

Serve the Lord With Gladness

By Senior Pastor Prince Guneratnam

In one of my many speaking engagements on mission's emphasis, I saw a caption that read, "What The Church Does or Does Not Will Decide The Destiny of the Nation." I gave it serious thought and fully agreed.

I was made aware of the awesome responsibility of the church. The church is the people of God. The power of the church is God's people. Daniel said, "The people who know their God shall be strong, carry out great exploits" (Daniel 11:32). My burden as the Pastor felt heavier. The Pastor is the leader to give the right counsel and full counsel of God to the people that they may serve God and the nation. Many times we say, "Don't look at man; look at Jesus" but Paul the apostle said, "Follow me." Paul knew that he was a faithful follower and he was totally committed to the cause of Christ. The church must be an example for others to follow. The destiny of the nation depends on us.

Jesus said, "You are there light and the salt of the earth." Like King David, let us serve our generation by the will of God (Acts 13:36). I like what E. M. Bounds said,

"Men are God's method. The church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men... What the church need today is not more machinery or better, not new organization or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use – men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but on men – men of prayer... The training of the Twelve was the great, difficult and enduring work of Christ... It is not great talents or great learning or great preachers that God needs, but men in great fidelity, great for God – men always preaching by holy sermons in the pulpit, by holy lives out of it. These can mould a generation for God."

I want to suggest three motives for serving the Lord and then, the strength whereby we can do it.

First: Let Christ's love be the compelling force to serve. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:14: "For the love of Christ constrains (lays hold of) us." It is love and not needs, because needs come and go. Love and not people, because people can discourage and disappoint us. Jesus never fails!

Jesus did the will of God because He loves us (John 15:13). Think of Calvary and what it means and let the love of Christ compel you to serve. I know a young girl who wanted to serve the Lord in full-time ministry. She was told never to return home again. She was disowned by her family, without financial support. I asked her, "Why do you want to serve the Lord?" She said, "I love Jesus."

Second: The Coming of Jesus Christ is sooner than we think. Jesus said, "I come quickly" (Revelation 22:20). When the Lord called me to preach the Gospel, I had a vision of Jesus descending from heaven. In the vision, I saw three doors at different intervals. Jesus was coming and coming through the doors. He came to the first and it seemed like he opened the door and came through and descended closer to the earth. He came to the second door and did the same. Then, at the third door, just as He was about to open it, He stopped. I did not hear any voice but as good as hearing, I understood the message of the vision. Jesus was at the door of His soon return for the Church of Jesus Christ. He is at the last door to fulfill the scripture in Matthew 24:40-42: "Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming." In 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."

The time to serve is now. This is harvest time. What we need to do, we must do quickly. Serve because He is coming soon.

Third: Jesus gave us a mandate (Matthew 28: 19, 20). We have been commissioned to go, teach and make disciples. There are many ways of going. Paul mentioned the various gifts ministries in the church besides Ephesians 4:11. The ministry according to the grace given to us is mentioned in Romans 12:6-8. Also in Corinthians 12:28: "God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, administration, varieties of tongues."

A young soldier asked the great general, the Duke of Wellington, "How do you interpret the great commission?" The general said, "You don't interpret a commission, you simply obey." Jesus our Lord commissioned us; we must obey.

Finally, the secret of our strength to serve is "with gladness." Nehemiah puts it in another way: "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). Are you weary, feeling weak and lack of strength? David said, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Get excited with Jesus. Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord." In referring to those who were born again, Isaiah said, "He gave them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isaiah 61:3).