

First United Methodist Church

310 North Rowley, Mitchell, SD 57301

Rev. Keith Nelson, Lead Pastor

keith@mitchellfumc.org

605.630.6586

Mahatma Gandhi is credited with saying the phrase, "Be the change you want to see in the world." There are some who say he never spoke that phrase. Whether he did or not, I don't know. It does sound like something he would have said, or at the very least he would have agreed with the intent. One interpretation of what the phrase means is that if you want to bring about change in the world, it must first begin in yourself. Change has to start somewhere. It starts with just one person. Recently I had the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of this phrase and actually live it out.

On the north side of Mitchell there's a street that is known as Cemetery Road. It's called that because the street runs east and west right beside the city cemetery. The Bike Path also follows alongside Cemetery Road for a stretch. This has become one of my favorite routes for walking our dog, Sophie. Now there are two pedestrian crosswalks that cross Cemetery Road, so people can access and use the bike path safely. What I've noticed recently is that very few drivers actually acknowledge the existence of the crosswalks. Motorists generally don't slow down. A motorist actually stopping to allow a walker, biker, etc. to cross is very rare.

In fact, just the other day if I hadn't been paying attention to traffic, Sophie and I could have easily been hit by a pickup whose driver was more interested in the coffee in his hand than what was near-by or a potential hazard on the road. My concern is that with school starting soon a child on a bicycle or walking might get hit. That would be absolutely tragic.

Anyway, just yesterday morning as I was driving to work, I noticed a pedestrian standing by the side of the road in the crosswalk, waiting to get across the street. I'll admit my first thought was, "Oh, I'll just buzz right by. He's waited this long, a little more won't hurt. I'm in a hurry, I'd really rather not stop." But then I heard another little voice in my head, "Keith, it's the crosswalk! Remember how frustrated you get when no one acknowledges you in that same spot?"

It was in that moment I heard those words spoken to me, "Be the change you want to see in the world." So, yes, I slowed down and stopped and allowed the morning walker to cross the road. It took all of 20 seconds. He appreciated it and gave a wave of thanks. No, the world didn't instantly change. But at least for one pedestrian on the bike path the world was a safer place and for one motorist, me, I realized that stopping didn't slow me down that much in the course of my day. This is the change I want to see happen right here in Mitchell. It has to start somewhere. I guess it can begin with me.

What about you?? What's the change you want to see in the world? How are you going to reflect that change in your life? How are you going to live into this new reality? Whether these words were spoken by a great spiritual leader, I don't know. But there is great truth in them...Be the change you want to see in the world.

Serving Together,
Pastor Keith

Join us for worship this Sunday at 9:30 am or Wednesday at 6:00 pm. It's always good to come together as the people of God!! Communion will be offered on both Sunday and Wednesday.

FOR OUR RADIO LISTENERS...Due to a broadcast conflict, our Sunday Service on KORN am will be broadcast at 9:30 am and not 11:00 am. Please Spread The Word!!