

The Deborah Report

A Partner Update from Deborah Ministries International

August 2011

When the going gets tough...(in spite of all the fridge magnets you've read, the completion of this thought is NOT 'the tough eat chocolate!') **Actually, when the going gets tough, it's time to realign your focus.** Where are you going? Why? And, ultimately, it's time to bear down and keep going!

When the demands of the ministry begin to "fray my edges" so to speak, it's time to realign my focus. *Where am I going?*

Sometimes, instead of having a clear destination, I inadvertently step onto the gerbil wheel of busyness. To be sure, to be in ministry is to be busy. But a periodic realignment is necessary in order to guard against a busyness that is *driven by a response to the needs and expectations of people*, as opposed to a healthy response to the things that the Lord has set my hands to do. In theory, that seems clear enough. In practice, it takes a continual discerning that can all too easily be derailed.

Where Am I Going?

For example, ministry is simply serving people on behalf of the heart of the Father, the mind of Christ, in the power of the Spirit. The key word there is people. It is all too easy to make the subtle slip from being motivated by God to being *motivated by peoples' expectations and desires*. This is especially so for those of us who love people. When I have made the slip, it's all too easy to tell, because that's when my edges begin to fray! It's time to reassess the path I'm on-- **where am I going?** The truth is that when I stay yoked to Jesus, He keeps me going on the path that presses forward toward the mark of the prize of my high calling in Christ Jesus! However, when I get drawn aside by any number of "responsibilities" I end up going in circles. To be sure, to a casual observer, it all looks like ministry. The difference is whether I'm moving forward with my God assignment or going in circles doing good stuff.

Why?

When the going gets tough...it's time to realign your focus. The next question is, "Why?" Why am I doing what I'm doing. If I really dig into my motives, I will find that somewhere I slipped from responding to God to responding to people. Once, several years ago when I seemed to be caught between a rock and a hard place, the Lord said to me, "Who called you?" Strangely enough, we always assume that God asks us to do the impossible and that people are more reasonable. That's a faulty assumption on two counts. One is that God does not

ask us to do the impossible--he asks us to respond to Him in obedience and then watch HIM do the impossible. Secondly, people are all too often unreasonable in their expectations!

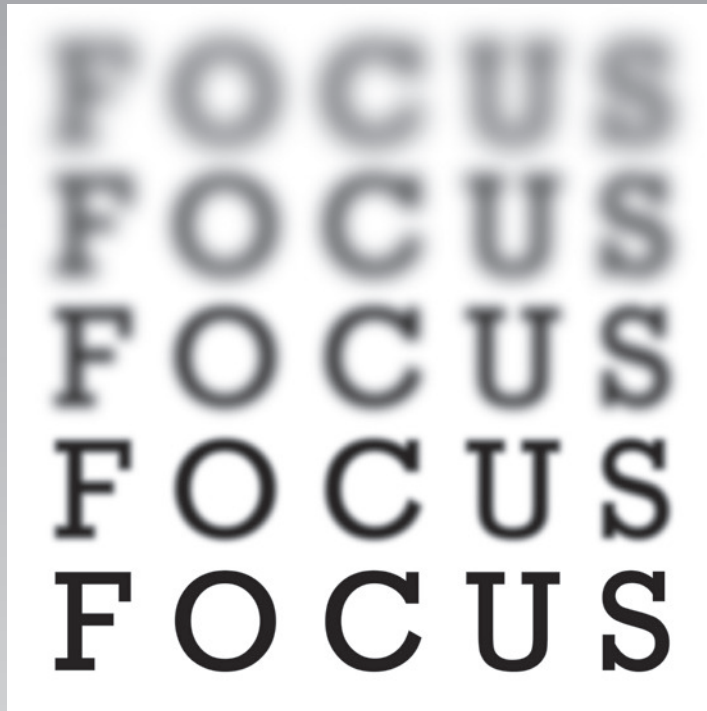
Keep Going!

And, lastly, when the going gets tough, it's time to bear down and keep going! Whenever I feel myself struggling with motivation to keep going, I realize it's because I've been using too much mental and emotional energy with the "going in circles" stuff. Nobody likes to go in circles. We all like to progress and move forward. The very process of moving forward energizes and

motivates to keep on. Going in circles does just the opposite--it saps your strength and destroys your motivation to keep on. What about you? Is there a gerbil wheel syndrome in any area of your life that causes you to be going in circles instead of moving forward? Know this, it is NEVER God's perfect will for you to be spinning a gerbil's wheel. So, if you have one (or more), it isn't God that put you there. Neither it is His will that you just try harder, thereby going faster and faster...in circles.

Jump Off the Wheel!

If you will honestly ask yourself these realignment questions, and just as honestly answer them...you will be able to see what it would take to step off the wheel. However, the longer you have traveled a particular path, the more smoothly worn it is. And automatic pilot is so much easier--but only



momentarily. Meanwhile your edges fray and fray until you hardly recognize yourself. As long as you try to please any master except Christ, (whether that be one of your dearest loved ones or even yourself) you will find yourself going in circles and ultimately resentful of everything and everyone.

Being yoked to Christ is not a religious command intended to keep you from having a life--IT IS A DIVINE INVITATION INTENDED TO FREE YOU FROM THE GERBIL WHEEL SYNDROME! Most people understand "being yoked to Christ" as being expected to be perfect. Truly, being yoked to Christ is an opportunity to allow the Holy Spirit to put your feet on the path that was fore-ordained for your particular life before the foundation of the world. It's an opportunity to walk tall and to be free of living in the soul-draining circumstances that fallen man seems to inadvertently surround himself with. Shockingly, the beginning of the change that we long for MUST come within ourselves. As long as you wait for God to change your circumstances, you will wonder why He doesn't seem to move on your behalf. When you come to the place where you are willing to allow him to be LORD of both your perspectives and your responses, you will find him to be powerfully present to convict and realign, thereby ultimately bringing about the changes you desire.

When the going gets tough...it's time to realign your focus. Has your focus been on the circumstances--the gerbil wheel? Until

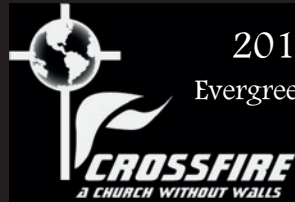


we get our realignment, even if the Lord caused your gerbil wheel to break--you would just inadvertently step onto another of the enemy's making. But realignment takes courage--courage to hear the truth and then to switch off automatic pilot. Oddly enough, when God was preparing Joshua to lead His people into the Promised Land, He told him repeatedly to **"be strong and of good courage!"** It takes courage to leave the familiarity of the gerbil wheel (the wilderness) and then to step into the Jordan, knowing that the Promised Land is on the other side!



The Heart of a Lion

Women's Conference



2011

Evergreen, Colorado

October 7th-9th

**Registration Deadline:
August 14th.**

Register at
www.crossfirechurch.us



Deborah is currently in Kyela, Tanzania ministering in Pastors' Conferences, churches, and a Bible School.

Please pray for her time of ministry there as well as for her safe travel home!



Deborah Ministries International ministers in response to Hosea 4:6, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" and John 8:32, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

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