

Missions Motivation

Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26

Introduction:

1. Let's read a story that occurred during Christ's earthly ministry to Israel. I wish I could have been there to see this. What a story! This really happened.
 - The fame of Jesus had started to spread. He was gaining notice as a great teacher and preacher, and big crowds were gathering to hear him. He was preaching in a home, and it was standing-room only. People were pouring out the door.
 - There were some men that had a friend that was paralyzed. He was on a cot outside the house. They thought, "We've got to get him to Jesus, and Jesus can help him." But they couldn't get him to Jesus. They probably tried the door, the windows, etc. There was simply no way. Then they started to think outside the box. I love this!
 - Finally, they decided, "Let's just raise the roof!" They had flat roofs back then, so the men climbed up and began to take off tiles until a hole was big enough, and they just let their friend down to Jesus. They lowered him to the feet of Jesus. Jesus must have been amazed.
 - This man got more than healing. Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven." It seems to infer that he got into this condition because of some sin problem. After this, Jesus healed the man, and he walked out with bed in hand! It wasn't a gradual healing; it was instantaneous. He popped up, grabbed his cot, and said, "Let's go!"
2. These men were on a mission and simply wouldn't be stopped. What motivated them to go to such extreme action? This is a very important issue in light of the mission we have been given today. Do you remember what our mission is? Acts 26:17-18
 - We are trying to shine the light of the gospel of Christ on the world, but Satan is trying every way he can to blind people from it. 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - God's heartbeat is for people to be saved from their sins and brought into a right relationship with Him. God's heartbeat should be our heartbeat. What motivates Him should motivate us. We cannot allow ourselves to get preoccupied with other things.
3. If we are to accomplish our mission, it will take people, like these men, with a bulldog tenacity who are motivated from Christ within. It is amazing what can be accomplished when you are motivated to do it. The Bible calls this "fervency," or "zeal."
 - At CrossRoads, we've been in the process of clarifying and streamlining the mission that we have been given. We are zeroing in on how we, as a church, can do a better job of getting new churches planted all over this world - churches that will proclaim truth, rightly divided. I've been preaching on this also this year.
 - There are some excited people around here right now. If we get a group of people that are zealous about the mission, there is no limit to what we can accomplish.
4. Every believer must fervently seek to accomplish our mission. We must all be involved. Why?

First, because there is great urgency to our mission

Second, because Jesus is the only answer for sinners.

But how do we accomplish our mission of planting churches and reaching souls for Christ?

- These four guys were on a mission to bring their friend to Jesus, and they accomplished it. But how did they do it?
- As I studied this, I saw some principles that I believe apply to us and will help us greatly in our mission to bring people to Jesus. There are some timeless principles here.
- We know there is urgency to our mission. We know that we have the only answer for sinners – Jesus Christ. But how do we accomplish our mission? Let's look at it.

First, by exercising an unwavering faith

1. *“When Jesus saw their faith...”* (vs. 5). As Jesus looked up, saw a bed coming down, and four faces staring down at him, He saw their faith.
2. Jesus **saw** their faith. Did you notice that statement? We think of faith as something invisible and intangible, yet Jesus saw it.
3. Jesus saw it in verse 5, but it was already there in verse 3 when they were still outside the house. There was an inner motivation of faith that led these guys to take action and do something.
 - Just as we say that love is an action word, the same is true of faith. Paul talked about the *“obedience of faith.”* cf. James 2:17-18
4. If we are going to plant churches, and do it effectively and quickly, it will take a group of people who have faith that Christ wants it done, and that He can do it. It will take people that believe that God is able, believe the gospel has inherent power to save souls, and believe that God answers prayer. Ephesians 3:20; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2
5. If we really believe in the power of Jesus Christ, it will cause us to take action.

Second, by overcoming the obstacles

1. These men were trying to bring a friend who had serious spiritual and physical problems to Jesus. Yet there were some real obstacles to overcome.
 - There were practical and logistical problems. vs. 4a
 - There were people problems. vs. 6-7
2. They had a fixed commitment. They did not stop in the face of adversity. They couldn't get in the door. Most people would give up. They probably tried the back door and windows. Again, most would have quit, but they did not.
 - Four other guys may have said, “It simply cannot be done.” These four friends said, “It can be done, and it must be done, and we won't stop until it is done.”
3. Do you know how you figure out a person's level of commitment? What does it take to make him quit? There **will** be obstacles and people problems, etc.
 - These four friends didn't say, “You didn't tell me there would be climbing involved. I'm afraid of heights. Manual labor? But I didn't wear my old clothes. This is taking more time than I thought.”
4. It doesn't take much to get some people to quit. Just hurt their feelings, and they quit church or quit their ministries. People think, “I'll do it as long as it's fun and I enjoy it, or it's not too demanding, or as long as people don't hurt my feelings.”

5. If we are going to accomplish our mission of planting churches, replicating ourselves, and bringing people to Jesus, it is going to take a group of people with a firm commitment, that are willing to have a bull-dog tenacity, and can overcome the obstacles.
6. Paul told Timothy to “*Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*”

Third, by a willingness to do the uncommon

1. These four men tried the traditional way of approach (Luke 5:18-19), but it didn't work. Can you see them all sitting outside that house thinking about what to do? Finally, somebody began to think outside the box. This took some guts! I'm not sure how they pulled this off, but they did!
2. The traditional American approach to missions has been this: “Let's send one couple out all by themselves to a strange land, and let's leave them there for 10 or more years, trying to plant a church all by themselves.”
3. The traditional approach has also been to have the American missionary stay there until he has land, a building, and a congregation big enough to sustain a full-time pastor. These expectations greatly slow down the church planting process.
4. Paul was able to plant churches quickly because he did not get caught up in these things. His desire was to see a group of souls saved, a few faithful people trained who could lead the church, and Paul was on his way.
 - “Our goal has never been to plant a fully functioning (all the bells and whistles) church. In fact, we work constantly at keeping it simple. Our primary goal is to lead a few souls to Christ who will then reach Caucel with the gospel. Therefore, I spend my time with Francisco or in training men.” **Missionary Jeff Carney**
5. Our vision and goal is to have a team right here from CrossRoads that will go out and plant a church in another area. We are constantly thinking outside the box so that we can see a church planted quickly and efficiently.

Fourth, by a commitment to teamwork

1. Notice verse 18. “...*men brought in a bed...*” This is plural. Notice all the plural pronouns in verses 18-20. One man could not have accomplished this mission. It took teamwork.
2. There is a lesson here. How could Paul plant churches in shorter periods of time? Paul always thought in terms of teams, not just individuals. We see this team concept, over and over again, as we read of Paul's missionary journeys.
3. Paul was extremely gifted and educated, yet Paul knew that the work of a missionary demanded a team effort. No one individual has all the spiritual gifts and is talented in every area of the Christian life. We all have strengths and weaknesses.
4. Because of this, a true team will always accomplish more than an individual. It seems to me, instead of a missionary being committed to a field (country), he should be committed to a team.
 - Instead of sending individuals to a field, we send teams to a field.
 - Instead of supporting individual men, we support church-planting projects that missionary teams are endeavoring to accomplish.

5. Teamwork! This one principle could make all the difference in the world when it comes to planting churches on the mission field.
6. There are great and godly men that are on the mission field endeavoring to plant a church all by themselves. Quite simply, it will probably never happen. They are frustrated and burned out.
7. What is the answer? We must go back to God's Word and see that the answer is one of teamwork.

In Conclusion:

1. Do you know why we give of ourselves to accomplish the mission? Look at Luke 5:25-26. These four guys worked hard and diligently to bring this guy to Jesus, but the result was changed lives.
2. One day we will stand before God, and all the trials and hardness will be worth it. Saved souls and changed lives will be our crown in heaven.