

DO SOMETHING NOW ACTION IDEAS

Based on *Outlive Your Life* by Max Lucado

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These are difficult days in our world's history. Billions of people are poor, and millions go hungry or thirsty every day. Disease claims thousands of lives daily. But you and I have been given an opportunity to make a big difference. As a preacher, I see how local faith communities can make a difference daily. After I preached at Oak Hills Church on the actions of the early church (as described in Acts) we've seen hearts stirred to compassionate living. We've seen ministries start, neighborhoods change and water wells dug. But that is just the beginning for us.

What if we did what the early church did? What if we rocked the world with hope? Infiltrated all corners with God's love and life? We are created by a great God to do great works. He invites us to outlive our lives, not just in heaven, but here on earth. Let's live our lives in such a way that the world will be glad we did.

I invite you to ponder how you can make a difference. Where is God showing you there is a great need? Go in that direction with a willingness to do whatever it takes to help. God will bless your service and your love. And remember, when you love those in need, you are loving Jesus.

You can read below a collection of ideas for "doing something now." Perhaps one of these will jump off the page for you, igniting a passion for others. None of us can help everyone. But all of us can help someone.

Suggestions for compassionate action:

- Volunteer at a local prison.
- Visit patients in a local AIDS hospice or hospital.
- Read books or share music with the elderly at a nursing home.
- Take a fast from drinking anything but water for a month, and donate the money saved to help bring clean water to those who need wells.
- Look around your neighborhood and ask if single parents, handicapped, or elderly people need help with house or yard projects.
- Educate yourself about sex trafficking around the world and possibly even in your own city. Get involved with an organization that works to bring an end to this tragedy, such as International Justice Mission.
- Throw a special dinner party at your house for people who usually eat alone.
- Be a big brother or big sister to a child who doesn't have two parents.
- Organize a clothes or food drive to aid local ministries.
- Pack "snack packs" to hand out to homeless people you see on the street.
- Take a working mission trip outside of the country.
- Write letters of support to soldiers stationed away from their families.
- Learn about child slavery and work with service organizations (such as World Vision, Every Child Ministries, International Justice Mission) to fight this evil.
- Secretly pay for someone's dinner bill at a restaurant.
- Identify a group of people you have previously disliked or held bias against, then make an effort to move toward them in love.
- Help to paint or fix-up worn down fences and houses in low-income parts of your town.
- Help organize a community garden to aid those living on a fixed income.
- Build teams to help raise funds and awareness for specific charities through walks, runs and other fundraisers (such as Hoops of Hope, 40-Hour Famine, Soles4Souls).
- Schedule prayer marathons at your church to pray about specific needs in your community.

Let me know what you do to make a difference. You can tell your story at www.MaxLucado.com.

P.S. I have personally set a goal of helping World Vision secure sponsorship for 25,000 children who are living in poverty-stricken communities. World Vision has proven track record of showing the love of Jesus to the world's poorest people -- providing them with the physical and spiritual resources that children and families need to survive. You can find out more at www.MaxLucado.com/worldvision/

Outlive Your Life: You Were Made to Make A Difference by Max Lucado, Coming September 2010
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