

The QBC Daily Nugget March 7, 2010

“The Rules of the Lord are true and righteous. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold” (Psalm 19:9b-10a)

ROMANS 12:15 – Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: **VESSELS OF MERCY**. Humans hurt. All of us. Are you a Christian? You have hurts and disappointments. Are you not a Christian? You have hurts and disappointments. Did Job ever get it right with these words – “Man who is born of a woman is few of days and full of trouble” (**JOB 14:1**)! Job wasn’t alone in his assessment of life in a world estranged from God. We could pull up a chair alongside Solomon and he would give his rendition of Job’s message like this, “For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.” Even our Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples, which includes us who know Him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament” (**JOHN 16:20a**). Humans hurt and for the believer in the Lord Jesus, that opens us up to become vessels of mercy to hurting souls.

When in the United States Navy, I served on various types of vessels. What determined the make-up of the vessel and all its associated equipment was the mission it was designed to perform. Get the mission down, then build the vessel. Now take that principle into our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and ask ourselves if we are on His mission and thus being equipped to be vessels to fulfill that mission. Let’s start out with the mission statement of our Lord revealed in Luke’s gospel. He is just about to launch His ministry and he proclaimed His mission – “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (**LUKE 4:16-19**).

As we seek to follow our Lord, there are four things necessary for us to own and live from His mission’s statement if we are to be His vessels of mercy to all the hurting people around us. First, seek to be a Spirit-filled person – “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me”. Unless we know the Spirit’s enabling, our ministry to the hurting will not last. We will lose heart, lose energy, and lose compassion. Only the Spirit can sustain ministry to the hurting (**2 CORINTHIANS 3:4-6**). The second necessity is to be versed in the good news of Christ – “He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the the poor”. Gospel saturated Christians become Gospel sharing Christians and effective ministers of mercy. Take away the Gospel, we offer hurting people nothing for the true healing of a hurting heart. The third necessity to be a vessel of mercy is to go to hurting people – “He has sent me”. We are to pray for hurts, but never think prayer alone is the answer. Pray for hurting people, yes, then begin to seek a way to be an answer to your prayers for them by getting involved in their lives. Intercessory prayer will include ways of involvement in the lives of those we intercede for in their hurts and sorrows. A phone call to a hurting brother or sister saying, “I am praying for you” followed up with, “Would you like to get together and talk?” just might be part of the answer to your prayer for them. A fourth necessity to be a vessel of mercy is to realize there is no “quick fix” when it comes to ministering to hurting people – “to set at liberty those who are oppressed”. An oppressed or depressed soul needs a commitment to whatever it takes, and as long as it takes, by one wanting to be a vessel of mercy. True ministry, like Jesus, a vessel of mercy, is costly, but the world is full of hurting humans needing someone to pay the cost. Is that “someone” each of us?

PRAYER: “Lord, as You are my Potter, make me moldable clay, fit to be made into a vessel of mercy.”

QUOTE: “The beginning of becoming a vessel of mercy is to embrace the Master’s mission statement.”