

THE ULTIMATE DREAM

FAITH FLASH ARTICLE

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The ultimate dream of any missionary is to have top-notch native preachers in every city of his field of labor. Why, what missionary would not want hundreds of eloquent red-hot revivalist preachers? Regretfully, such dreams are usually classified under the "pie in the sky" category.

As a matter of fact, I have dedicated the last thirty years of my life in pursuit of such elusive dreams. And after all of these years, I still dream THE DREAM every night of finding a Saul/Paul, only to awake to stark reality every morning.

In reality, on most foreign fields you often will not find much more than a smorgasbord of mix-matched (frail) men, united only by their calling. And sometimes even that thin line of ministerial unity is severely tested.

So-called church experts, looking at the group through their critical eyes will see that there is little to behold as far as an "exciting prospective" of a "winning team" is concerned. Much like Gideon and his moldy crew of three hundred "soldiers"... they are (were) usually anything... but that!

I have even seen, on occasion, the disdain of a visiting "supporter", as he looked down on some raggedy person... a called man of God (!?). Of course, that is only his prejudiced opinion (may the lord rebuke such experts). God does not see things that way!

Somehow, midst those cracked violins and twisted cellos (seen by many as discarded men), God ordains that very group of men to blend into a SYMPHONY of called and chosen!

Yes, many of those men are (perhaps) simpletons, others are hotheaded and impulsive (reminds you a little of the disciples that followed Jesus). But into their hands, under the leadership of the missionary, the soul of a whole nation is deposited.

So, the next time you see a missionary struggling with bickering national preachers (who really should know better), please don't blame the missionary... if you must blame someone... blame God, He called them!

You see, the One who calls a man to the ministry is God Himself... not the missionary! Yes, the ultimate dream of a missionary is to have men and money. But neither is easy to come by, especially the first item!

Here in Brazil, we face the same problem... even after these many years! Yes! We DO have preachers that preach poorly... and others that are not well versed with their table manners. Should they be discarded because of such "de-

How can we discard them if they are CALLED by God? Don't forget Rev. Samuel... you are merely looking for a king, God is looking for a vessel (first) that can be made into a king! Immediately, two Brazilian Pastors come to my mind. Neither of them has flash... nor splash! As a matter of fact, they both barely can read and write. You would say they are "all thumbs"...

Yet, the first one (Pastor "O") is uniquely called of God to find other young men that have a calling... and those young workers often DO HAVE flash and splash! The genesis of their ministerial success can be found in the anointing of Pastor "O"... the very one that "cannot preach his way out of a wet paper bag".

The second man of God that comes to mind is Pastor "J". He blubbers when he talks/preaches. He would make anyone a nervous wreck if you just focused on that. But, BECAUSE OF HIS CALLING, he is WILLING to go ANYWHERE just to preach the Gospel! Eternity will tell how many villages heard Truth because of "blubber mouth".

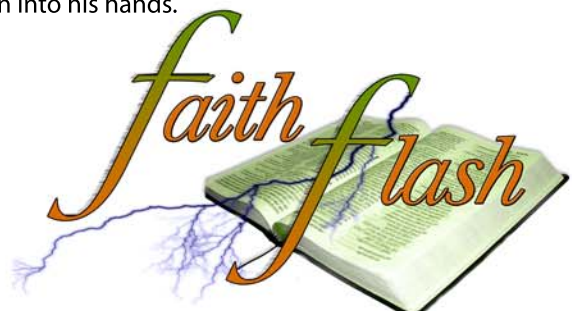
It is men, CALLED men like Pastor "O" and Pastor "J", that cause the angels to sing every time another soul is prayed through to the Holy Ghost in some wilderness village. Don't forget: angels sing to the SYMPHONY of detuned violins... it is God that supplies the HARMONY to the whole plan!

Don't "shoot" the missionary just because the local ministry is not top guns! The missionary is working with what God gave him...and nothing more!

True enough, it is the missionary's responsibility to maintain a CLEAN ministry among the nationals. And that is a thankless job in itself because often the best of the ministerial crop is blighted beyond recovery.

But should the missionary be considered a failure because of the lack of multiple bright "stars"? Never!

Let the missionary dream the ultimate dream... meanwhile encourage him to continue working with what God has given into his hands.



With Rev. John Bradley Lambeth