

(1 Corinthians 15:55-16:2, NIV84)

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

The devotion below, from Herman W. Gockel, is about mission work. Paul's letter above describes how mission work is funded. You and I, as the redeemed of Christ, overflow with joy and thanksgiving in the fact that God "gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Specifically, Jesus gives us victory over the curse of sin, which is death. Since He has conquered the grave, we too will conquer the grave.

For the members of Messiah, one of our dear sisters and fellow members, Kathy Finch, went home last night to be with her Lord. Just like you and I, Kathy came to faith in Christ Jesus through the gospel ministry. She believed the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus and ordered her life by it. Kathy faced death without fear because she knew what Jesus accomplished for her by His cross and His resurrection. Now she is enjoying the full fruits of Christ's victory.

This is why we support the spread of the gospel, whether at home or abroad, because souls need saving. Sinners need to hear the good news of Jesus and come to the assurance of forgiveness and eternal life.

In light of what Jesus has accomplished in your life, through what He did in His life, give prayerful thought how you want to respond with joy and thanksgiving to God for extending the reach of the message of salvation in Christ Jesus.

Victorious with you in Christ,
Pastor Golm

June 23

Undertake Big Things for Christ

Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Matthew 28:19-20

Before World War II a certain brand of cigarettes was advertised in every city and town in Japan. It was the most popular brand in the country, not because of its superior quality, but because it was backed by American interests who believed in doing "big things in a big way".

A Japanese Christian statesman one day pointed to one of these advertisements and remarked: "If Americans would put as much money into advertising Christianity as they put into advertising that cigarette, they would have the Gospel of Christ in every hamlet of this empire within five years."

We know that proclaiming the Gospel of salvation dare never be put into the category of mere advertising. But properly understood, might not the word of the Savior find application here: "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light"? Are we, as individuals and as a church, afraid to do "big things in a big way" for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior?

Let there be no mistake: He expects us to undertake great things for him. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." "Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth." Surely, his-and ours-is a global program. Dare we shrink from our tremendous task because of its very bigness?

Surely not! Someone has said: "Undertake great things for God. And expect great things from God." Notice, the Savior's great Commission to all believers contains not only a command, but also a promise: The command is: "Go!" The promise is: "I'll be with you." He has promised to be right at our side as we carry out his worldwide program. With him at our side and with the world as our field, let us put courageous hands to the task of winning men, women, and children for heaven.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)