

## Lesson 6

Alfred Nobel (1833–1896) is best known for the Nobel Peace Prize. Less well known is the fact that Alfred Nobel also invented dynamite. As well as a chemist, engineer and innovator, he was a weapons' manufacturer. In 1888, Alfred's brother Ludvig died. A French newspaper erroneously published Alfred's obituary. It condemned him for his invention of dynamite, stating: 'The merchant of death is dead... Dr Alfred Nobel, who became rich by finding ways to kill more people faster than ever before, died yesterday.' Alfred Nobel was devastated by the foretaste of how he would be remembered. His last will and testament set aside the bulk of his estate to establish the Nobel prizes. He gave the equivalent of \$250 million to fund such prizes. Alfred Nobel had the rare opportunity to evaluate his life near its end and live long enough to change that assessment.

**A. DIFFERENCE IS DISTINCTION...** This world is desperately searching for their distinction... what sets them apart... and everyone has it... but when viewed through the world's perspective we can miss our distinction, what makes us different. We're spiritual beings recreated in the image of Christ with a higher purpose. If we tend to evaluate our difference by the things we see around us, we miss the potential we have in Christ.

*2 Corinthians 5:16-17 TPT*

*So then, from now on, we have a new perspective that refuses to evaluate people {and ourselves} merely by outward appearances. For that's how we once viewed the Anointed One, but no longer do we see him {or ourselves} with limited human insight. Now, if anyone is enfolded into Christ, he has become an entirely new person. All that is related to the old order has vanished. Behold, everything is fresh and new.*

**Paul was looking for a political, military Messiah who would liberate National Israel from Roman power.... HE MISSED IT!**

**This was his epiphany and the heart of his transformation...it turned him into another man...not a keeper of laws in Israel but a liberator of souls and nations for Christ!**

## **B. WHY WE MISS OPPORTUNITIES**

### **1. PAIN**

Many people think that their hurts and their disappointments have disqualified them from ever being able to make a difference. *Pain has a way of impacting the*

*heart and soul so that our world begins to shrink and so does our potential. The harder my heart gets, the smaller my world becomes.*

## **YOUR PAIN IS BUILDING YOUR PLATFORM...**

*Psalm 105:17-19 TPT*

*But he had already sent a man ahead of his people to Egypt; it was Joseph, who was sold as a slave. <sup>18</sup> His feet were bruised by strong shackles and his soul was held by iron. <sup>19</sup> God's promise to Joseph purged his character until it was time for his dreams to come true.*

It's the struggle that is laying the foundation for the difference you will make. Joseph had to be prepped to save the world and his family... why it included rejection, betrayal and false imprisonment, we do not know. But God used it!

**Is there some pain keeping you out of the game? Hurry up and get healed, God needs you and so does the church!**

*2 Corinthians 1:8-9 TPT*

*<sup>8</sup> Brothers and sisters, you need to know about the severe trials we experienced while we were in western Turkey. All of the hardships we passed through crushed us beyond our ability to endure, and we were so completely overwhelmed that we were about to give up entirely. <sup>9</sup> It felt like we had a death sentence written upon our hearts, and we still feel it to this day. It has taught us to lose all faith in ourselves and to place all of our trust in the God who raises the dead.*

## **2. PROBLEMS**

Your calling is going to crush you. If you're called to mend the broken-hearted, you're going to wrestle with broken heartedness. If you're called to prophesy, you're going to struggle with your mouth. If you're called to lay hands on people, you're going to fight spiritual viruses. If you are called to teach and preach the truths of the gospel, you will be sifted for the wisdom that anoints your message. If you're called to empower, your self-esteem will be attacked, and your success will be hard fought. You're calling to make a difference in this world will come with thorns, cups and siftings that are necessary for your mantle to be authentic, humble and powerful. This crushing is not easy because your assignment is not easy. Your oil is not cheap!

~ The Apostolic Encourager

Never underestimate the difference your problems can make...learn from them, hear from God and move on and find a way to pour what you're learning into others. The odds are there are people attached to you and they are probably facing

the same things or have gone through them. Everyone can benefit from a problem that's been given to Jesus and conquered.

## **YOUR PROBLEMS ARE REVEALING YOUR POTENTIAL...**

### **Big problems = Big Potential!**

*Hebrews 12:1-2 TPT*

*As for us, we have all of these great witnesses who encircle us like clouds. So we must let go of every wound that has pierced us and the sin we so easily fall into. Then we will be able to run life's marathon race with passion and determination, for the path has been already marked out before us. <sup>2</sup> We look away from the natural realm and we fasten our gaze onto Jesus who birthed faith within us and who leads us forward into faith's perfection. His example is this: Because his heart was focused on the joy of knowing that you would be his, he endured the agony of the cross and conquered its humiliation, and now sits exalted at the right hand of the throne of God!*

### **3. PAST**

#### **Everyone has a past:**

*Philippians 3:13 TPT*

*<sup>13</sup> I don't depend on my own strength to accomplish this;<sup>[13]</sup> however I do have one compelling focus: I forget all of the past as I fasten my heart to the future instead.*

## **YOUR PAST POSITIONS YOU TO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE...**

THIS IS NO CLICHÉ OR JOKE...ITS HOW GOD BUILDS PEOPLE AND THE KINGDOM...HE USES YOUR PAIN, YOUR PROBLEMS AND YOUR PAST!

### **C. HOW DO I MAKE A DIFFERENCE?**

#### **1. Identify your spiritual gifts, passion and interests.**

What gets your fired up? What stirs an internal response/reaction besides the news, bad drivers, and general stupidity? What makes you weep? Causes you to pause and pray even for 2 seconds? What do you really care about and how has

God wired you? What areas are you personally struggling with in spite of your deep love for Christ, and faithfulness to a relationship with God?

**2. Connect with a group, team or ministry that addresses # 1.**

- Lets' look at the list of opportunities / Create something if you like...

**3. Remain faithful no matter what. (If you're unsure, commit for a season)**

*Galatians 6:9 TPT*

*And don't allow yourselves to be weary or disheartened in planting good seeds, for the season of reaping the wonderful harvest you've planted is coming!*

Even when you are hurting, struggling, failing and hell is raging against you...God is building something inside of you...it's your difference...your distinction...it will produce fruit (results) if you don't give up.

*1 Corinthians 1:26-30 TPT*

*Brothers and sisters, consider who you were when God called you to salvation. Not many of you were wise scholars by human standards, nor were many of you in positions of power. Not many of you were considered the elite when you answered God's call. <sup>27</sup> But God chose those whom the world considers foolish to shame those who think they are wise, and God chose the puny and powerless to shame the high and mighty. <sup>28</sup> He chose the lowly, the laughable in the world's eyes—nobodies—so that he would shame the somebodies. For he chose what is regarded as insignificant in order to supersede what is regarded as prominent, <sup>29</sup> so that there would be no place for prideful boasting in God's presence. <sup>30</sup> For it is not from man that we draw our life but from God as we are being joined to Jesus, the Anointed One. And now he is our God-given wisdom, our virtue, our holiness, and our redemption.*