

Accepting the Challenge

The big social media of 2014 appeared daily on your I-Pad, smart phone and computer screen. Millions of dollars have been raised with the ALS ice bucket challenge in just one month. In large numbers, people were willing to publically douse themselves with ice water and then nominate friends, family members and co-workers to do the same. The ALS ice bucket challenge may have become the largest viral event in the history of the internet. And, it is streamed into homes throughout the world on our computer screens, tablets and smart phones..



When accepting the challenge, some participants often dedicated their involvement to loved ones and friends who died from the incurable disease, adding extra meaning to their participation.

Can you imagine the impact if we were to start a social media challenge to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior? There is no more worthy, life-giving cause than the eternal life Christ promised to baptized believers. Parents would cry with absolute joy to see their children proclaim Jesus as their Savior. We could nominate co-workers and life-long friends. Response time would not be limited to 24 hours “or else” they would be obligated to donate more money. It would not be a fund raising campaign at all. Salvation is a free gift. Instead of giving, it is about accepting salvation as God’s gift.

We’re not fighting an incurable disease. Satan's effort to destroy lives is deadly *but* curable. Having millions of people proclaim their love for Jesus Christ would be a major setback for the devil. There are people close to us who have already passed from this life before becoming believers. That is motivation enough to dedicate our participation.

Just think how powerful a statement it would be for celebrities and community leaders to also go on record as believers. It could create a wonderful groundswell of support to know others in the community are believers. And, it would multiply its effect as others would become more acutely aware of the importance of faith.

There are a number of people who inspired others to seek a relationship with God. Billy Graham is a well-known evangelist, filling stadiums with people listening to God’s message. In biblical times Peter – “the rock on which Jesus built his church -- was known for growing the numbers of the believers. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Peter spoke to a large crowd in Jerusalem, addressing people from many different countries, each in their own language. *Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Acts 2:41)* The Bible tells of Peter and John speaking to the Sanhedrin (rulers, elders and teachers in the temple, who did not believe in the resurrection, or that Jesus was the Messiah). In spite of the opposition Peter and John were successful. *But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand. (Acts 4:4)*

You, too, can utilize opportunities and encourage others to accept Jesus as their Messiah. That is what the Great Commission is all about. As Christians, we are too complacent while others are actively suppressing our opportunity to share the faith. Let’s seize this opportunity. It doesn’t have to be on Facebook. You can express your faith in many ways. But, just think of the possibilities if we found a way to make the expression of faith viral, reaching and encouraging many. Instead of just anonymously clicking the “like” tab, take on the challenge yourself. Your heart-felt message can reach thousands, so the numbers who believe will grow.

I accept the challenge and nominate my friends, fellow Christians and others to do the same.

Question: In what ways can you share your faith with others, teaching them about how God has made a difference in your life?

Prayer: Heavenly father. Give us the courage to tell others how you have been a blessing in our life. Let us accept the challenge and share our faith with others. Amen.