

GIRLGUIDING SERVICE
LUKE 8:40-42, 51-56
MATTHEW 5:13-16

“Impact!”

Feeling the Impact

I've got a surprise for you! I'm not sure that I should tell you; should I keep it as a surprise? If I tell you, you might get excited! Will I tell you? OK, here goes. There is a box of *Jelly Babies* for you after the service and you can have one each from box. Lots of ways to feel: does anyone not like *Jelly Babies*? You might feel disappointed? I'm only giving you one sweetie each? You might feel that there is not much to get excited about? You might love *Jelly Babies* and be really pleased that I've given you a present of some sweets? Perhaps the surprise *Jelly Babies* has made your day better, has changed way you feel? Maybe it has made you happier!

What makes you happy?

What makes you sad?

What makes you frightened?

What makes you excited?

Lots of things have an impact on us and on our lives. Sometimes it is just a sweet that we enjoy and it is gone in a minute; other times it lasts longer. Someone does us a good turn and we're glad for their help and we might remember that for rest of our lives. Sometimes the impact is different and someone does something to hurt us and that makes an impact too and we don't forget that either and we remember that for rest of our lives and hate them for it forever.

We read a story about a girl who was 12 years old and she was sick. Her being sick had made her family very sad and anxious. Her dad had heard about Jesus and he tried all the doctors and others and nobody could help and now he thought that Jesus might be able to help. He'd heard that Jesus was in his town. He went to see Jesus one day and the girl's dad, whose name was Jairus, came to Jesus and fell down on his knees in front of him and begged Him for help because his daughter was sick. Jesus said he would come to Jairus' house, but He got interrupted by an old woman who was also sick and had been sick for 12 years; Jesus stopped to help her and Jairus was getting more and more worried about his girl; "Jesus, come on; hurry up!" but Jesus was caring for the old woman. He healed her and then came to Jairus' house and people there were sad and said that the girl had died, but Jesus went into the house and took the girl by her hand and said to her gently "get up!" The girl who had been sick and had died, got up and she was healed. Jesus had made her better.

The impact on her was amazing; she was well again and not sick anymore; her life was completely changed. The impact on her family was amazing as well: they were all happy again and not sad anymore, not frightened or anxious, but full of hope and joy. Jesus has that kind of impact on our world still, to bring love and grace, hope and help to our lives, and that impact on us and on our world lasts forever.

Making an impact

Do you know these inspirational people? Here are some people who have changed a little bit of the world:

Sophia Jex-Blake, was one of a group of women called the Edinburgh Seven, women who studied medicine at Edinburgh University when it was only men who were doctors; she was the first female doctor in Scotland.

Helen Sharman, was the first British woman in space, spending a week or more in the Mir Space station; now she inspires lots of girls to want to do science and be astronauts.

Jane Haining: was a Scottish Christian, who came from near Dumfries, and who went to work in the Scottish mission school in Budapest in Hungary; during the Second World War she rescued lots of Jewish children and got them to safety; she died for her work in Auschwitz, but inspired by her Christian faith she made an impact on lots of lives, as did all of these women.

My mum: was a nurse who worked in Sick Kids Hospital and cared for needy children from all across Edinburgh; later she was a district nurse in Lanark and helped mothers have their babies safely; later she told me about Jesus and took me to church.

These are all people who made an impact on a little bit of the world. People who do good things inspire others to do good things too: a random act of kindness when we do something to help when that is not expected, can inspire other people to be kind to the people they meet. But then we wonder: we're not important people, so how can we make an impact on the world? Well, maybe we don't make an impact on the whole world, but there are all sorts of things we can be and do that make a difference in our part of the world.

Jesus told His friends that they were the light of the world. Close your eyes; all you can see is darkness; imagine what the world would be like if stayed the same when you opened your eyes! When it is dark, all it takes is one small light, one small candle, or one light bulb to make a difference. "*You are the light of the world*" Jesus told His friends and that is about two things:

- First, it is about being good people, people who have faith, who have love in their hearts for other people, people who think about others and are learning to love God; being good people. By being kind, patient, forgiving, loyal, friendly, we can make other people's lives better.
- Secondly, it is about doing good things, loving and caring for others, helping. Jesus said that when we are good people who do good things, we make an impact on the world, like the light that makes an impact on the darkness. About two years ago, the Brownies raised money to twin all the church toilets with toilets in Cambodia and India and we have the certificates to show what they did, and we're going to put these certificates up in our new toilets because the Brownies raised money to build toilets for people who don't have any. It can be dangerous for people, especially women and girls to go the toilet in some villages, towns or cities, so to build new toilets makes their lives completely different and safe. This makes a huge impact on people across the world if you twin your toilet with someone in India, Cambodia. That is just one way of making an impact; there are lots of others.

Of course, we can make a very different impact on people by being different kind of people. We can be people who are selfish and think only about ourselves; or people who hurt others by the words we say or the things we do to them; we can be people who neglect others – when we're like that, the light goes out; the light gets hidden; the world is a bit darker when that happens. It is so easy to let that happen and something goes away when that happens.

The world needs people who are good and who do good; the world is a better place, our families are a better place, our street is a better place, Girlguiding is a better place, the church is a better place, school is a better place, work is a better place when people are good and do good. Jesus called this being the *Light of the world*. This is how we make an impact on the world, by being good people who do good things; we can change the world, and make it a better place for everybody.