

Forty Days of Purpose Devotional

Day 38 "The Great Commission in *my* commission."

Many people are discouraged, thinking they have little to offer that is of real value to God or other people. Rather than simply dismiss the question, let us for the moment take it seriously. To a large degree you and I tend to believe what other people think of us. It is possible to overcome this "peer pressure," but it is a struggle. If the people you live and work with see as ordinary, you tend to uncounsciously accept that so many reasonable people are probably right. How do the people around you see you? The answer is probably that they see you the way they always have – ways that make them comfortable. When Jesus returned to His home town in the power of the Holy Spirit, his friends, family and former neighbors didn't see Him the way He was, but rather the way He had been before:

"At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They said, 'Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?"" (John 6:41-42 [NIV])

Jesus summarized the situation as follows:

"Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.' He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith." (Mark 6:4-6 [NIV])

If the ministry of the Son of God Himself was inhibited in His hometown and among His relatives, why should we be surprised if our's is as well? Perhaps you need to go somewhere else (remember that one city is composed of many towns) and spend time with someone else if you want to be fully used by God. Only in this way can you learn who you truly are in Christ, and live the life God designed for you. While some may have to move, others need only *move out* of their usual routines (ruts).

- Jesus knew who He was, because He came from the Father. We, on the other hand, must learn who we are in this life.
- When you meet a person for the first time, they begin to learn who you are NOW, unbiased by who you WERE.
- If you go somewhere new as a minister of the Gospel people will see you as a minister of the Gospel, and God's work is much more likely to be accomplished.

If you have ever failed at something IMPORTANT you probably know what it means to dread failure. One of the foundational strategies of motivational seminars and success symposia is to help people overcome this dread. Why? The fear of failure causes paralysis, making true success impossible. The basic idea is that many small failures are inevitable on the road to true success, and therefore should not be viewed as "failures" but rather as lessons and stepping stones. Deciding to live life in "the comfort zone" is like staying in your comfortable suite on the Titanic as it is sinking. Venturing into the icy black waters of the North Atlantic at night is scary, but is the only pathway to life. Ask God what new adventures, what abundance of life He has waiting for you out of your comfort zone. How long do you think your comfort zone is going to last, anyway?
