

Being The Change

by Kimberly Fletcher



It is hard to see all the darkness flooding our world today and not become overwhelmed by it. In just five short months our entire world has turned upside down with COVID-19, riots across the country, and anything related to God being attacked, defamed, defaced. How did we get here? As I have pondered that question over the last few months, something Victor Hugo once said kept filling my mind, "Even the darkest night will end, and the sun will rise."

As I have pondered his words, I have come to understand how this simple sentiment has the power to literally turn the world around—and it begins with us!

The time of the Judges was one of the darkest periods in Biblical history. It has been referred to as "the Dark Ages of Israel." People lived by their own interpretation of right and wrong. The younger generation forsook their faith and history. Anarchy ensued, absolute truths of right and wrong were done away and everyone justified their own behavior. Every evil flooded the nation and it truly was the darkest of times. But then, we turn the page to the Book of Ruth, who we learn lived in the time of the Judges. What an amazing story of light during a dark time.

As I thought more about being the light, it re-

mind me of an experience I had a few years ago. My husband, Derek, has always wanted to see the Grand Canyon but I was never interested. After all, it is just a big crack in a desert. You look at it, leave and check it off your bucket list. I just did not see the big deal.

We passed by the Canyon many times on the way back and forth from the west to east coast to visit family. We even stayed in Arizona a couple of times with my husband's sister. For 25 years we passed by that crack in the desert and though my husband always said he wanted to see it, we never stopped because I was not interested. Then, a few years ago my son moved to Phoenix and we decided to visit him. As we were planning our trip, my husband brought up the Grand Canyon yet again. It obviously meant a lot to him and after 25 years, I was tired of hearing about it. "Okay," I said, "Let's go see the crack in the desert."

We arrived at the Grand Canyon just before sunset and my husband insisted we drive straight to the Canyon before checking into the hotel. I was a bit irritated with the delay, after the long drive. But the kids were excited about it, and Derek really wanted to go. So, I put on my happy face and decided to make the best of it. Derek sprinted past me as we got out of the car and the kids followed right behind him. "Hon-

estly," I thought, rolling my eyes at their excitement, "it's just a crack in the desert."

We walked along a treed path until we came to an opening with an overlook and there as the path widened, I had my first look at the wonder of the Grand Canyon. A lump formed in my throat as I realized just how foolish and short-sighted, I had been. It was absolutely, beautiful, beyond description. I was simply awestruck. As we walked back through the path, I noticed a sign that said, "Sunrise 6:10." I reached for my husband's hand and motioned toward the sign. "I want to come back," I said. He just smiled.

The next morning, I was the one sprinting past everyone, not wanting to miss a thing. I was insistent we arrive at 6:00am so I could capture every moment. It was a bit harder navigating the path in the dark, but it was worth it. My husband and I sat arm in arm in anticipation of the first ray of sun over the horizon. My heart leaped as the dark sky flowed to pink and there before my eyes, I saw the sun, in all its splendor, rise above the majestic grandeur of the Grand Canyon. Tears filled my eyes. I was absolutely speechless. How do you describe such a breathtaking scene in words?

An immense feeling of joy and profound gratitude welled up inside me. There before me, in that moment in time, I was witness to the majesty of God's hand! I will never forget that moment. It changed me.

As I stood watching that beautiful scene no problem seemed too big, no burden too heavy. I found myself counting every blessing and I wanted to be more and do more to show gratitude for each one. Then a quote by Thomas Tapper came to my mind. There will now and again come to us a scene, a remembrance, so full of beauty and pleasure that we shall feel

rich in the possession of it.

And in that moment, that is exactly how I felt.

Our world has changed dramatically in a short time, but for a moment, let's look back and remember what our world was like before COVID-19. There's an excellent video on YouTube titled "**The Great Realization.**" It depicts, in powerful imagery, the change that swept across the world in 2020. The change was the realization that we had become too busy, too disconnected, too self-absorbed; then posing the question, when the doors open, do we want to go back to the same?

We are surrounded by beauty. The majesty of God's hand is all around us. For 25 years I ignored it, dismissed it as unimportant. For 25 years I missed being in the presence of ultimate beauty, denied by my own short sightedness, the feeling of a peace I cannot explain. That day at the Grand Canyon changed me. It made me realize the importance of beauty and light in our lives. It helped me understand that no matter how dark things become, I can be the light where I am. I can be the change I want to see in the world. It begins with me.

We are bombarded daily by the impact of media and culture on our lives. Advanced technology has rendered us incapable of escaping it. We can seek retreat in our churches, homes, or private schools, but the world is always there, influencing our children and intruding upon our lives. Escaping the world is not the answer. We can't escape from the world, nor does God want us to, but we can learn how to successfully navigate through it and lift others along the way.

So, what do we do? How can we be the light in the darkness? How can we create the change?

First, we need to start with us. We can decide to give into the darkness posting nasty comments or derogatory statements on social media just like everyone else, OR we can use it as a medium to promote the good, true, and beautiful. We can choose to be angry and resentful, OR we can choose to be kind. We can become argumentative when people attack us, OR we can choose to be silent and pray for them. We can be the frown, or we can be the smile, the choke hold, or a warm hug. It may not happen right away, but over time, with consistent love, even the angriest people will be drawn to the light.

Second, we need to create havens of love and light in our homes—places where our children, friends and neighbors will feel peace and want to gather.

The environment we create in our homes is the very thing that has the power to change the world—in one generation. The books we read,

music we play, the pictures on our walls, are the very things that create that environment. When our children see beauty, they will gravitate to it. When they see pictures of Jesus with children, they will come to know Him and know that He loves them. When they hear patriotic music, they will become patriots. When they see artwork depicting courage, grace, love, and beauty, they will want to emulate it. We are creating the future of America right now, in our homes, today. If we do not like what we see in the world, it is we who have the power to change it!

In these dark times, knowing they would be dark times, God has raised up a mighty generation of mothers to be the light where we are and create the change HE wants to see in the world. He is counting on us.

In the time of the Judges there was Ruth. Today, there is you!



Hallelujah

by Lindsey Stirling

Video: Lindsey Stirling Playing in the Subway
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VzprYCxPBQ>

Watch the following video, and answer the discussion questions



Discussion Questions

- ★ *How do our busy lives distract us from the beauty around us? Why is beauty important at all?*
- ★ *What can you do to be the change, "capture the sunshine," or bring beauty into your own home and family? How do you use social media to spread good messages and positivity?*
- ★ *What stood out to you in the Lindsey Stirling video? Why do you think people responded differently in the subway station than they did when she was on stage?*
- ★ *How do we let others' view of beauty influence ours? How can we let God's view of beauty become ours? Is there a time that you know of that someone else in the group has been an example of capturing the sunshine or spreading beauty?*
- ★ *What is your favorite example of beauty in nature? Don't forget that God has made us just as beautiful as the exquisite earth we live on!*