



Fulfilling Our Missional Mandate

Pastor Marc Estes

I. Introduction

A. A2 Conversation Comments

#Introduce Self, Privilege to be with all of you. Want to honor all of you for your dedication to building great local churches. You truly are the hope to the world.

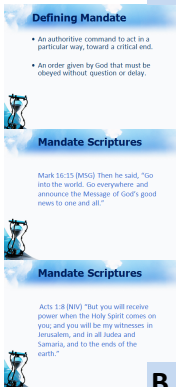
B. Message Introduction

1. This session topic is, "Fulfilling Our Mandate." It is a challenging session mainly because all of us totally understand our mandate as well as completely embrace it as our responsibility.
2. The challenge lies not in the understanding of it, but the implementation of it.
3. Like most Christians, the reality of hell and the implications of not sharing, seem to get lost in the midst of all of life's other challenges, pressure points and priorities.
4. However, the world is in desperate need of Him! It is volatile times. World is upside down in every sector. There is no other solution to world's problem but Jesus! WE are the ones.
5. As leaders, our priorities need to shift regarding the urgency of sharing the Good News.

II. Defining Mandate

Let's begin by looking at the meaning of Mandate. Fresh look at magnitude of this command.

A. Defining Mandate



1. Webster's: "An authoritative /command to act /in a particular way,/ toward a critical end."
2. Christian: "An order given by God that must be obeyed without question or delay."
3. The last words of Jesus capture God's mandate for the church; primary reason we exist.
Mark 16:15 MSG Then he said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news to one and all."
Acts 1:8 NIV "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
4. This mandate was an urgent priority; a really BIG deal to Christ. "SHARE HIS LOVE."
66%/54%

B. Our Mandate

1. The mandate given by Christ applies to all churches. We don't have the option to choose our own mandate, or to make it a lower priority. It is His church, His plan, His Purpose. We are His people, we are not our own! #employee telling boss new plans; CAR-PET
2. We have been placed in the most unstable time in the history of the United States.
Q- Ed Stezer – "The mandate of the church is to increase the fame of God through the redemption of people."
Q- Paul Harvey – "Too many Christians are no longer fishers of men. Instead they have become keepers of the aquarium."
3. He has trusted us to reach people for Him. It is our mission, it is our mandate! This must be a passion and priority in all we do as a church.

III. Mission Mandate Inhibitors

There are many common challenges that we face as Church Leaders as to, why we struggle making the Good News a high priority in our lives and our churches. We understand, it is our responsibility, but just don't. These inhibitors are seen in churches abroad.

We must be reminded: What is in the heart of the leader is what determines the heart of the church.

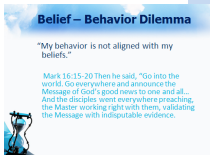
Your beliefs, thoughts, attitudes and actions shape the culture of a church.

Evangelistic leaders produce evangelistic churches. Inward leaders, produce an inward church.

Inhibitor Defined: "A substance or impurity that decreases the rate of, or stops completely an important process." Used in Chemistry; substances to stop chemical reactions. Gospel is explosive!

The first step in fulfilling our mandate is to recognize the MANDATE INHIBITORS. Here are TOP TEN: (Don't include main personal ones; fear, intimidation, complacency, apathy)

A. The Belief-Behavior Dilemma



1. Our challenge: "My behavior is not aligned with my beliefs." **#All have to a degree.**
Mark 16:15-20 NIV Then he said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news to one and all (BELIEVED)... And the disciples went everywhere preaching, the Master working right with them, validating the Message with indisputable evidence. (BEHAVED)"

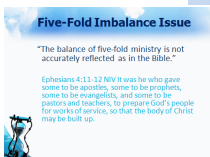
2. The greatest dilemma facing the church today is this one; all levels with all people!
We principally agree but don't practically apply. We believe, but we don't behave.

#The Plane that never takes off- An Indian entrepreneur gives people who can't afford to fly a chance to try it. The Airbus 300 never leaves the ground. One wing, no lighting, no toilets, but can hear announcements & be waited on by flight attendants. People come from all over to sit in plane that never flies. Go through motions without any action!

3. Current stats on Church abroad: (Brad Wagoner – Shape of Faith to Come) Declining Behavior
 - 60% pray weekly for a person that needs Christ.
 - 36% have invited someone to church within the last month.
 - 10% seek opportunities to speak about Christ, but doesn't translate into actual encounter.
 - 7% spend time with someone regularly that needs Christ.
 - 5% have led someone to Christ.

#CBC – We are working hard to change this dilemma. We have made choice to shift as primary purpose. Not just an event, series or season. It is the reason we exist. Been 2+ years!

B. The Five-Fold Imbalance Issue



1. Our challenge: "The balance of five-fold ministry is not accurately reflected as in the Bible."
Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

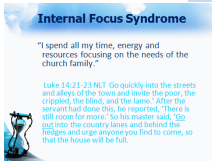
2. As a spirit filled church, we all understand the definition and purpose of the Five-fold ministry. These ascension gifts were given as key positions to build up the church. The NT gives us what that balance looks like.
#My wife's cookies = need right ingredients and RIGHT amounts to make right end result.
3. The Biblical balance of the five determines the overall health of the church. All are important and all must be given proper representation to build a thriving, healthy local church. The usage/mixture determines the fruit!
#Pastor = caring community of introverted people. Prophetic = subjective, etc.
4. A big issue today in the church abroad, is the enhanced focus on a few of the ascension gifts and the lack of focus on the Evangelist gift. Evangelism is a critical building-growing-reaching gift to the body and should receive ample attention as others. Lack of evangelism results in a lack of true conversion growth.

DISCIPLES	PROPHETS	EVANGELISTS	WITNESSES	TEACHERS
Disciples Heard 144 Times	Prophecies Heard 144 Times	Evangelists Heard 3 Times	Witness Heard 14 Times	Teachers Heard 36 Times
Accounted 144 144 Times	Prophecies Made 144 Times	Evangelists Made 144 Times	Witnesses Made 144 Times	Teachers Made 144 Times
211 TOTAL	177 TOTAL	135 TOTAL	29 TOTAL	151 TOTAL

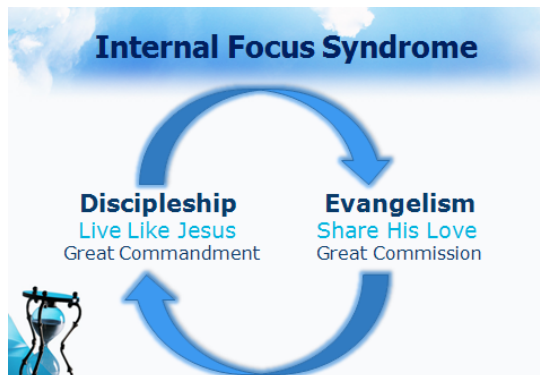
5. We MUST ask ourselves a few honest questions, individually and corporately:
- Where do I/WE devote most of my time and energy in my ministry area? Personal Lives?
 - How much of MY/OUR ministry area focuses on internal vs. external ministry?
 - How many people (volunteers/staff) in MY/OUR ministry area focus on reaching the lost?
 - How much of MY/OUR budget is devoted to fulfilling the Great Commission?

Dr. Richard Armstrong (Princeton, 5 decades of studying church growth) says, “One painful conclusion I reached long ago, and have had no reason to modify after many years of trying to help churches accept and fulfill their ministry of evangelism, is that the bottleneck in the process is often-if not usually – the pastor. It may be theoretically possible, but it is highly improbable, that any congregation will accept its corporate evangelist responsibility without the active leadership, support and involvement of the pastor and its core leadership team.

C. The Internal Focus Syndrome



1. Our challenge: "I spend all my time, energy and resources focusing on the needs of the church family."
2. We have been blessed with an abundance of people to care for. We are admonished to know the state of the flock and attend to the herds.
3. Caring for people is right and important. We need to pastor, teach and equip. We need to love, encourage and relate. But for what purpose? Jesus seemed to allude to going and reaching!
Luke 14:21-23 NLT Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' After the servant had done this, he reported, '**There is still room for more.**' So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full.'
4. We are called to make disciples, but building disciples is not the end, or the means, but both; it's cyclical. God desires both quantity and quality!



D. The RLI Syndrome



1. Our challenge: "All my friends and family are believers and a part of the church."
John 1:41 NLT Andrew went to find his brother, Simon, and told him, "We have found the Messiah"
Acts 10:24 (Cornelius) They arrived in Caesarea the following day. Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends.
Acts 16:31-32 (Philippians Jailer) "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." ³² And they shared the word of the Lord with him and with all who lived in his household.
2. We all should have strong healthy relationships within the church. However, we should also have many relationships with those who are not yet a Christian, teach others too! **#86 RFNC**
3. The pace and focus of our lives causes us to suffer from a disease called, "RLI Syndrome." For some it is chronic, for others it is terminal.

- R - Redemption: We are saved and redeemed from our sins.
- L - Lift: We are lifted from our sinful lifestyle and habits.

I - Isolation: In the process we leave our sinful relationships behind.

4. This was first recognized and labeled by John Wesley back in the late 1700's. Started the Methodist movement. He said, that, *"any movement (church) that cannot reproduce itself would be extinct within two generations... if we as a movement don't break out from our Christian relationships, we too will cease to exist."* **#Look at the Methodist church today???**
5. We must be proactive in breaking free from this crippling disease in order to thrive!

E. The Wrong Gift Deception

The Wrong Gift Deception

"It's not my gift or personality. Evangelism is for the evangelists!"
2 Timothy 4:5 Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.



1. Our challenge: "It's not my gift or personality. Evangelism is for evangelists." **#38% say so.**
2 Timothy 4:5 NLT Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you. (Do the work of an evangelist and fulfill your ministry/ **notice the order!**)
1 Peter 3:15 NLT And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.
2. Many agree that there is some personal responsibilities attached to the Great Commission but still tend to shift the leadership burden to others. These are common occurrences:
 - The Lead Pastor is responsible for inspiring people to share their faith.
 - Our outreach ministries will fulfill the mandate for us. (Food, Homeless, Youth, Reach, etc.)
 - I am too committed to my gift area; all the others can make up the slack.
 - My department is more focused on other areas; evangelism isn't really a part of what we do.**#Isaac/Katrina Tarter – challenged and did LL Project. Entire family gets saved!**

F. The Lacking Knowledge Illusion

The Lacking Knowledge Illusion

"I have not been equipped to share the Good News in this rapid changing culture."
Mark 13:11 Don't worry in advance about what to say. Just say what God tells you at that time, for it is not you who will be speaking, but the Holy Spirit.



1. Our challenge: "I have not been equipped to share the Good News in this rapid changing culture."
2. I have to admit, the melting pot of religious beliefs does make it a challenge. **#I'm from PDX!**
#Jehovah Witness, Calvinist, Catholic.
#"I am making up my own religion."
#Rob Charnoff – White Magic, Satanist, Jew – "When you gonna 'do it' to me?"
Mark 13:11 NLT Don't worry in advance about what to say. Just say what God tells you at that time, for it is not you who will be speaking, but the Holy Spirit.
3. We should be prepared to give an answer for the hope within us, but also remember the Holy Spirit will give us everything we need in every situation.
4. We are called to proclaim the truth, more so than just defend it. –
Isaiah 55:11 NLT It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

G. The Internal Pressure Syndrome

The Internal Pressure Syndrome

"I would love to reach others but am overwhelmed with the daily tasks of ministry and find it difficult to find time to build relationships with those who need Christ."

Colossian 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.
Luke 10:40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations.



1. Our challenge: "I would love to reach others but am overloaded with the daily tasks of ministry and find it difficult to find time to build relationships with those who need Christ."
#Any relate?
Colossian 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.
Luke 10:40 NIV But Martha was distracted with all her preparations.

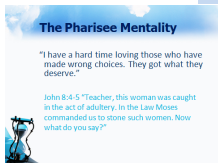
- Administration is a part of what we do. We are a complex organization that requires systems and structure.
- Systems, structure and administration are merely a means to end. We can't make them the end in themselves. We have to protect our vision and not let the mechanics become our focus.
Q - We are called to build people, not programs
- We exist to reach people and make disciples.

H. The Natural Minded Ailment



- Our challenge: "I never really share with others, because I rarely see an opportunity."
John 4:35 NIV "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest."
Romans 8:14 TNIV For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
- We live in the western world and have been immersed in a culture that lives with a natural view of life. Life exists solely with our five natural senses.
- Natural-mindedness always results in a non-urgent mentality, which leads to complacency which converts to apathy, and apathy results in not fulfilling your Mandate!
- The kingdom of God is the opposite. We have been given the Holy Spirit to help us see, hear and live in a different realm; the supernatural realm!
Q – We are not natural beings having a temporal supernatural experience. We are supernatural beings having a temporal natural experience.
#100's of opportunities daily!
#Little Princess – Old lady at Safeway, anniversary flowers.

I. The Pharisee Mentality



- Our challenge: "I have a hard time loving those who have made wrong choices. They got what they deserve!"
John 8:4-5 "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" **#difference between two - BLOOD**
Luke 6:41 NLT Why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?
- If we were painfully honest, there is a little Pharisee mentality in us all! It is so easy to be irritated with the destructive, careless behavior of those who need Christ.
#Bum at Camp – Provoked believers to consider their heart.
- It was this attitude that Christ detested most. He despised the Pharisee's and yet adored the broken, hurting, wounded, abused, accused and accursed.

J. The Retreat from the 'Big-Bad World' Mentality



- Our challenge: "I am concerned with the influence of the world affecting my life. I choose to remain in my church community; better safe than sorry."

Matthew 5:13-16 You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.” / You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

#READ Salt and Light: Our Christian habit is to bewail the world’s deteriorating standards with an air of rather self-righteous dismay. We criticize its violence, dishonesty, immorality, disregard for human life and the materialistic greed. ‘The world is going down the drain,’ we say with a shrug. But whose fault is it? Who is to blame? Let me put it like this. IF the house is dark when night fall comes, there is no sense in blaming the house, for that is what happens when the sun goes down. The question to ask is ‘Where is the light?’ if the meat goes bad and becomes inedible, there is no sense in blaming the meat, for that is what happens when bacteria are left alone to breed. The question to ask is, “where is the salt?” just so, if society deteriorates and its standards decline, till it becomes like a dark night or stinking meat, there is no sense in blaming society, for that is what happens when fallen men and women are left to themselves, and human selfishness is unchecked. The question to ask is, “where is the church?” Why are the salt and light of Jesus Christ not permeating and changing our society? It is sheer hypocrisy on our part to raise our eyebrows, shrug our shoulders or wring our hands. The Lord Jesus told us to be the world’s salt and light. If therefore darkness and rottenness abound, it is our fault and we must accept the blame.

2. With the declining number of people who attend church or desire to even have a relationship with a Christian (due to our reputation), there is a need bring greater emphasis on a “GO AND TELL” approach, not just a “COME AND SEE” approach. Inviting people to church is good, but it simply is not enough!

IV. Missional Mandate Accelerators

We remove inhibitors and now add some accelerators. Accelerators are needed to enhance our progress in fulfilling our mandate. Our natural-temporal man is always in desperate need of supernatural assistance to propel us toward the right destination in a timely manner.



Accelerator Defined – “A device that is used to increase speed to reach a particular destination in a timely manner.” **#Gas Pedal in a car. You don’t use accelerator, you don’t go anywhere: can’t move on own.**

Here are SIX Accelerators that must become a part of our everyday lives as leaders:

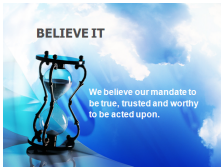
A. Pray It -



1. Our confession: “Our consistent and fervent prayers focus on reaching those in need of Jesus.”
2. Evangelism is one of most resisted activities on planet. It is not natural, but supernatural. **Colossians 4:3-4 NIV** And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

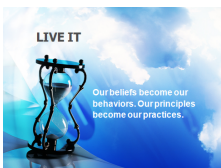
3. Pray is the key to effective evangelism. Paul asks them to pray in two primary ways; the lost and ourselves (them and you). They need change and we need change!
#Holy Man – Teach me to pray like you! “Until you want God...Souls as bad as air..can’t teach..”
4. Here are SIX important, yet practical pray points to pray as a leader:
 - a. Pray daily that God would change your heart toward the lost. **#It is a daily discipline!**
 - b. Pray daily that God would give you daily divine appointments. **James 4:2**
 - c. Pray daily for 7-10 RFNC that need Christ. **#Target specific people**
 - d. Pray for the church to reach your metro area. **#Ask Him for the multitudes**
 - e. Pray for unsaved in every leader meeting. **#Department, Ministry meeting. Services.**
 - f. Encourage others to pray the same.

B. Believe It –



1. Our confession: “We believe our mandate to be true, trusted and worthy to be acted upon.”
2. We just can’t believe for the church or for others, but must believe for ourselves.
Mark 9:23 Everything is possible for those who believe.
Mark 11:24 whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.
2 Corinthians 4:13-15 It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak...
3. BELIEVE Definition, “To be true and trusted and worthy to be acted upon. It assumes that the belief is validated by the action.”
4. BELIEVE = Greek is a present, active verb, not passive. **#I am open to be used. Caskets are open**
#Blondin tight roping across the Niagra Falls? Who believes? Then get on my shoulder
5. Do we REALLY believe that God can use us reach the multitudes?

C. Live It –



1. Our confession: “Our beliefs become our behaviors. Our principles become our practices.”
2. This is where the rubber hits the road! This is where the church is built. This is where our city is turned upside down. This is where we Fulfill Our Mandate. We gotta LIVE IT!.
Acts 8:4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.
James 1:22MSG Don’t fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear!
3. Our beliefs must become our behaviors; our principles must become our practices.
#Three Fingers on Chin - People always see more of what we do than what we say!
4. We must make sharing the Good News a daily priority; personally and corporately. It is the reason why we exist.
5. Don’t always do, because we feel like it, we do it because it is right. It is a discipline, can’t wait for the desire **#Kyle Brushing Teeth, “Don’t feel like it.” Mandate is not based on feeling!**
6. Things we can do:

- Hand out Touch Cards to every person. (Not an exaggeration) **#Great conversation starters**
- Set time aside to build relationships with the unchurched/unsaved. **#David/Uhi BBQ**
- Look for opportunities to, “Live Like Jesus and Share His Love.” **#Find a need and fill it.**
- Get involved in community activities or organizations. **#Bryan and Mark – Softball**

Coaches.

D. Preach It -



- Our confession: “Our speech is filled with a passion and urgency to fulfill our mandate.”
- Each of us has been given the wonderful privilege and responsibility to influence others. What you say to those you lead has significant shaping power. Impart it to others that follow you!
Acts 10:42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.
Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?
- Take the time to preach the need to fulfill our Mandate with passion.
- Preach it in the following areas:
 - Emcees in every weekend service. **“Take a touch card, invite a friend, tell someone!”**
 - Youth Pastors in every mid-week service.
 - Children’s, Origin, Young Adults, Men and Women’s Bible Studies, PBC Classes, etc.
 - All leaders meetings.
 - Every message have a gospel piece in it. Altar call every service.

E. Plan It -



- Our confession: “Our strategies reflect our mandate and carried out through our time, energy, resources.”
- Those who fail to plan, plan to fail. Fulfilling Our Mandate requires strategic planning.
- Here are some planning suggestions:
 - Existing Areas - Block out some time to prayerfully consider how you might add a Mandate emphasis to all aspects of your ministry.
#Children’s did with Summer of Fun, FPU, Connect Groups!
#IDEAS – Encourage Evangelism Study SG’s, Mom2Mom, Serve with Community Partners.
#CBC BUDGET PROCESS – If it doesn’t reach people it doesn’t exist.
 - New Areas - Develop an annual outreach plan for your specific area of ministry.
#TC Book, “The churches that provide multiple evangelistic serving opportunities for their members are some of the fast growing churches in the nation. Inviting their church to their city is as important as inviting their city to their church.”
Veterans Ministry, Foster Care, Sex Trafficking, GU with Janus Youth, CSU, etc.

F. Reproduce It -



1. Our confession: "The fulfillment of our mandate is evident in the multitudes that are passionate to pass it on. "
2. [2 timothy 2:2](#) And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.
3. Every church or movement is just two generations from extinction.
4. We are here as a result of those that went before us and chose to share the gospel throughout the generations. We must be passionate to pass the baton to those who are not yet saved, who will in turn take it to the ends of the earth for a witness... then the end shall come.
#Just one of you could reach world in just 33 years!

V. Conclusion

I want to finish where I began and close with a clip of William Booth sharing his last 60 seconds of words in public at Royal Albert Hall - May 09, 1912. He was not only was a man who was passionate about preaching the gospel, but he would equip those he led to Christ to in turn reach others.

Today, his passion continues to live on through those he equipped. In one year alone, the Salvation Army saw:

- 30 million people attend their public meetings.
- Served more than 35 million people through a variety of programs (basic social services, holiday assistance, substance abuse programs, medical care, transportation assistance, day care and senior citizen's assistance.
- Provided 60 million meals,
- Provided lodging for 11 million people
- Distributed tangible items such as clothing to 22 million people.
- He understood the word MANDATE. He prayed it, believed it, lived it, preached it, planned it AND definitely reproduced it!

Let these words inspire you to Fulfill Our Mandate. Here are his closing 60 seconds of ministry!

[VIDEO "While Weep, I'll Fight \(.54\)](#)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xekOyHgeplc&feature=related>

- **Close in Prayer**

A Vision Of The Lost

By William Booth (1829-1912)

On one of my recent journeys, as I gazed from the coach window, I was led into a train of thought concerning the condition of the multitudes around me. They were living carelessly in the most open and shameless rebellion against God, without a thought for their eternal welfare. As I looked out of the window, I seemed to see them all . . . millions of people all around me given up to their drink and their pleasure, their dancing and their music, their business and their anxieties, their politics and their troubles. Ignorant - willfully ignorant in many cases - and in other instances knowing all about the truth and not caring at all. But all of them, the whole mass of them, sweeping on and up in their blasphemies and devilries to the Throne of God. While my mind was thus engaged, I had a vision.

I saw a dark and stormy ocean. Over it the black clouds hung heavily; through them every now and then vivid lightening flashed and loud thunder rolled, while the winds moaned, and the waves rose and foamed, towered and broke, only to rise and foam, tower and break again.

In that ocean I thought I saw myriads of poor human beings plunging and floating, shouting and shrieking, cursing and struggling and drowning; and as they cursed and screamed they rose and shrieked again, and then some sank to rise no more.

And I saw out of this dark angry ocean, a mighty rock that rose up with its summit towering high above the black clouds that overhung the stormy sea. And all around the base of this great rock I saw a vast platform. Onto this platform, I saw with delight a number of the poor struggling, drowning wretches continually climbing out of the angry ocean. And I saw that a few of those who were already safe on the platform were helping the poor creatures still in the angry waters to reach the place of safety.

On looking more closely I found a number of those who had been rescued, industriously working and scheming by ladders, ropes, boats and other means more effective, to deliver the poor strugglers out of the sea. Here and there were some who actually jumped into the water, regardless of the consequences in their passion to "rescue the perishing." And I hardly know which gladdened me the most - the sight of the poor drowning people climbing onto the rocks reaching a place of safety, or the devotion and self-sacrifice of those whose whole being was wrapped up in the effort for their deliverance.

As I looked on, I saw that the occupants of that platform were quite a mixed company. That is, they were divided into different "sets" or classes, and they occupied themselves with different pleasures and employments. But only a very few of them seemed to make it their business to get the people out of the sea.

But what puzzled me most was the fact that though all of them had been rescued at one time or another from the ocean, nearly everyone seemed to have forgotten all about it. Anyway, it seemed the memory of its darkness and danger no longer troubled them at all. And what seemed equally strange and perplexing to me was that these people did not even seem to have any care - that is any agonizing care - about the poor perishing ones who were struggling and drowning right before their very eyes . . . many of whom were their own husbands and wives, brothers and sisters and even their own children.

Now this astonishing unconcern could not have been the result of ignorance or lack of knowledge, because they lived right there in full sight of it all and even talked about it sometimes. Many even went regularly to hear lectures and sermons in which the awful state of these poor drowning creatures was described.

I have always said that the occupants of this platform were engaged in different pursuits and pastimes. Some of them were absorbed day and night in trading and business in order to make gain, storing up their savings in boxes, safes and the like.

Many spent their time in amusing themselves with growing flowers on the side of the rock, others in painting pieces of cloth or in playing music, or in dressing themselves up in different styles and walking about to be admired. Some occupied themselves chiefly in eating and drinking, others were taken up with arguing about the poor drowning creatures that had already been rescued.

But the thing to me that seemed the most amazing was that those on the platform to whom He called, who heard His voice and felt that they ought to obey it - at least they said they did - those who confessed to love Him much were in full sympathy with Him in the task He had undertaken - who worshipped Him or who professed to do so - were so taken up with their trades and professions, their money saving and pleasures, their families and circles, their religions and arguments about it, and their preparation for going to the mainland, that they did not listen to the cry that came to them from this Wonderful Being who had Himself gone down into the sea. Anyway, if they heard it they did not heed it. They did not care. And so the multitude went on right before them struggling and shrieking and drowning in the darkness.

And then I saw something that seemed to me even more strange than anything that had gone on before in this strange vision. I saw that some of these people on the platform whom this Wonderful Being had called to, wanting them to come and help Him in His difficult task of saving these perishing creatures, were always praying and crying out to Him **to come to them!**

Some wanted Him to come and stay with them, and spend His time and strength in making them happier. Others wanted Him to come and take away various doubts and misgivings they had concerning the truth of some letters He had written them. Some wanted Him to come and make them feel more secure on the rock - so secure that they would be quite sure that they should never slip off again into the ocean. Numbers of others wanted Him to make them feel quite certain that they would really get off the rock and onto the mainland someday: because as a matter of fact, it was well known that some had walked so carelessly as to lose their footing, and had fallen back again into the stormy waters.

So these people used to meet and get up as high on the rock as they could, and looking towards the mainland (where they thought the Great Being was) they would cry out, "Come to us! Come and help us!" And all the while He was down (by His Spirit) among the poor struggling, drowning creatures in the angry deep, with His arms around them trying to drag them out, and looking up - oh! so longingly but all in vain - to those on the rock, crying to them with His voice all hoarse from calling, "Come to **Me!** Come, and help **Me!**"

And then I understood it all. It was plain enough. The sea was the ocean of life - the sea of real, actual human existence. That lightening was the gleaming of piercing truth coming from Jehovah's Throne. That thunder was the distant echoing of the wrath of God. Those multitudes of people shrieking, struggling and agonizing in the stormy sea, was the thousands and thousands of poor harlots and harlot-makers, of drunkards and drunkard makers, of thieves, liars, blasphemers and ungodly people of every kindred, tongue and nation.

Oh what a black sea it was! And oh, what multitudes of rich and poor, ignorant and educated were there. They were all so unlike in their outward circumstances and conditions, yet all alike in one thing - all sinners before God - all held by, and holding onto, some iniquity, fascinated by some idol, the slaves of some devilish lust, and ruled by the foul fiend from the bottomless pit!

"All alike in one thing?" No, all alike in **two things** - not only the same in their wickedness but, unless rescued, the same in their sinking, sinking . . . down, down, down . . . to the same terrible doom. That great sheltering rock represented Calvary, the place where Jesus had died for them. And the people on it were those who had been rescued. The way they used their energies, gifts and time represented the occupations and amusements of those who professed to be saved from sin and hell - followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The handful of fierce, determined

ones, who were risking their own lives in saving the perishing were true soldiers of the cross of Jesus. That Mighty Being who was calling to them from the midst of the angry waters was the Son of God, "the same yesterday, today and forever" who is still struggling and interceding to save the dying multitudes about us from this terrible doom of damnation, and whose voice can be heard above the music, machinery, and noise of life, calling on the rescued to come and help Him save the world.

My friends in Christ, you are rescued from the waters, you are on the rock, He is in the dark sea calling on you to come to Him and help Him. Will you go? Look for yourselves. The surging sea of life, crowded with perishing multitudes rolls up to the very spot on which you stand. Leaving the vision, I now come to speak of the fact - a fact that is as real as the Bible, as real as the Christ who hung upon the cross, as real as the judgment day will be, and as real as the heaven and hell that will follow it.

Look! Don't be deceived by appearances - men and things are not what they seem. **All who are not on the rock are in the sea!** Look at them from the standpoint of the great White Throne, and what a sight you have! Jesus Christ, the Son of God is, through His Spirit, in the midst of this dying multitude, struggling to save them. And He is calling on **you** to jump into the sea - to go right away to His side and help Him in the holy strife. Will you jump? That is, will you go to His feet and place yourself absolutely at His disposal?

A young Christian once came to me, and told me that for some time she had been giving the Lord her profession and prayers and money, but now she wanted to give Him her life. She wanted to go right into the fight. In other words, she wanted to go to His assistance in the sea. As when a man from the shore, seeing another struggling in the water, takes off those outer garments that would hinder his efforts and leaps to the rescue, so will you who still linger on the bank, thinking and singing and praying about the poor perishing souls, lay aside your shame, your pride, your cares about other people's opinions, your love of ease and all the selfish loves that have kept you back for so long, and rush to the rescue of this multitude of dying men and women.

Does the surging sea look dark and dangerous? Unquestionably it is so. There is no doubt that the leap for you, as for everyone who takes it, means difficulty and scorn and suffering. For you it may mean more than this. It may mean death. He who beckons you from the sea however, knows what it will mean - and knowing, He still calls to you and bids to you to come.

You must do it! You cannot hold back. You have enjoyed yourself in Christianity long enough. You have had pleasant feelings, pleasant songs, pleasant meetings, pleasant prospects. There has been much of human happiness, much clapping of hands and shouting of praises - very much of heaven on earth.

Now then, go to God and tell Him you are prepared as much as necessary to turn your back upon it all, and that you are willing to spend the rest of your days struggling in the midst of these perishing multitudes, whatever it may cost you.

You **must** do it. With the light that is now broken in upon your mind and the call that is now sounding in your ears, and the beckoning hands that are now before your eyes, you have no alternative. To go down among the perishing crowds is your duty. Your happiness from now on will consist in sharing their misery, your ease in sharing their pain, your crown in helping them to bear their cross, and your heaven in going into the very jaws of hell to rescue them.