

I Must!

Nehemiah 2:1-5 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

- Emergency vehicles are different – they evoke in us a sense of urgency because they are equipped differently and have a different purpose than a normal vehicle. The church is an emergency vehicle!
- Yesterday was the third anniversary of September 11, 2001, when 19 terrorists literally brought the daily routine of millions of Americans to a screeching halt. It was an urgent situation, and an urgent situation commands our attention, interrupts our routine, dictates our actions, calls us to sacrificial duty, and demands our response.
- Canadians have turned Christianity into a pacifier when Jesus Christ meant it to be an agitator! The message is always urgent when God is involved – “Let my people go!”
- Everywhere we look, there is someone with a cause! And God is not pleased when unbelievers have more passion than believers!
- Billy Graham once read a letter at one of his crusades from a young communist student to his fiancée, breaking off their engagement:

We Communists have a high casualty rate. We're the ones who get shot and hung and lynched and tarred and feathered and jailed and slandered, and ridiculed and fired from our jobs, and in every other way made as uncomfortable as possible. A certain percentage of us get killed or imprisoned. We live in virtual poverty. We turn back to the party every penny we make above what is absolutely necessary to keep us alive.

We Communists don't have the time or the money for many movies, or concerts, or T-bone steaks, or decent homes and new cars. We've been described as fanatics. We are fanatics. Our lives are dominated by one great overshadowing factor, the struggle for world communism.

We Communists have a philosophy of life which no amount of money could buy. We have a cause to fight for, a definite purpose in life. We subordinate our petty personal selves into a great movement of humanity, and if our personal lives seem hard, or our egos appear to suffer through subordination to the party, then we are adequately compensated by the thought that each of us in his small way is contributing to something new and true and better for mankind.

*There is one thing in which I am dead earnest and that is the Communist cause. It is my life, my business, my religion, my hobby, my sweetheart, my wife and mistress, my bread and meat. I work at it in the daytime and dream of it at night. Its hold on me grows, not lessens as time goes on. Therefore I cannot carry on a friendship, a love affair, or even a conversation without relating to this force which both drives and guides my life. I evaluate people, books, ideas and actions according to how they affect the Communist cause and by their attitude toward it. I've already been in jail because of my ideas and if necessary, I'm ready to go before a firing squad. I will gladly die that Communism may be advanced one more mile, because **when you are in the business of changing the world, there is no price that is too great to pay.***

- This young man gave his life for a cause that ultimately failed – communism is a dying political philosophy! But his sense of urgency is admirable – are we willing to do the same for the cause of Christ?
- We're not in any business other than the world-changing business! Not the music business, the building business, the sermon business, the fundraising business, the fellowship business, etc.
- So much that really matters to us doesn't matter at all to God! Your possessions don't matter to Him. He's only impressed when we dedicate our possessions to fulfilling His divine purpose.
- How are we going to explain to God that He blessed us so much, that we had so much wealth, and we squandered it on ourselves?
- Every Sunday that we do not become divinely urgent is just another entertainment time - and a waste of your time and God's time! We need a baptism of fire – a baptism of urgency! **I must! I must!**

- Nehemiah was a cupbearer to the king, living in comfort. His "career" was going fine, but He had a passion to get involved in restoring the city of Jerusalem. When Nehemiah became urgent, the king noticed and opened the opportunity. God placed his urgency on others!
 - He saw something that mattered to God and took responsibility
 - He found a passion that became his priority ("I must!")
 - Then he experienced supernatural anointing/empowerment
- It wasn't all smooth sailing either. Nehemiah was opposed by Sanballat and Tobiah, who poured out a torrent of doubt, abuse and contempt on everyone engaged in the work. They conspired to stop the building of Jerusalem's walls by armed force, tried to lure Nehemiah away from Jerusalem, and accused Nehemiah of trying to build a kingdom for himself. None of their schemes succeeded because Nehemiah refused to be distracted. ("I must!")
 - **Nehemiah 4:17** They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.
 - **Nehemiah 6:3** And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?
 - **Nehemiah 8:10** Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.
- Because of Nehemiah's passion, God did a miraculous work and they built the walls in only 52 days! When we work, God works!
- **Matthew 28:19** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ...
- **Mark 16:15** Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
- **Luke 24:47** That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations ...
- **John 20:21** As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.
- **Acts 1:8** Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me ...
- What part of "GO" don't we understand? ("We'll pay someone else to do it, that's not our responsibility" – NO! I MUST! I MUST!)
- If you're not urgent about the Great Commission, you're in the wrong church - because we're going to keep at it until things change around here! We can't have church as usual while the world is going to hell!
- What if we get all these new people in here and they mess up our church? What if the new ones outnumber the old ones? What if someone smokes in the parking lot? What if someone wears immodest clothing to church? What if I lose my seat, my parking place, or my position? **Pastor, what if things change?**
- We have no business to criticize anybody or anything until we personally have become URGENT about the Great Commission! It's not about throwing your offering in the plate on Sunday and heading back to your "real life" on Monday! It's about URGENCY! I MUST!
- It's not over until every member of this church says, "I'm responsible!" It's not over until every person in Fredericton, including college students from dozens of countries, hears the gospel! It's not over until this church becomes a flashpoint for revival in Canada!
- Someday God will ask you, "What did you do personally about my Great Commission?" What will your answer be? I gave in the offering? I attended the services? I enjoyed the socials? I sang in the choir? I preached a sermon? What do YOU want to tell Jesus?
- **Romans 1:14-15 (NLT)** For I have a great sense of obligation to people in our culture and to people in other cultures, to the educated and uneducated alike. So I am eager to come to you ... to preach God's Good News.
- I am obligated! I am a debtor! **I must! I must! I MUST!**
- **1 Corinthians 9:22 (KJV)** To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.
- **If we're going to reach this generation, we absolutely must get out of our comfort zone!** Coming to this building every week and waiting for the sinners to show up won't do it – over 70% of North Americans do not attend church!
- Every member of this church needs to enlist again in God's army and say, "Ready! Aim! Fire!" Most Canadian churches gather every week to say, "Ready! Aim! Aim! Aim! ..."
- In March 2001, God impressed on me a vision for this local church. To be honest, I put it away for awhile because we got hit so hard by the enemy in the last couple of years. But it's time to dust it off!
- God is giving us some brand new opportunities! **I MUST! I MUST!**

OUR VISION FOR FREDERICTON

**Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.
(Revelation 3:8)**

- **We dare to dream** of a place where lost people can find God, hurting people can find healing, and all people can find love.
- **We dare to dream** of welcoming thousands into membership in our church family, developing each individual to spiritual maturity, and equipping them for a significant ministry in the body of Christ.
- **We dare to dream** of a church that is passionate for evangelism, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with the thousands of residents of greater Fredericton, supporting dozens of career missionaries on every continent, and sending out hundreds of our members on short-term mission projects around the world.
- **We dare to dream** of an army of lay ministers, committed to using their God-given gifts, talents, energies and resources to achieve excellence and spiritual impact in every ministry of the church.
- **We dare to dream** of a congregation mature enough to embrace Apostolic truth and Biblical holiness, yet compassionate enough to include people at any stage in their walk with God.
- **We dare to dream** of a church campus on fifty acres of land, housing beautiful yet simple facilities including a Worship Center where people can experience God's presence, an Education Center where people can study God's Word, a Prayer Center where people can hear God's voice, and a Family Center where people can fellowship with God's children, all set in a peaceful, inspiring garden landscape.
- **We dare to dream** of a church family who love, learn, live, laugh and labor together, where everyone is included, anyone can be involved, and no one feels insignificant.
- **We dare to dream** of a people who will pray in harmony, give with generosity, work in unity and worship with expectancy until God hears from Heaven and heals our land with a visitation of His glory in the city of Fredericton.