

Pushing Back the Darkness! Part 14: "That I May See!"

The Church was designed as a mostly volunteer organization... The Church is called to voluntary service, including volunteerism, that will be evaluated... "We must give an account." **2C5.10** We, the Church, will be evaluated and rewarded for every thing done in the body (this life)... "Works will be tested and if they survive, we will receive a reward!" **2C3.10ff**

1Cor 3.10-15 "Take heed how you build on the foundation which is Jesus Christ. If a man builds with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; his work will be made evident, the day will declare it for it will be revealed by fire what quality of work it was, and if it abides, that man will receive a reward and if it burns he will suffer a loss, but he will, himself, be saved – but as one who comes thru fire!"

The whole point of the short series was to bring us to the place of lasting fruitfulness because empty-handed is not acceptable! And the "building" we do, the rewards we desire, *have much to do with hearing God's voice and seeing what He wants done... In fact, if we don't wait on Him, we can do all sorts of things with life that are nothing more than wood, hay and stubble!*

If we find out we've been wrong are we willing to apply the necessary "force" to ourselves to course correct?
"People whose minds are made up to advance the kingdom of God take their objectives by force..." – Jesus Mt 11.12

And it is necessary to step up and into our role of voluntary service to God and His people! But what if we don't see that what we are doing, how we are building, is wrong?

This past week... Greater number of opportunities to push back the darkness! Wednesday night, great demonstration! Teams all working so well, serving willingly, joyfully! Power outage: people praying in the dark! But far too many conversations that ended in the dark! Not willing to leave non-activated, decommissioned servants behind!

The Wrong Way... "The hardest one to convince that there is a problem is the one who is the prisoner!" –DOC Counselor There is a way *that seems right (right enough, all-right) to a man* but the end of it is death! **Pr 14.12 16.25** All the ways of a man *are clean in his own eyes* but the Lord weighs the spirits! **Pr 16.2** Seeing, they don't "see," hearing, they don't "understand," lest they be turned around and their sins be forgiven them! **Mk4.12** "For judgment I came into the world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." Then some of the religious leaders who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" Jesus said to them, "*If you were blind, you would have no sin; but because you say, 'We see.'* Therefore *your sin remains.* **John 9.39-41**

The Right Way... Blessed is the man *that walks not in the advice of the ungodly, nor stands on the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scoffers.* But his delight is in the law of the LORD and he meditates in it day and night. He will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth fruit in its season; his leaf also will not wither; and whatsoever he does will prosper. **Ps 1.1-3** What man is he that fears the Lord? *Him will he teach the way that he will choose.* **Ps 25.12** The way of the indolent man (disinclined, slow to grow, wanting no pain) is like a hedge of thorns: *but the way of the upright is made plain.* **Pr 15.9**
The man that vacillates from the way of understanding will dwell in the congregation of the dead. **Pr 21.16** The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to liberate the bruised. **Luke 4.18,19** In that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues and evil spirits; and to many that were blind He gave sight. **Lk 7.21**

The Activation Way... *A blind man was sitting along the road when he heard that Jesus was passing by. He cried out, "Have mercy on me!" Many tried to silence him, but he yelled louder! Jesus stopped and called him to come. They said, "It's your day! He's calling you to come!" Jesus asked, "What can I do for you?" "I want to see." Jesus said, "Your faith has made you whole." He received his sight and followed Jesus down the road. Mk 10.46ff This is relevant to sinner and saved alike!*

The Elements! A man, sidelined, by blindness! Jesus is *passing by*... He cries out... and then listens... Voices tell him to be quiet! Casts aside shame/fear/doubt, and yells louder! He hears the Voice calling him! "What do you want from Me?" "I want to see!" Get up, your faith has made you whole... *and he followed Jesus!*

Nothing is more empowering for us than the Voice of the One we love, opening our eyes to see... And no one is a more picture perfect example of what it means to voluntarily serve God at His direction!

Can you see Him?

His sympathy for the distressed? Think of the things on His mind... Think of the issues dealing with... Think of the rights He had to not go one more step... Think of the "self" He laid down... *HEARS THE CRIES OF ONE BEGGAR IN THE ROAR OF THE DAY!*

For Him it was natural to lay it all down, put it all on hold, to help!

Inspiring His followers by His compassionate action? The disciples rebuked the children, He said, "let them come!" The religious condemned, He received them! Judas begrudged the waste, Jesus let the woman anoint Him! The crowd said, "Shut up beggar!" Jesus asked, "What can I do...?"

The message: "Life is about the people around us!"

Encouraging the faith of the needy? What made Bartimaeus ready? Was it the crisis he had lived with? Or the Answer passing by? Had he been set up by the stories? Had he yearned in the darkness? What seed was in his heart? What sensibility had finally rooted? "Where are you Bartimaeus?"

Listen for His Voice!

Jesus, am I sidelined because of blindness?

Will You open my eyes to show me where?

When it comes to laying it all down, what do I hold on to?

Is my life about the people around me? Which ones?

Am I an encourager of faith?