

# MAUPIN MESSAGE

## How Do We Make a Difference?

Can you and I make a difference for Christ? Do you have to be a pastor or a missionary to make a difference for Christ? What is it we do that makes a difference for Christ? What is a Christ follower “supposed” to do?

If you’ve ever wrestled with any of those questions, welcome, you and I have that “club membership” in common. I recently had the opportunity to review my history in Christ with a good friend who is recuperating from a terrible health issue. Last week, I celebrated a significant birthday and as I age, I am blessed to realize that I’ve had the privilege to see a couple of friends finish well, no bitterness even as terminal cancer took them away from their loved ones here. And as my friend recovers from a sudden, healthy-to-clinically-dead-to-healthy-with-significant-physical-consequences condition, his fervor for sharing Jesus with all those he encounters is unshaken. It’s truly remarkable that he’s all about sharing Christ with people in hospitals, rehab centers, and with his in-home care givers. My friend inspires me and makes me search for my own boldness.

According to Scripture, EVERY believer gains the perfecting presence and power of the Holy Spirit upon believing and receiving God’s loving gift of salvation through surrendering and submitting to Jesus as Lord and Savior. According to Scripture, Jesus, before ascending into Heaven to be seated at the right hand of God, said that the Holy Spirit would be sent to dwell in all who believe. Therefore, our vocation doesn’t dictate who among us is filled with the Holy Spirit and thereby inspired by the Spirit to share Christ with those we meet. For me, it is living out what I call Cracked Pot Theology: I’m filled with the spirit but I’m not a polished vase set on a pedestal. I’m more of a cracked pot, stumbling along and letting the Holy Spirit spill out as I go. It’s really not about me—and I submit it’s also not about you—it’s about Jesus. Jesus changes lives, not me. However, God uses even me to deliver His message of salvation—and He’ll use you too—as I make myself available to be used by Him. Your faithful prayers and financial partnership fuel my vocational outreach through Fellowship of Christian Athletes. YOU are reaching coaches and athletes through me leading coaches and athletes to a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.

This Spring, I challenged athletes to memorize 1 Corinthians 10:13 and as of this writing nearly a dozen have shared with me that verse from memory. The central part of that verse is “God is faithful.” I was 33 years old when I was challenged to memorize that verse and at that time, I missed that central essential. For several years I erroneously made that verse about me, my survival, my readiness, my equipping. What a difference it makes knowing that that verse describes God’s actions, His equipping, His faithfulness, His work through me and amidst and in spite of my circumstances. Now, consider how God has placed me in the lives of coaches and 13- to 18-year old student athletes who can grow in Christ regardless of their own circumstances by building on the foundational truth of the faithfulness of God. It is a joy to serve Christ with you and I am grateful for you and to be a missionary with FCA. You are a part of every changed life, every strengthened witness, every renewed/restored/recommitted coach and athlete. Thank you for standing with me and for making it possible to serve Christ with you through FCA. Susie and I praise God for you in our lives.

