are quick to recognize how foolish that would be, and yet somehow we think that in certain areas of human life and experience, that people should be treated alike; that students should all be treated alike on certain matters, or that church members should all be treated alike on certain points.

You say, “Brother Frazee, don't you think we ought to be fair?”

Yes, that's right. God makes a difference. We will introduce another verse on making a difference.

“And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes” Luke 12:47–48.

That isn't fair, is it? Two men did the same thing. One got many stripes and the other got few stripes. The truth of the matter is that's the only way to be fair. You at once see that what we've studied so far is true—being fair and treating everybody the same is two entirely different things. Notice the rest of the verse:

“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more” Luke 12:48.

Before—don't miss this—I can know how much ought to be required of a certain man, I have to know how much has been committed to him. Is that right?

Before you can tell how the director of the institute, or the supervisor at the sanitarium, or the father and mother in the home before you can tell whether they've

treated everyone fairly, you have to be able to see all that's in the minds of all those people. That machine hasn't been invented yet that will enable you to take an X-ray of the ten to thirteen billion brain cells in every skull. God has reserved that to Himself. So it is written:

“Judge not, that ye be not judged” Matthew 7:1.

This is such a common and subtle thing that as the Lord has rolled the burden on my heart about this, I'm constrained to believe that it's a real stumbling block in the lives of many people. There are people who are *stumbling* over the fact that they haven't been treated like other people have been treated. They think they should, and haven't been, so they feel that they haven't been treated justly. Sometimes people carry that to the point where they feel that *God* hasn't dealt fairly with them. I have talked with people who have lost a loved one, perhaps a child, and they say, “I don't see why God did that to me. I don't think it's fair. He lets other people have this and this and this, and look what He took away from me.” That's a real stumbling block, isn't it? And if you judge someone in responsibility and say, “I don't think they treat everyone alike.” They'd better *not* treat everyone alike, my friend. That's the *sure* way not to be fair.

There is another way this stumbling block asserts itself. If a supervisor, a parent, a teacher, or a church officer attempts the impossible task of satisfying everybody, that everybody is being treated alike, then really he's got a stumbling block so big he'll do more than stumble. He'll be stopped. He can't get over it. He can't get around it. No friends, thank God, we are not given that impossible task. So let's dismiss it and put it all aside, for our text says,

“And of some have compassion, making a difference;
And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;
hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” Jude 22–23.

No better example of this principle can we bring than the life and work of our Lord Jesus Himself. He selected 12 men. Did He treat them all alike? No. Peter was rebuked more often than any of the other disciples. The man who got the least rebukes in the three and a half years was Judas.

“Oh, I don't think that was fair.”

No. You might not think it was fair, but it was the Lord that was doing it. And for three and a half years, He rebuked Peter publicly again and again, and never once until the last week He was on earth did He rebuke Judas publicly. He didn't treat them alike, did He? It wasn't because He had it in for Peter. It wasn't because Judas was His close personal friend, and that He was partial to him. Was it? No. Why did He treat Peter one way and Judas another? He knew the *needs* of each soul. Do you see? And before you start judging some parent, before you start condemning some church officer, before you start gossiping about some institutional officer because he doesn't treat everyone alike, stop and think of this lesson. Get the stumbling block out of the road. And if you have dared to drop such words of criticism, go around and pick them up if you can find the feathers you have scattered, because our text says, “And of some have compassion, making a difference.” Who

said that? The Bible said it, and all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine.

What a great world of burden would roll off of some people's shoulders if they could just be convinced of the fact that they don't have to judge people anymore on this subject. They can leave them with God. It is not your business, my well-meaning friend, to measure people, and *you* are not to decide whether they're treating everyone alike or not. That's not your job. "Some have compassion, making a difference."

The dean of the law school at Harvard University is credited with this statement (there's something about it I like): "My job is to break rules. Any clerk can keep them."

You say, "That's awful."

No, not if you understand what he's talking about. He wasn't talking about matters of right and wrong. He wasn't talking about crimes. But an institution like that has to have policies and rules. Every educational institution has to. But *somewhere* along the line, there has to be in administration a bit of human sympathy and understanding to deal with exceptional cases. That's what that dean at the law school at Harvard was talking about.

But the critic would look at him and say, "There you are. You are the dean of the law school at Harvard, but you don't treat all the students alike. Here John Jones came in, and you let him get away with this or that, and it isn't according to the book."

"Indeed," he said, "That's my job." He considers himself the human interpreter to the students of those policies which are laid down by the faculty and board of trustees. And if they don't like the way he does it, they can turn him out and get another one, can't they? That's it. But every institution and every organization has to have that power of adjustment. Why? Jesus says, "And of some have compassion, making a difference."

Somebody says, "Brother Frazee, don't you think people take advantage of that?"

Sure. They've been doing it for 6,000 years. Sure, they'll take advantage of it. The mercy of God either leads men to repentance, or confirms them in impenitence. Don't forget it, friends. That same love and compassion is like the rain and the sunshine, which cause the crops of grain to mature, but the weeds grow under the same sunshine and rain. And wherever you have an administration that carries out these principles we are studying tonight, you're going to find people taking advantage of them. That's no argument against it. I repeat, "The mercy of God has been leading people to repentance or confirming them in impenitence again and again."

Some of you students have been here for some time, and some of you have just come today. If you see—don't miss this—a fellow student make a mistake, and then watch to see what *they* (that means the administration) are going to do about it,

and if they are not as strict about it as you think they ought to be, you conclude that it doesn't make very much difference, and you can go ahead and break the rules too, then you've missed the whole point. The reason for you to be obedient to God, and to cooperate with those in authority is *not* the way someone else is treated, either less strict or more strict than you might imagine. Your loyalty and your love must be a personal matter between you and God, the home, the parents, the school, the institution, and the church with which you are connected. This is so important.

Here are some more reasons why those who deal with human souls must make a difference:

“Every association of life calls for the exercise of self-control, forbearance, and sympathy. We differ so widely in disposition, habits, education, that our ways of looking at things vary. We judge differently. Our understanding of truth, our ideas in regard to the conduct of life, are not in all respects the same. There are not two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one are not the trials of another. The duties that one finds light, are to another most difficult and perplexing”
Ministry of Healing, page 483.

[Elder Frazee calls for two boys to come up front.] Here are two little fellows. Now suppose we say that these fellows should be treated just alike, that that's the only fair thing to do. Suppose we've got a lot of things to move here. I imagine I could give one of them a hundred-pound sack, and he could carry it up the hill to the sanitarium. Now to be fair, this other fellow ought to do the same. Don't you all agree with that? Huh? You don't?

But you say, “Brother Frazee, what about adults?”

I will tell you something. There are people who differ in their mental and spiritual capacities as much as the difference in the physical capacities of these two little fellows. That's right. May I read this again (this is a marvelous paragraph):

“We differ so widely in disposition, habits, education, that our ways of looking at things vary. We judge differently. Our understanding of truth, our ideas in regard to the conduct of life, are not in all respects the same. There are not two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one are not the trials of another. The duties that one finds light, are to another most difficult and perplexing” *Ibid.*

I introduced a young man to you a few weeks ago who is now engaged in leading out in the colporteur ministry in a conference to the north of us. I told you that when Danny Miller came here from California as a student several years ago, he was careful to see to it that he wouldn't be asked to lead in prayer. Don't you think that *every* student at Wildwood ought to be *required* to be able to do that, and if they *won't* do that, then they shouldn't be allowed to come? There are some people who,

if they were asked to come up here and lead in prayer, would be just as easy and natural for them as breathing. But there are other people who, if they thought they were going to ask to lead in prayer here tonight, they wouldn't be here tonight. Am I correct? We'll not ask for a show of hands on either one of those.

But that's just one illustration, and there are 10,000 other examples. And you mean to tell me then that administration [...inaudible; tape skips] or school or church or institution are going to be saddled with the job of treating all those people just alike? The more you look at it, the more absurd it is, isn't it? And yet millions nurse that idea.

Now, I'm going to bring an illustration that will really interest someone. In Volume 4, page 552, this is talking about money and property. Did you ever hear it advocated that everybody ought to have the same amount of this world's goods? And if things were only fair, they would? It's because people are unfair that some people are rich and others poor? Something wrong with the political system or the economic system.

"It was not the purpose of God that poverty should ever leave the world. The ranks of society were never to be equalized, for the diversity of condition which characterizes our race is one of the means by which God has designed to prove and develop character. Many have urged with great enthusiasm that all men should have an equal share in the temporal blessings of God"
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4, page 552.

You know, that sounds good—that has a good ring to it. Doesn't it? And if I'd get up and preach that to you, I could get at least half of you to agree with me, but it wouldn't make it true. Someone has well said that a lie which is *all* a lie may be met and fought outright. But a lie that is *half* a truth is a harder thing to fight. It sounds good that all men should have an equal share in the temporal blessings of God.

The rest of the sentence says:

"But that was not the purpose of the Creator... It would be the greatest misfortune that has ever befallen mankind if all were to be placed upon an equality in worldly possessions"
Ibid.

Now look at Deuteronomy 8:18 a minute:

"But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth" Deuteronomy 8:18.

Well, God didn't give me power to get very much. No, but praise His name, He gave me power to do something else that I'd rather do than to get all the money in the world. And I'm not dissatisfied at all. But I'm thankful that God does give power to some men to get wealth. And then they come along and let us have some

of that money to do God's work with. That's all right with me; isn't it with you? Or does it worry you?

"Thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is
He that giveth thee power to get wealth" Deuteronomy 8:18.

God has given me the joy of winning souls, the joy of training students, the joy of helping prepare the harvest for the coming of the Lord. I'd rather have that than money. But in this work, God has given some people the power to get wealth. Right here tonight, I can think of men and women whose ability to handle things in a business way, personally and institutionally, have great respect for and great appreciation of. And because someone else can handle a hundred times more money than I do, it's nothing for me to worry about. *God* is in the business of helping people. And remember we read there, He hasn't done it all the same.

In Matthew 25, Jesus makes it very plain, when the master of the house left to be gone to a far country, he called his servants. He gave one man five talents, another two, and another one. The poor fellow who only had one talent foolishly dealt with it. I suppose if you had asked him while the master was gone, he might have said, "It isn't fair. I wasn't treated like the other servants, so I'm not going to do much with mine. I will just give it back to the boss when he gets here."

Let God distribute His gifts as He will. And *don't* insist that either God or man treat everyone alike, because it's impossible. It's not only impossible, it's worse than that. It isn't *good*.

"It would be the greatest misfortune that has ever
befallen mankind" *Testimonies for the Church*,
Volume 4, page 552.

Perhaps an illustration in nature would help. Do you like rivers? Do you like waterfalls? Do you like the little brooks? Do you know what makes possible all these? It's simply this: There is a difference in elevation of different places on the earth. And if you could get enough bulldozers together and make everything equal over this earth, you would have what the world started with—a globe covered with water from pole to pole. That's all you'd have. The streams all flow from high to low. Will you repeat that with me: The streams all flow from high to low.

This is one of the great reasons that God has made people differ in their ability to get money? God intends that people who have the ability to get more shall be imparting to those who don't have so much.

Someone here is saying, "I hope my rich friend hears that and imparts some to me."

Well, I hope so too, if that's God's will. But when it all gets done, remember that if it could all be equalized, it would be just like the planet all covered with water. When the land is just the same mile after mile, what happens to the streams? They slow down, and you have swamps. Nice place to live, isn't it? The mosquitos think so.

I'm glad for the mountains and the hills and the valleys and the plains. That there's all a *difference*, a *difference*, a *difference*. This is what makes human life interesting.

Somebody says, "If everybody could sing like Ben Glanzer, who would go to hear him sing?"

We differ. And you mean everybody's got to be treated alike? It never happens anyway. But why whip some administrator because he can't do it? Why criticize some parent because he doesn't treat his children all alike. They're not *all* alike.

Elder Luther Warren used to use an illustration as to why you find some things in the *Testimonies* that *seem* to lead in one direction, and you look over in another book and you'll find something in another direction. He said, "Suppose we were visiting in a home, and after breakfast, we see the father out by the barn. One of the boys comes out, and we hear the father say, "John, don't push the horses too much today. We've got plenty of time. We'll get the plowing done. Take it easy with the horses." So John harnesses his team and goes off to the field. Presently James comes sauntering out from the breakfast table, and father says, "James, get busy and get the horses harnessed and push them all day long. We've got to get the plowing done."

What would you think? Well, if you knew the boys, you might understand. But the father isn't treating them alike, and that isn't fair! Or is it? Ah my friends, before you criticize God, or anyone that God uses, because they don't talk to everyone alike, remember there are no two people alike to treat alike. So it is written, "And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire."

This gets down to even little things like eating food. That can really be a problem. You'll remember that one of the professors at Cornell University, Doctor McKay, who was not a Seventh-day Adventist, recommended the book, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, very highly and marveled that much of it was written a hundred years ago is right up to date nutritionally. I read:

"There are two extremes, both of which we should avoid. May the Lord help every one connected with our medical institutions not to advocate a meager supply of food... Some require well-prepared vegetables to meet their peculiar needs. Others have not been able to use vegetables without suffering the consequence"
Counsels on Diet and Foods, page 286.

What does "require" mean? "Require" means they need it; they have to have it. Do you mean that some people have to have something that other people can't even take? That's what this says. Well, how in the world are you ever going to have them live together? If we learn these lessons and get these stumbling blocks out of the road, we can get along fine. But if we have the slightest ghost of an idea that fairness means that everybody has to conform to the same pattern, then we're

attempting the impossible. And mark you this: Just as it is part of God's plan that the rich man shall help the poor man, so it is in these peculiar things about diet and a hundred other subjects.

God does not allow people who have different ideas and different stomachs and different livers to get together so they can bother one another. No. God allows it so they can live *without* bothering one another. And if we'll learn our lesson, the Loud Cry is ahead. I want to learn it. Don't you?

It's interesting how many people are willing to put their shoulder to the wheel and push in a church or an institution or in any teamwork, provided they think that everyone else is working as hard as they are. But if they see other people who aren't putting out, they think, "Well, after all, why should I?" There are people who are willing to sleep in the rain or under a leaky tent, provided everybody else has a leaky tent. But if the general has a palace, it's awfully hard for the soldiers to be out in the rain.

Notice how this simplifies the whole thing. I read:

"We must work harmoniously. It is through harmonious action that our work is to be carried forward, and some will have a very hard time. Some will have an easier time" *Selected Messages*, Book 2, page 204.

Well, that isn't fair, is it? It isn't equal. I think that everybody should have just the same kind of bed, and just the same conveniences, and just the same remuneration and work just the same number of hours, and be sure that the work they have is just as hard as everybody else and no harder. When you find a place like that, let me know. There is no such place in Heaven or hell or this world. There's no such place. It only exists in people's imagination. Notice:

"It is through harmonious action that our work is to be carried forward, and some will have a very hard time. Some will have an easier time. But all these things will have to be taken just as they come, and the workers must remember what Jesus gave in coming to our world" *Ibid*.

Did Jesus get treated just like everybody else when He came down here? When little Jesus was in that home in Nazareth, did the older brothers and sisters, the stepbrothers and sisters, the sons of Joseph, did they say? "Dear little Jesus is so nice we'll see to it that He's looked after and taken care of." Did they? In *The Desire of Ages*, the chapters "As a Child" and "Days of Conflict," we are told that His work was made unnecessarily severe because He was so willing and uncomplaining. Why did His Heavenly Father allow that? We are told in Hebrews 5 that He learned obedience by the things that He suffered.

And if you occasionally have to bear an extra load, thank God for it. You'll understand Jesus better. Never criticize anybody in Heaven or earth because your load is heavier than your brothers. Maybe you just think it is. Maybe it really is. But if so, you're having an added privilege in fellowship with Christ.

The best place to learn this best is at the cross. There the King of Heaven suffered the just for the unjust, and took *all* that we deserve, and paid the price of our redemption. Looking at that, can we ever complain?

We are treated better than was our Lord. And no matter how much injustice or unfairness, or inequality we see in the world about us, or even in the church, can never approach what happened at Calvary. When the One who deserved no pain took all our pain, when the One who had never sinned was treated as a sinner, when the Creator laid down His life that we might be redeemed, *this* is the cure for worry over all these things that we've touched tonight.

"Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up
the stumbling block out of the way of My people"
Isaiah 57:14.

Shall we take it out, friends?

I wonder if there is someone here tonight that believes God gave this message for you, and you're thankful for it, and by God's grace, you're going to do something about it? Thank God. The arrow has found its mark.

And remember:

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have
fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ
His Son cleanseth us from all sin" 1 John 1:7.

Whatever the failures and mistakes of the past, we may, through the grace of Christ, rise above them. Aren't you glad?

I am so glad, friend, that every failure I've made can be covered, and thank God they are covered under the precious blood of Christ.

[Testimony service]

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