

Fresh Oil



April 2019

Dear Fellow Servants,

Churches need many things to thrive in this world. They need good programs, adequate finances, an attractive facility, etc. However, none of those things would count for anything without the necessary component called COMMITMENT. The apostle Paul understood the value of commitment and modeled it in his life and ministry. He encouraged the Galatian believers that rewards came when commitments are carried through to completion. Consider what he said in Galatians 6:9:

"And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary"

What makes these words of Paul have more of an impact is the fact that he wrote them while imprisoned in Rome. He hadn't given up on the work of the Lord. He understood the power of commitment, that is vital to see one through a difficult circumstance. He also wrote to the Philippians while in that Roman jail. Here is what he told them in Phil. 3:13-14:

"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"

Did you happen to notice something in that passage? Paul's ability to stay committed was directly linked to his ability to maintain his focus. He didn't get distracted and bogged down with a bunch of things, going in several directions. Instead, he chose to forget the past and set his sights on what was ahead. Commitment is the engine that drives our focus. Without it we would throw in the towel and lose heart.

Nevertheless, commitment doesn't happen that automatically. Our ability to stay committed will be tested by action. Arthur Gordon once said,

"Nothing is easier than saying words. Nothing is harder than living them day after day"

Let me close this edition of "Fresh Oil" with a cute illustration that John Maxwell shared about a newly-elected judge. During his acceptance speech he said, "I wish to thank the 424 people who promised to vote for me. I wish to thank the 316 people who said that they did vote for me. I wish to thank the 47 people who came out last Thursday to vote, and I wish to thank the 26 folks who actually did vote for me."

So, I must ask you, how are you doing in the area of following through on your commitments?

Your fellow servant,

Pastor Brian

... I have been anointed with fresh oil

PSALM 92:10

