

Greetings: As you may know the 'life and times' of a pastor can be varied. It can range from intense excitement, to times of disappointment, sometimes in the same day. Now ok, that can happen to all of us, but as pastor(s) sometimes it can seem more profound, probably because we have a commission from God and hearts that really do care, *for all of you*. Certainly, over

the past few weeks things have sometimes been a challenge.

But as someone once said, '*Some days are diamonds, some days are stone*'.

Leading people to Christ is always exciting! (Had the privilege a few times, both one to one and via ministry: Jeremiah 9:23-24 for which I give the Lord all the glory) The miracle of winning someone to faith in Christ surpasses any thrill this world has to offer. Have you had that experience yet? If not, I recommend you consider the Lord's Great Commission anew.



God is calling us to be people of integrity. We may know that. But have you grasped that the Lord is calling you to be a godly person who—as much as anything else—is committed to influencing his family, friends, neighbours, work associates, countrymen, and others around the world for Jesus Christ?

Incredible? Idealistic? Impossible? Listen to what the Lord Jesus said:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, I am teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matt. 28:18-20)

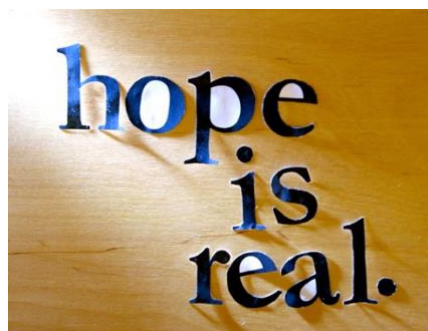
"Well, Martyn" you may say, "I agree, the Lord does want us to help fulfil His Great Commission in our generation. It's just that, um, I suspect He's thinking more of using you than using me. After all, you are the Pastor, and I certainly don't have the gift of evangelism."

Hold it right there...! I don't see anything in the Great Commission about gifting or talent or ability or personality or even opportunity. The Lord is clear: "You ... and you... and you, I'm calling all of you men and women to go- make disciples."

It's not a matter of gift; it's a matter of obedience.

"Lord, I promise to help fulfil Your Great Commission."

Will you? *It's not a matter of gift; it's a matter of heart.*



Thousands of godly men and women have helped fulfil

the Great Commission throughout the world. *How can we be like them?*

I've studied that question and found the answer has little to do with method or technique.

Some people have preached before the masses, some in churches.

Some people have presented the gospel in small groups, mostly one-on-one.

Most people have used a combination of approaches.

But that isn't what made them effective fishers of men.

What I've found is that the great "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19) all have shared 11 distinctives that gave them a tremendous heart for the world.

Both Scripture and church history speak to the importance of these distinctives that should shape every Christian man and woman's heart and life:

- A passion for those apart from Christ
- A Christ-centred message
- A holiness in every area of life
- A vision to reach the great cities
- A boldness to try new methods
- A willingness to endure criticism
- A commitment to a local church
- A love for the whole Body of Christ
- A sacrificial financial giving
- A seriousness about private prayer
- A faithfulness to the end

Unfortunately, today, the first distinctive listed above (passion) is sorely missing in our churches. Many lack any measure of concern for those who have not yet trusted Christ as Saviour.

How's your heart?

How can we sit around while so many propel themselves forward, all that much closer to an eternity without Christ?

For heaven's sake—if nothing else! —we must do something.

Almost all of us get nervous about witnessing.

At least I certainly do, even after all these years.

But when we willingly obey the Lord, He uses us.

So, let's begin to take pride in the good news of Jesus Christ. Like the apostle Paul, let's affirm, *"I am not ashamed of the gospel."* Why? *"Because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes"* (Rom. 1:16).



The world is often swollen with pride of its debauchery and sin. *Shouldn't we be proud of the liberating, life-changing gospel of Christ?*

What is the gospel? It's *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16). The gospel is *"that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that*

he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve, and then to the five hundred (1 Cor. 15:3-6).

It's no more than those great truths, no less. It's simple enough for a child to understand, yet profound enough to amaze the most brilliant theologians.

Are we proud enough to share this good news with others? I hope so.

There will certainly be opportunities to share with others over the next months. As I have mentioned previously things have changed, both on earth and in the heavenlies. We are on the verge of something new and exciting, perhaps a fresh biblical move of God's Spirit in the Land. Revival, Renewal. God in His timing will reveal all to us. **So, Get Ready...** *"No one knows when that day or time will be, not the angels in heaven, not even the Son. Only the Father knows. So always be ready, because you don't know the day your Lord will come. The Son of Man will come at a time you don't expect him"* (Matthew 24:36, 42, 44)

If Jesus were to return today, would you be prepared? **If not**, what steps should you take to be more prepared? **If so...** please take the occasion to *'let somebody in'* on the great truth that you have found. I pray that we take every opportunity (even in lockdown) to share what we have found in Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:26 The Passion Translation (TPT)



²⁶ Brothers and sisters consider who you were when God called you *to salvation*. Not many of you were wise scholars by human standards, nor were many

of you in positions of power. Not many of you were considered the elite *when you answered God's call*.

I Hear His Whisper...

"I will make a way."

I have led you here, my beloved. You haven't missed a step. When you set your heart to seek my face and yielded your will to mine, I took you by the hand and haven't let go. Though it seems as if you've walked straight into a brick wall that's blocking your path, look closer.

See with the purity of Spirit vision, and you will notice it is actually a door. I'm good at making a way when there seems to be no way. What you see as a stopping point, I see as a moment for you to pause and find your peace in me. Nothing but me.

Circumstances are not always as they appear. When you live from my vantage point, you begin to see things from my point of view. You get excited by setbacks, because you begin to see them as opportunities for something greater. This may not be what you expected, but remember, I am faithful, and I have nothing but the best for you. Leave the details in my hands.

ROMANS 8:28 (TPT)

We are convinced that every detail of our lives is continually woven together to fit into God's perfect plan of bringing good into our lives, for we are his lovers who have been called to fulfil his designed purpose.

ROMANS 8:28

Pray This!

Lord—You love me and have nothing but the best in store for me. Your plans are designed to prosper me and give me a future filled with hope. Lack is a curse I will not accept. Give me wisdom and power to create wealth, so I will have more than enough to be a blessing to others. Teach me things I haven't known before. Open doors of favour that launch me into divine opportunities. Bless the work of my hands.

**Whatever your cross, whatever your pain,
There will always be sunshine, after the rain
Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall,
But God's always ready, to answer your call ...
He knows every heartache, sees every tear,
A word from His lips, can calm every fear ...
Your sorrows may linger, throughout the long night,
But suddenly vanish, at dawn's early light ...
The Saviour is waiting, somewhere above,
To give you His grace, and send you His love ..
Whatever your cross, whatever your pain,
"God always sends rainbows after the rain ... "
(anon.)**

