

“Thoughts From a Missionary Journey”

Introduction:

“Aslan, Aslan. Dear Aslan,” sobbed Lucy. “At last.”

The great beast rolled over on his side so that Lucy fell, half sitting and half lying between his front paws. He bent forward and just touched her nose with his tongue. His warm breath came all around her. She gazed up into the wise face.

“Welcome, child,” he said.

“Aslan,” said Lucy, “you’re bigger.”

“That is because you are older, little one,” answered he.

“Not because you are?”

“I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger.”

—C.S. Lewis, *Prince Caspian*

Zech. 2:13— “Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.”

Key Point: The God who gives us opportunities to _____ Him as we _____ others in unique circumstances, does so as well in the more normal circumstances of our everyday lives.

Ministry in Ancient Corinth & Modern-Day Germany

1. Longstanding ministry relationships are a blessing to have and to _____.

Acts 18:1-4—¹After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ²And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, ³and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. ⁴And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

- Paul’s ministry partnership with Aquila and Priscilla lasted for nearly two decades (roughly AD 51-68).
- They ministered together in Corinth and later in Ephesus where they hosted the church in their home (1 Cor. 16:19). They were also involved in ministry apart from Paul, instructing the gifted preacher Apollos in the faith (Acts 18:24-26) so that he might be more effective in ministry.
- At the end of his life, they were on his mind as he wrote his final epistle (2 Tim. 4:19).

Key Point: Willingness to share God’s _____ and to show _____ are some of the most significant ways that we can minister to others in our lives.

2. God has purposed _____ with our brothers and sisters as one of the primary ways that He comforts and encourages us as His people.

2 Cor. 7:6-7—⁶But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, ⁷and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

- Titus was one of Paul’s closest ministry companions and was his child in the faith (Titus 1:4).
- Paul’s time with him in Macedonia was a time of great comfort for him.
- Even after many years, Paul desired that Titus make time to come to visit him (Titus 3:12).

Key Point: God has purposed for times of fellowship together with brothers and sisters from other places to be of _____ encouragement.

3. All ministry on some level involves both _____ and being _____.

2 Cor. 12:14-15a—¹⁴Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. ¹⁵I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls.

- Paul believed that it was a good use of financial resources to visit others and to be visited by them for the purpose of ministry and encouragement.
- Paul understood that the toll that ministry takes on someone is more than financial. It also involves time and physical exertion.

Key Point: Since all that we _____ and all that we _____ belongs to God, we can delight in offering ourselves and our resources to the Him in order that we might minister to others.

4. Because we are embodied creatures, certain places come to have significance in our lives.

2 Cor. 1:1,15-16—¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia: ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ...¹⁵Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a second experience of grace. ¹⁶I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on my way to Judea.

- Paul visited certain places repeatedly for the purpose of ministry and to maintain relationships.
- Paul saw the value in times of intensive instruction in God's Word (Acts 20:7-8).

Key Point: When we are willing to get outside of our normal routine, God is often free to minister to us in _____ ways.

Concluding Thoughts

- How can we be available to serve others through the ministry of hospitality in the coming weeks?
- How can we encourage and serve our brothers and sisters who are ministering in other nations?
- What are we willing to sacrifice in terms our time and our resources in order to minister to and serve alongside our brothers and sisters?

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