

Obstacles to Opportunities

Sunday Morning, July 27, 2015

Thesis:

Embrace Opportunities Placed In Front of You By God

Introduction:

When NASA began the launch of astronauts into space, they found out that the pens wouldn't work at zero gravity (Ink won't flow down to the writing surface). In order to solve this problem, they hired Andersen Consulting. It took them one decade and \$12 million. They developed a pen that worked at zero gravity, upside down, underwater, on practically any surface including crystal and a temperature range from below freezing to over 300 degrees C. And what did the Russians do? The Russians used a pencil!

Too often we focus on problems and fail to see opportunities right in front of us. Winston Churchill once said: "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; while an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

The Disciples in Luke 9 are placed in to an Obstacle Training Course.

I. Seeing the Obstacle

(Luke 9: 10 - 13a)

10 And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 But when the multitudes knew it, they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing.

12 When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here."

13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat."

(Ephesians 5: 15 – 17)

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

II. Seeing the Opportunity

(Luke 9: 13b – 14)

13b And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."

14 For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty."

✚ How Do We Accomplish This?

✚ It Would Take About 8 Months Pay to Buy Enough Food!

✚ Take An Offering and Feed Some. A Good Honorable Effort In People's Eyes.

(Romans 12: 1 – 2)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Rom 12: 1-2

Purpose:

God gives us the obstacle as an opportunity to show us His power through obstacles. (Mark 10:27)

(Mark 10:27)

But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

Examples:

- † Abraham and Sarah
- † Moses and the Red Sea
- † Peter Let Out of Prison by an Angel

III. Seeing God's Sovereign Solution (Luke 9: 15 – 17)

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 So they all ate and were filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

(John 6:6)

But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

Jesus Invites Us To Be Involved In His Work

This is a "Crisis of Belief"

(According to Henry Blackaby's "Experiencing God" Material)

Infant babies grow as God intended, so we to must grow by doing His will.

Trusting His solutions to the challenges He gives us!

"We need to start looking at the world and the problems we face from His perspective."

Dr. George Calhoun,
Judson University Professor and Pastor

Conclusion:

The Feeding of the 5000 was to Teach Us
to Accept Obstacles as Opportunities
to See God's Power & Glory!