

MOBILISING - MENTORING - TRAINING

This Edition: Obstacles to Missions

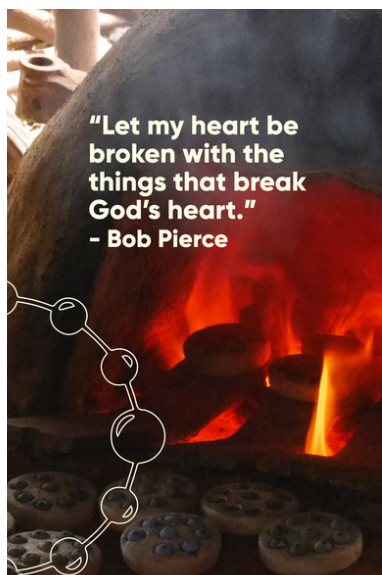
"The peoples of the world need Christ." This was the deep conviction of William Carey, who read and studied, and even made a leather globe of the world in his little cobbler's shop. One day, this was the place where Carey heard the call for missions – not in some enthusiastic missionary conference – and he sobbed out, "Here am I; send me!" To surrender was one thing, to get to the field was quite another problem. But Carey persisted, he prayed, he pled, he plodded, and he preached: "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God." There were no obstacles that could get in the way of the burning desire in his heart to reach the nations. William Carey died at the age of 73 after profoundly impacting missions - not just in India but globally.



Do we have a problem?

If so many still have yet to know the love of Jesus and the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are still so few, there must be a problem! There must be a disconnect going on because either God's people have a listening problem or God has a calling problem. Is it that there are not many more William Careys hearing 'the call' anymore? We don't believe so as God is still actively sharing his heart with his people. Is it that people are no longer listening to the heart beat of God and to the needs of the world? There could be some truth in this reality, but on the other hand many have still given their lives of surrender to God, just like the William Carey of old. It is obvious there is need for improvement, so let us look at a few obstacles that are very common in these times and seasons.

Many people who are sitting in the church or classroom would be better off in a ministry setting. So how can we as Mobilisers encourage people to rise above the obstacles and be involved?



Obstacle: Letting go of the familiar (Language, culture, food, weather, living arrangements, comforts) to embrace the unfamiliar is too challenging!

These are all natural concerns and fears that every missionary candidate faces. For those who have been through this process, they have constantly needed to cry out to God for the strength to live a surrendered life. As a teenager Nikolas Von Zinzendorf and five other students started "the Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed" at Halle University in 1715. Their creed was simple: **"None of us lives for himself."** Their purpose was prayer, fellowship, witness, and foreign missions. These were the early beginnings of the Moravian movement, which clocked the longest prayer chain in history - unbroken for 100 years. They matched their passion for Christ with a compassion for the lost. By 1930 more than 3000 missionaries had been sent. The mustard seed became a great tree. So at some point in our lives the obstacle of the unfamiliar is overshadowed by a zeal, a boldness and a consuming fire for the call.

Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deuteronomy 10:12)

Obstacle: A lack of resources, support and approval brings an immense sense of discouragement!

When one carries a passion for missions, yet a lack of finances and resources becomes an obstacle, this causes immense stress. Much work needs to be done to raise awareness and to gather resources before going. Some mission agencies have financial targets for individuals to meet while others believe that one should live solely by faith. Either way there needs to be a level of **TRUST** and **FAITH** that if the Lord has called, the Lord will provide in all areas.

For others the sense of discouragement comes from a lack of support and approval from family, friends and church to go. Responsibilities, family commitments, church allegiance seems to sometimes be an obstacle. For William Carey there was a real challenge because no missionary societies existed and there was limited missionary interest. When Carey brought this subject for discussion at a ministers' meeting, he was told, "Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine." **But Carey persisted!** We can therefore conclude, that to rise above these obstacles one must be committed to praying for the needs, sharing the call with others, trusting God and being willing to obey all.



Obstacle: Distraction & busyness is not a good mix.

With the speed and modernisation of this time and season we live in, it's very easy to get super busy doing things. The reality is that not everything is beneficial and sadly many mission minded people become distracted. It's easy to say, 'I need to get financial security first', or 'I need to get married', or 'There is enough work to be done here'. Yes, these things are all true but are they at the expense of the call the Lord has placed on people's lives? We must keep our eyes on the most important task of all:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

The 'Great Commission' given to the early church is still the great commission for us today! Keeping this at the forefront of our hearts will help us rise above obstacles.

In summary, the same message that was given to the early church is for us today as ACTS13 Africa. God has given us all something to do that will last, that will have impact, that will make a difference. We need to have a culture of looking outward to see the world around us. We have been blessed so that we can be a blessing to others. Everyone has been given gifts and abilities to be involved in fulfilling these last words of Jesus. One day each of us will all stand before God and most of the things that society puts utmost value on today will be of no importance. God may look at each of us and ask, 'How did you love me?', 'How did you serve me?', 'How did you love the lost?', **'How did you rise above the obstacles?'**

TEAM UPDATE:

South Africa: A recent missions prayer meeting has started and one couple is interested in becoming mobilisers.

Zimbabwe: It's garlic planting season, much work is to be done. The harvest from garlic supports missions.

Burundi: A pharmacy has been started to help support the sending and supporting of missionaries.

Ghana: The team gathered to train volunteer mobilisers in the areas of: spiritual gifts, personalities, team work and more.

ACTS13 General: Members of the team are working hard to prepare training resources for ministry, new candidate training orientations as well as connecting with prospective workers.

- ***Pray for the partnership there is with the church in Ethiopia that they will keep moving forward with the desire to send workers out with our organisation.***
- ***Pray that we would be able to start having new contacts with pastors in countries where we don't have established teams. Pray for the expansion of the ministry of ACTS13.***



Antioch's Mission DNA - Rekindling the zeal for missions in our churches.

Partner with us to pray for 'Unreached People Groups?'

