

The Growing Happens in the Going: Embracing Dangerous Mission

There's something transformative that happens when we stop waiting for perfect conditions and simply step out in obedience. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, "One act of obedience is better than a hundred sermons." This truth cuts through our tendency to overthink, overplan, and over-prepare before taking action for the Kingdom of God.

Seeing Before Feeling

In Matthew 9:35-38, we encounter a profound sequence: Jesus saw the crowds, and then He had compassion for them. Notice the order—seeing came first, compassion followed. How often do we wait for compassion to well up inside us before we act? We tell ourselves we'll serve when we feel moved, when our hearts break, when the burden becomes unbearable.

But what if we reversed our approach? What if we intentionally went to see the harassed and helpless, the marginalized and broken, trusting that compassion would follow? When we position ourselves to witness the reality of lostness around us, our hearts cannot help but be stirred. Go and see. See the forgotten. See those trapped in cycles of despair. See those who appear to have it all together but are crumbling inside. And watch what God does in your heart.

Jesus declared that "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." This isn't just ancient encouragement—it's present reality. Perhaps you've been bruised by past ministry efforts. Maybe you've sown seeds that seemed to fall on rocky ground. But hear this afresh: the harvest is plentiful. There are fields white unto harvest all around us, waiting for laborers willing to step into them.

Commissioned by Prayer

Every significant mission begins in the secret place of prayer. It's in those moments of intercession that God flips the script on us. We start praying for others to go, and suddenly we hear, "What about you?"

When we pray, we're not just preparing for mission—we're being commissioned for it. Not by human ambition or organizational strategy, but by God Himself. This divine commissioning changes everything. It means we're not operating on our own strength or wisdom. We're sent ones, carrying the authority of the One who sends us.

And here's the beautiful part: prayer doesn't end when the mission begins. Prayer and mission must be married together, inseparable companions on the journey. Find others who will pray with you weekly, holding up your specific mission field before the throne of grace.

Equipped with What Matters

When Jesus sent out His twelve disciples in Matthew 10, His instructions seemed almost reckless by worldly standards. No money in their belts. No extra provisions. No backup plan. Just go.

Why would Jesus send them out so apparently unprepared? Because He wanted them to understand a fundamental truth: they were the only tool the Holy Spirit needed. Their availability mattered more than their resources. Their obedience outweighed their preparedness.

We often wait for funding before we launch. We delay until we have complete clarity. We hesitate until we feel fully equipped. But mission is a muscle that needs to be strengthened through use, not contemplation. The instructions God gives us often only make sense as we're walking them out.

This doesn't mean we're reckless or foolish. Jesus told His disciples to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves." We can be shrewd about safety and boundaries while remaining pure in motive and gentle in spirit. We can flee from unnecessary danger while still advancing into dark places with the light of Christ.

Choosing Your Mission Field

While all of life should be lived missionally, mission is strengthened through focus. Think of your life as containing multiple potential mission fields—your workplace, your gym, your neighborhood coffee shop, the hospital, the grocery store you frequent.

Now choose one. Pick a specific area where you'll practice throwing darts at targets. As you focus on one mission field, you'll develop skills and sensitivity that naturally transfer to other areas of your life. You'll learn to recognize divine appointments. You'll grow bold in starting conversations. You'll become comfortable with the uncomfortable.

The specificity isn't limiting—it's liberating. It gives you a place to practice, to fail, to learn, and to see God move. And once you've experienced breakthrough in one area, you'll find yourself naturally spotting opportunities everywhere.

The Reality of Rejection

Jesus didn't sugarcoat the cost of mission. "You will be hated by all for my name's sake," He told His disciples. We carry a message the world fundamentally opposes. Our very presence as light-bearers exposes darkness, and darkness doesn't appreciate being exposed.

But here's what we must settle in our hearts: rejection is part of the package. When we internalize this reality, rejection loses its sting. We're not surprised by it. We don't take it personally. We simply recognize it as confirmation that we're carrying something authentic and powerful.

And this makes the moments of acceptance absolutely miraculous. When doors open that should be closed. When conversations happen that shouldn't be possible. When hardened hearts soften. These moments remind us that we serve a God who makes a way where there is no way.

Losing Life to Find It

"Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it," Jesus promised. Mission is where we die to ourselves—our need for recognition, our desire for comfort, our demand for control. And paradoxically, it's where we truly come alive.

On the mission field, it's not about making a name for ourselves or showcasing our abilities. It's about the power of God flowing through surrendered vessels. Like a seed that must die to bear fruit, we must release our agendas to see Kingdom fruit emerge.

Nothing Returns Void

Here's the encouraging truth: every act of obedience matters. Every cup of cold water given in Jesus' name carries weight in the Kingdom. When someone receives you knowing you're a Christian, something significant is happening. There's a great exchange taking place, even if you can't see it.

Don't underestimate the small things. The brief conversation. The kind gesture. The moment of presence. These seemingly insignificant acts carry the Kingdom of God into places that would otherwise remain dark.

The Invitation

So where is God calling you? Not vaguely, but specifically. What mission field is stirring in your heart?

Pray first. Let God commission you. Then unequip yourself with earthly crutches and equip yourself with the Holy Spirit. And finally, go. Step out. Take the risk.

Because there is growing in the going. The lessons the Holy Spirit wants to teach you can only be learned in the stepping out, in the risk, in the unknowing where you become completely reliant on Him.

The harvest truly is plentiful. The question is: will you be among the laborers?