

Just Do It

Why is the church so feeble today? Why does the church seem so ineffective and impotent when it comes to really making a difference in this world? Is the church supposed to be so inconsequential with each other and in our culture? If the church were to disappear from the world today, what difference would it make?

These questions haunt me these days. They are the kind of questions that have the potential to get you down, make you want to throw in the towel, or regroup and come at it in a fresh way. The devil really wants us to prefer the former. And if he cannot get us to throw in the towel, then he will do all he can to cause us to rest in the status quo. What he does not recognize, though, is that we are not children of a quitter and we are not part of a kingdom that even knows where the towel is. Rather, we are children of the King and we belong to a kingdom that will never go away. Actually what our enemy does not remember is that our kingdom is like a mustard seed; though one of the smallest of all seeds, it grows to be the largest of all trees in the garden. (Mark 4:31-32)

But the truth is that we are not that tree yet, and sometimes it does not look like we are on our way to becoming the kind of tree where birds come and rest in its branches. We know that we will be, but sometimes it just does not look like it. Why is this true?

There are probably many answers to these questions. One answer that I have been thinking about is how we either do not know or do not appreciate the power that resides in us as children of God. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, Christian, did you know that? (Ephesians 1:19-20) Another answer may be that biblical illiteracy automatically leads to ministry impotency. If you do not know the playbook, how can you be effective at all on the field of play?

However, what has been rattling around in my pea brain has been how we have made Christianity and life in the church a spectator sport. In other words, ministry in the church and in the world is something that the “gifted” or “professionals” do; it is not something for everyone. We have made the church a place where the “paid holy men” do it all and we will let you know what you can do and not do. We clergy are partially to blame for this. Do not let any of them tell you otherwise, we really like it when you look at us as “professionals.” We love it that you think we have something special that you do not have. It really makes our chests puff out whenever you ask us about doing something in the church.

You people are to be blamed as well (you know, you non-clergy people, the laity as you are known). You love to have heroes to look up to, idolize and follow. That is really a bad combination you know; we love to be the hero and you love heroes. I have to believe that you really like *coming* to church, enjoying the show, and leaving feeling great. Church for you had become a wonderful place to be challenged, comforted and encouraged and church for us has become a wonderful place to feel like we matter. Soooo, we both carry some blame – lets leave the blame behind and seek freshness.

Nike has a slogan that will breathe new life and freshness into the body of Christ that will release us to be who and what we are supposed to be. By now you have to know the Nike slogan, right? “Just Do It.” It is so simple, yet can cause a revolution within the church of Jesus Christ. What is God whispering to you? Are you being led to do something? Do you

think you have something that you should be leading or should be a part of within the church? If so, “Just Do It.” Let me explain.

I have had some GCBC people come up to me and wonder if “we” are going to ever have prayer meetings. Did you hear their question? Read it one more time and think about it, are we ever going to have prayer meetings? My response to them (though really not intended to be cute and sarcastic) has been, “I do not know, are we?” At that, some have looked back at me like the proverbial dog who is hearing or seeing something they can not figure out – you know, the twisting head and ears perked up as if to say, “what the ...”

Do you get it? This is what we have done to each other. We holy men have fixed it so that you do not do anything unless we give you the green light and you think all you have to do is bring it up and suggest it and we will make it happen for you.

Can we try something different at GCBC? If God lays on your heart that we need to be praying, then get some people who share that burden and have prayer meetings in your home or somewhere else that can host it. What if all of a sudden you start to think that it might be wonderful if we could start to reach out to some homeless people in our community? Could that be God leading you into that? If it is, “Just Do It.” If you are not all that keen on the Nike slogan, then listen to what the Apostle Paul wrote:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1Corinthians 12:4-7)

I am so glad that God gave out all the gifts and I am so glad that He gave the church variety of services and activities. What a thrill it is to know that God is the one who empowers them all in everyone. Whew, the pressure is off me and we are free to be and do what God has made us to be and do. Is this what God intended in the first place?

By the way, the word Nike comes from the Greek word *nikos*. *Nikos* means “victory.” Do you think that victory comes from “Just Do It?”

I Love You,

Tony