

# **“ A Personal Journey to becoming a Shepherd”**

## **An Inspirational Guide**

### **Abstract**

This paper will provide the fundamental basis for running a three year Missions Campaign for Beaverton SDA Church. With God’s help, it is intended to inspire individuals to become shepherds of flocks like the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ. Both the Bible and Ellen G. White writings will be used to ground ones thinking and provide compelling arguments for engaging in a mission’s campaign that is bigger than us. The hope is that the sound counsel and quotes from Jesus, our Good Shepherd, will touch hearts and help everyone receive the Holy Spirit. This document will be used as an Inspirational guide to point us to the Bible, so that we will study it with fervor and be grounded in its truths. The hope is that everyone people will hear His voice and aspire to lead and guide the flock that each individual shepherd chooses to lead.

**Missions Program**

**Beaverton SDA Church**

**October, 2009**

# Outline

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# Inspirational Guide to Missions

## Introduction

According to the laws of Physics the objects that move in circular motion have two forces propelling them – centripetal and centrifugal forces. Centripetal force tends to accelerate an object toward the axis of rotation while the centrifugal force is directed away from the center of rotation. When these two forces are balanced the objects are set in motion. One might say “What does this have to do with missions?” Well, quite a bit. A mission minded church will need to set these two forces into motion to create the momentum. The inward force helps one to focus on the members of the church and allows the church to be grounded in the principles of a mission oriented church. When the church is ignited by the Holy Spirit, the church members are propelled outward, to tell others about Jesus and His soon coming. The outward force is equally important as the inward force. However the impact of the outward force is far reaching than any other force. The balance of the inward and outward force creates a momentum that cannot be stopped. These laws of nature hold true at the individual level, the small group level and the congregational level. Synchronizing these forces and creating a balance at each level is what is required to set each group in motion. This paper attempt to provide some insights into how these forces can be discovered and be set in motion to create momentum that will respond to the Gospel Commission.

### I.0 Creating the Inward Force

Before we can begin working on a centrifugal or force, one needs to focus on the inward or the centripetal force. Leadership must begin with self change first. If we believe that God has put us in a leadership role to help change others the change has to begin with us. God has to change us and strengthen our own spirituality. We must choose to surrender our lives and walk with him.

This inward change calls for a personal relationship with the living, all powerful Creator God through faith in His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This change involves receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal savior. Our

salvation is a gift of God's love and forgiveness. When we accept this gift we must make a commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a commitment of one's intellect, emotions and will.

Intellectually, as Seventh-day Adventist we know, that we have the truth, we can prove it from the Bible and we can connect the historical events predicted in the Bible. We are knowledgeable on the books of Daniel and Revelation and we can speak intellectually on these topics with charts and date lines. These are important and wonderful things but have we neglected the emotional side of our relationship with God? Are we passionate about what believe and can we prove it? Do we passionately love God or are we passive about it? How passionate was Jesus Christ in dying for us on the cross of Calvary. He was so intense that He was sweating blood, praying all night and fasting for 40 days. God chose His Son because He was passionate about the mission of saving us. As leaders we must have this passion to serve Him and God will choose us and anoint us to do His mission on earth. We must daily surrender our lives and walk with Him to gain the strength and the passion we need.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup>neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:37-39

The final facet of our commitment comes with our will to serve. God is not looking for intellect, good looks or wealth. God is looking for a willing heart. It has to come from within ourselves. The inward forces that will propel the momentum come from our will to serve Him. This force cannot be directed to many different directions. We cannot serve two masters at the same time. We must be totally committed to Him and Him alone.

## **II. On Creating Outward Force**

Once the inward forces are set into motion, it is time to ponder on how the outward forces must be triggered to create the momentum.

All around us we see the fulfillment of prophecy and the signs of the Lords soon coming. It is an exciting time as well as a perilous time we are living in - exciting because we have seen huge leaps in technology and increases in knowledge, and perilous because the level of immorality, crime, wars and disasters have increased exponentially. With all of this happening around us, we know that the Lord is coming soon. So, what are we doing about it? Sometimes, we wonder how people could have missed the Lords first coming. In reading the book of Jeremiah, we see that the people were given a detailed account in prophecy of Jesus' first coming. No one should have missed the direct fulfillment of the prophecy when Jesus came. Interestingly, the heathen and the lowly grasped message and worshipped Him and celebrated His arrival. Unfortunately, the ones that claimed to have all the knowledge were too proud and blind to see the signs and they missed Him. Well, how are we doing? Every day we see signs. It is no longer a prophecy of future happenings. Many signs are happening today, right before our eyes. Are we getting numb? Is complacency seeping in?

The important question is - how are we reacting to these signs? Are we not doing the same thing that people did during His first coming! We are doing our routine religious traditions and rituals. We have a chance to wake up. Time is running out. We need to feel the urgency. We cannot fall into the same trap they did. We must wake up. We need to pray for a revival and learn how to prioritize our lives. Some of us have our priorities backwards. We hear ourselves saying "Let me take care of all my home activities and work responsibilities and if I have any time left over, I will give it to the Lord". We all know how that works, whether it is money, time or stamina. There is usually nothing left to give to the Lord. The transformation that we must seek must be for us to re-order our lives and get our priorities straight. We cannot do it on our own and must claim the promises given to us by our Lord. He promised that if we ask He will pour out the Holy Spirit and shower us with the "latter rain" to equip us with what we need to face the last days prior to His coming. He has also warned us that Satan will be going around to "devour" us and will try to deceive the very elect. It will be a shame if

we miss Him again. With all the warnings and the prophecies we have, we must pray that we will not fall into the same trap and be lost. We cannot and must not let it happen. The Lord is waiting patiently for us to change. We must not let Him down.

The Beaverton SDA church is working on a three year campaign. It will be great to be interrupted to see the Lord descend from heaven and for Him to find us preparing for Him with all our heart. The reason it is important to unite and stay focused on His soon coming is because the enemy will find ways to distract us. If we unite as a church working together, praying together, asking for the out pouring of the Holy Spirit, Satan will not have a chance. Therefore it is not just a nice thing to do this but it critical to our fundamental beliefs to be a church that is on fire for the Lord.

Once the elements that create the forces of energy are set in motion nothing can stop them. All we have to do is to ask the Lord to bless these forces and magnify them!

### III.0 How are we charged by the Gospel Commission?

When I was coming to America, my parent's farewell message to me was "whatever you do, never forget God, read your Bible and pray every day". This farewell message captures the essence of their love and their aspirations for me in a simple language with a world of meaning.

When Jesus gave His farewell message to His disciples, it was precise and clear filled with love. He had just laid down His life for them and for all the world. He wanted to make sure that they fulfilled the mission of spreading the gospel to all the world. Did Jesus know if they could do it? Yes, He knew that in their own strength they could not do it, but when He equipped them with the Holy Spirit, He knew that their accomplishments would not have limits. At their parting, all He asked of His disciples was a willing heart and for them to know that He will return to take them home.

The key words in the gospel commission are:

1. Go .....to all the world
2. Teach.....the good news of salvation
3. Baptize.....everyone that believes in Him
4. Make them Disciples...bring them into the fold

Here are the words that Jesus used when He commissioned his disciples along with promises, as recorded in the gospels:

- Go into all the world (Mark 16:15 NIV)
- preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15 NIV)
- Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19
- You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8 NASB ©1995)
- They were to go out of their way, approach people regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or faith, and challenge them to become His followers. (summarized Isaiah 61:1-3)

In the Three and half years with Jesus, the disciples tried to understand His mission and stayed in their comfort zones. The transformation only happened after Jesus left. His farewell message and His action oriented message sank in. Their honest commitment, dedication was blessed with the Holy Spirit and as promised, Jesus was with them as recorded in the scriptures "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world". Once the Disciples went through the "upper room experience", they were not the same. They were focused, confident and on fire for the Lord and nothing could stop them.

The disciple internalized the farewell message from Jesus their Master. They fearlessly shaped the early Christian church.

To the members of the early Christian church was given a precious trust. They were to be executors of the will in which Christ had bequeathed to the world the treasure life eternal. Repentance and remission of sins was to be preached in His name among all nation, beginning at Jerusalem. And they proved true to their trust. Endued soon afterward with power from

on high, they boldly confessed their faith in the risen Savior. Many of such as should be saved were added to their number...Review and Herald, march 24, 1910.

The disciples created ripples through the "then known" world. Their desire was that people in the churches they established, would create their own ripples till the end of the world. Ripples have a certain momentum and if new ripples are not created they will all disappear. The Lord in His way has a backup plan. If we do not create these ripples, the very stones will rise up and create the ripples. That would be a sad day! It is an honor to serve Him. The gospel commission is given to us just like it was given to His disciples. The commission is to tell everyone about Him and His soon coming. It is no mistake, we are chosen to heed to His farewell message today. We should feel privileged to be living in these last days and It is no accident that God has a plan for us individually and collectively today.

This mandate, from the Lord Himself, is simple, beautiful, and binding. It is for every follower, whether member, pastor, or administrator--Go ... teach ... baptize ... make disciples. This principle ignites the mission of the Church and sets the standard for any measuring, any assessment, of success. It touches all, whatever their responsibility, whether they are laypersons or church employees. It spans all the elements of church life, from the local church to the General Conference, in schools and colleges, publishing houses, health-care institutions, and health food organizations. The promise is encapsulated in the baptismal vows, in mission statements, in aims and objectives, in policies, and in constitutions and bylaws "to witness to His loving salvation," "to facilitate the proclamation of the everlasting gospel," "to supply the multitudes with the bread of life," and "to nurture them in preparation for His soon return." The four-fold command to go ... teach ... baptize ... make disciples sounds wherever Seventh-day Adventists work or come together. (Fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church)

The Gospel commission cannot be clearer; it cannot be any more compelling.

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, third angels messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are

to allow nothing else to absorb their attention. Testimonies,  
Vol.9.p.19

So the next question is - how should one respond? Ellen white is very clear in terms of our priorities.

#### **IV. Responding to the Gospel Commission - enabling both the inward and outward Forces**

God's intention for us is to respond to His commission. He gave us the command and has promised to enable us. Therefore we must choose to use all the forces of energy to respond whole heartedly to His Commission.

Is there a specific way to respond to the Gospel Commission?

All four Gospels stress that Jesus' followers are to take the life of God that they experience in the church and carry it to the world. All are to share the good news that through the Holy Spirit, Jesus, the living Lord of both church and world, meets and joins with His followers in the church. The life that God intended is already available here and now, and as long as time lasts: "I will be with you always, to the end of time" (Matt. 28:20, REB).

The disciples followed Jesus' example and with the power given to them by the Holy Spirit went out and preached the Gospel. They used every fiber of energy and every force they had to preach the Gospel with confidence. They did not fear death or persecution. This is because they believed with all their heart that Jesus was coming back to save the world. They knew that their Master was counting on them. They had to spread the good news so that the Ultimate sacrifice of their Master will not be in vain. The Lord gave them the intellect, passion and will to respond to the Gospel Commission. The same will give us what we need today to respond to Him.

#### **V. What does it mean to be a Shepherd**

When we take Jesus as our example of a Good Shepherd, and try to be like Him, we will change.

Christ is the foundation of every true church. We have His unalterable promise that His presence and protection will be given to His faithful ones who walk in his counsel... The duty and delight of all service is to uplift Christ before the people. Testimonies. Vol .9 p.147

Each one of us is equipped by God, with our life's experience, our walk with God, intellect, passion and will. God will provide opportunities. We must pick the area in which we want to serve Him. We must select the people that we will work with in creating flocks for the Lord. There is no "cookie cutter" method or mold to replicate us. We are different and we bring a variety of talents, skills and experiences. We need to submit ourselves to the Lord and ask Him to show us where we can be best utilized in this ministry. When we do this, our human inadequacies disappear and we will only see the strength and courage of God leading us and lifting us up. We will not be discouraged by lack of people's confidence in us because we will be filled with the Holy Spirit. We will be able to do things that would be impossible. We will be on a spiritual high...gaining victory over Satan as we lead and guide the sheep entrusted to us. Just like the Good Shepherd finds us, a shepherd must find his/her sheep. The shepherd communicates the love of the Good Shepherd and draws many sheep to the fold.

## **VII. Call to Action**

If we truly believe that the Gospel commission must be fulfilled in our generation, we must take action now.

**Commitment** is the first step. It is the entrusting of one's self to a definite purpose. This comes from within one's self and our communication with God. It is quite easy to see whether we are truly committed or not. Commitment to one's self is different from committing to God. When you commit to ourselves that we will stop a bad habit, some are more committed than the others. It is very easy to see who is really committed and who is not. However, when we commit to God, we cannot shy away from our commitment. We must always remember that God will give us the strength to stay committed. He did not break His commitment to us. He restored us from sin and gave us the opportunity to be saved.

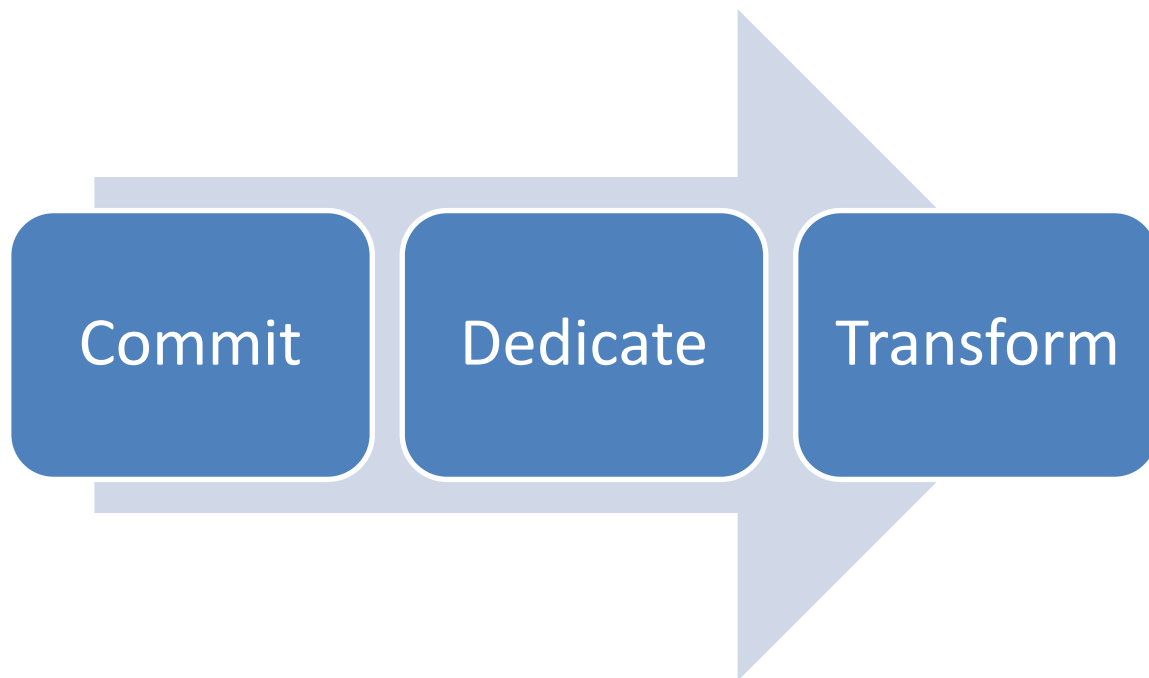
The second step is the pure, unadulterated **Dedication**. Dedication is the act of setting ourselves apart for a religious purpose. Once we dedicate our lives for Him there is no turning back. It has to be a complete submission of our lives to Him.

Once this is achieved, it will be amazing to see the inward and outward change happening. This is a **transformation** of all the forces being set into motion and there is no stopping of how we will be used by the Lord. The priorities in our life will be changed. We will no longer be frazzled by earthly burdens. We will no longer be trying to please someone on this earth but doing the will of God. We will be on an exciting ride. People will wonder what is going on with us. We will be given so many opportunities to witness for Him. We will be given special gifts to attract sheep to the fold. We will meditate on the Lord day and night.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.  
Whatever he does prospers. Psalms 1:2,3

We must claim this promise in Psalms. God can count on us to be like the “tree planted by the water”. Our work will flourish. What an awesome experience this will be. With God’ help we can do it.



## Conclusion

As Bonhoeffer once said in his writings – “A church is a church when it exists for others”. Let us go forth and bring people into the church and make it functional for others to meet Him and to know Him.

God is glorified in saving men from all tribes and tongues solely on the basis of His mercy and power. The collection of the redeemed doesn't bring glory to Him because they are so impressive but because His love for them is. Angels, demons, believers, and even the lost see the church as curiously amazing in its collection of disparate people brought together under the love of God. What greater motivation do we have for working toward revitalization? God is glorified in our efforts even if we don't register numerical increase or find personal fulfillment in the response of those we work with. While it is possible that working to revitalize a church isn't the Lord's will I would argue that those cases are vastly smaller in number than

the ones in which revitalization absolutely is the Lord's will. Filed under: Church Revitalization, Ministry Posts [Leave a comment](#)

The ultimate satisfaction in all this is that God is glorified and His mercy and grace saves us and all those we labored for. All heaven rejoices when souls are brought to him by sincere, committed believers. In this mode of operation with the forces acting within us and outside of us, we behold the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. How could anything else be better than this? To be able to look up and say "Lord we have eagerly waited for you, our joy knows no bounds to go home with you!" May the Lord continue to guide us as we seek His will for us on this earth?

May we, with God's help trigger the centripetal and centrifugal forces and become the catalysts that God wants us to be. May He enable us to create the energy and the passion for the missions by responding to the Gospel Commission in a way that we have never thought of before? The Lord is coming soon and we can no longer delay!