



The Make It Happen Moment ® Serving Life

A faith-based leadership education message provided by
The Make It Happen Learning Institute
Reaching People, Unleashing The Extraordinary! ®

“Life is so much fuller and more significant when we spend it engaging others around us!” – Dino Rizzo

Years ago when I first started serving in the prison ministry of our church, I attended a bible study at the Rayburn Correctional Institute in Bogalusa, Louisiana. At the end of the study, several inmates gave personal testimonies about their life and their relationship with the Lord. I will never forget the story that one of the men shared that day. He started by saying he had been in prison for more than 14 years of a 20-year sentence and that he spent his first several years depressed, angry, bitter, and miserable. All he did each day was murmur and complain about his 20-year sentence as he constantly told everyone how unfair it was and that he didn't do anything to deserve it. He said that his misery continued day in and day out until one day when a more tenured fellow inmate had the courage to confront him with the simple truth in love.

His friend said, “George, I’ve been listening and watching you be miserable in this prison every day since you came here. If you have any hope at all to make it, there are a couple of things you need to do. The first thing is that you need to accept responsibility for your actions and admit that you did do something deserving of your judgment. And the second thing you need to do is stop focusing on yourself and complaining about your 20-year sentence because there are other guys who have it much worse...30 years, 50 years, and even life. If you can do these two things George, then the time will stop doing you and you will start doing the time.”

After George shared what his fellow inmate told him, he said that he took the advice to heart with the help of the Lord and his whole life changed. He concluded by saying that

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doing time in prison is not easy by any means and that being on the down side of a sentence term [14 yrs of 20] is so much better than being on the upside; however, regardless of how many years that were left, he said his choice to take responsibility for his actions before God and focus on others rather than himself made all the difference.

As I reflect on this true story, I have wondered just how many of us can myopically live inside the same kind of prison walls as George was living, even though we don't actually live in a brick and mortar prison. I'm talking about a narrow internal walled-in place of depression, bitterness, anger, etc. - blaming everything and everyone for the results of our own poor life choices without any regard for the Lord or other hurting people. I know firsthand that if we would heed the advice given to George and apply it to our own lives, we will discover by the grace of God that life will stop doing us and we will start doing life. In fact, this is exactly the way the Lord intends for us to do life – focused on others and serving them rather than ourselves. The Bible states in Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man [Jesus] did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Just imagine how life would be if we really did give our lives to genuinely love and serve others as Jesus did. I've read that Thomas Jefferson observed, "A candle loses nothing when it lights another candle." With a spirit of commitment and generosity, may we brightly serve our life to others with the love of Christ poured out from our hearts so that we can brighten a hurting and broken world around us!

**The Make It Happen Service Enthusiasm Value:
"Make It Happen" People Are Five Star Service Enthusiasts!**

Have A Blessed "Make It Happen" Week!

"Everything is possible for him who believes." Mark 9:23 NIV

NIV study notes add "a person who truly believes will set no limits on what God can do [for them and through them]."



® Dino Rizzo is the author of the book titled, *Servolution*. To order a copy of this Make It Happen Book™ purchased, reviewed, and officially endorsed by The Make It Happen Learning Institute, please visit www.makeithappenbooks.com, the on-line leadership reference library of The Make It Happen Learning Institute.

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