September 2019

Contents

- Pearl
- Introduction to this Issue
- Goals for the Day
- Transitioning
- Show Me Your Dreams
- CMDA’s Center for Well-being
- Announcements

Pearl

“But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14, ESV).

Introduction to this Issue

In medicine, triage is an ever-present challenge. How will you prioritize the morning, the afternoon, the evening? Urgencies contend with schedules, intended priorities, even strategic plans. Missionary medicine, in particular, carries the potential to swallow the day, the person, the life. Impatient patients wait to hear the words, “The doctor will see you now.” Spouse or family may also wait to hear the sound of your voice or foot fall on the threshold of home. St. Augustine has been called a “Doctor of the Church.” In The City of God, he warned about disordered lives. This issue is about goal setting, short-term and long-term. CMDA CEO Emeritus Dr. David Stevens often reminds us to keep the main
thing, the main thing. He shares his heart and mind pursuing God’s vision for his so-called retirement years. Two devotionals may help you refocus. Interspersed between these longer portions are wisdom soundbites. God created time. Jesus Incarnate lived in finite time. He, too, triaged, sometimes frustrating His disciples and friends. Now the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, walks beside us teaching us to number our days. He helps us in the moment and in the years to keep His priorities ours. – Judy Palpant, Editor (judypalpant@gmail.com)

“Success begins with realistic goals.” – Baldo cartoon of two kids playing soccer (Sunday, July 21, 2019)

Food for Thought

Your greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important...there is an insidious tendency to neglect important tasks that do not have to be done today—or even this week...Adequate time for daily waiting on God is the only way I can escape the tranny of the urgent. – Charles Hummel in Tyranny of the Urgent

Goals for the Day

by Dr. Al Weir, MD

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men” (Colossians 3:23, NIV 1984).

Dr. Dave Hafer is a retired maxillofacial surgeon in Montana. He and his wife Bobbie took up painting to fill the Montana winters. They are both incredibly talented and love their new avocation. They love it so much that Dave took it to the Lord and asked Him, “Don’t let this be just for us. Show us how to use it for your glory.” And they have, repeatedly auctioning their work to raise funds for Christian ministries. Last year when they attended a conference for Christian women physicians, an attendee asked him, “Would you consider letting me commission you to do a painting?” Dave replied, “I guess I can do that. What did you have in mind?” The physician answered, “I want a picture of heaven. I want to place it on my office wall so that every morning when I arrive for work, I am reminded of my goal for the day.”

What is your goal for the day when you show up at work each morning or evening? Do you have earth goals or heaven goals?

C.S. Lewis said, “Aim at Heaven and you will get Earth ‘thrown in;’ aim at Earth, and you get neither.”
Most days, when I walk into my office at 7 a.m., my goal is very fixed on earth. I have patients to see, meetings to make, business to complete, home to get back to. The goals I set for myself could be completed successfully even if there were no heaven.

What if I instead chose my goals for the day with a keen awareness that heaven is real, that Christ came to get us there, and that every patient, every meeting and every business decision has eternal significance?

This physician above commissioned a painting to remind her of the truth. I have placed a gold cross on my lapel. Dr. Walt Larimore placed a sticker on every chart, WIGD (What is God Doing?) What step can you take to help you envision and achieve your goal for each day as you pursue God’s mission for your life?

Dear Father,
Help me begin and continue each day with the keen awareness that my work has eternal significance.
Amen

Food for Thought
What about today?
Make the most of each day. Today is not only the first day of the rest of your life, it’s the only day of your life. Cherish each moment and don’t delay relishing life’s deep priorities. – Johnny Cox, PhD BSN

Transitioning

by David Stevens, MD, MA (Ethics)

After 25 years of service, I stepped down as CEO of CMDA on September 1. No, before you ask, I’m not going to be superannuated. (Aren’t you glad you read this to pick up that new word? It means “retired,” but I’ve learned you can sure can get some funny looks if you use it! People wonder if you have a terminal disease!) A better descriptor is I’m “transitioning” from lots of administration and a frenzied pace to more ministry.

Dr. Mike Chupp, a general surgeon who spent 20 years as a missionary in Kenya, is the new CEO. He is doing a great job! I first met and was impressed with Mike when he visited Tenwek Hospital as a medical student for a rotation when I was serving as a healthcare missionary at Tenwek. I was so impressed that I wrote him after he left and asked him to consider long-term service. He did, and the rest is history!

I’m not retiring, but it is a big transition for me. Most transitions loom large—moving from college to medical school to residency to practice. Even changing jobs or moving to a new home often require a steep learning curve and lots of adjustments. I certainly know that firsthand. When we moved into our present home, my wife Jody and I had moved 22 times in 31 years. I moved five times with my parents before I went to college, and I’ve experienced three career changes: medical missionary, Executive Director of World Medical Mission with Samaritan’s Purse and then to CMDA in 1994. I’ve managed CMDA from three different headquarters over those years. Yes, I’ve had lots of transitions, and I know you’ve had some already and there are many more to come.

So, how do you transition well? I’ve learned a few things.

First and most importantly, seek God’s will first.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him,
Is God directing you to undertake this change? Don’t ever transition to find “greener pastures”—more money, more prestige or more power. Ask yourself, “Am I considering this transition to accomplish God’s plan for my life, or am I doing it for me?” Even if your transition is thrust upon you because you have finished a phase of your education, what does God want for you next?

I had some opportunities to go to some prestigious medical schools, but when I prayed and sought counsel, God made it clear I should go to my state school so I could graduate with little or no debt and get to the mission field sooner. In my early days at CMDA, some influential and rich individuals asked if I would run for Congress. My first thought was, “No way,” but from experience I knew I should take the issue to the Lord before I responded. I admit I was relieved when God endorsed my original thought!

Once you hear from the Lord and obey Him, that doesn’t mean your transition will be easy. God doesn’t promise that. He only promises He will be with you wherever He leads you.

My first year at CMDA was the hardest year of my life. This is saying something. Here’s why. When I was taking relief teams into war zones, I crashed in a small plane. Another time, we ended up in the middle of a fire fight.

So, during that first difficult year as CEO at CMDA, I had to revisit my “call” to remind myself that my transition had been ordained by God. I had to exercise my faith as never before to get through seemingly insurmountable issues, and, as a result, it greatly strengthened my trust in Christ. God doesn’t waste hard times; instead, He uses them to grow our faith.

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”
—Isaiah 26:3, KJV

The most common question I get today is, “What’s next?” My reply is, “I don’t know...yet.” Almost a year ago I heard God say, “Finish well and then rest in me and seek my will.” I don’t know about you, but I have a hard time waiting. I’ve always had my ducks in a row and knew what God had next when He transitioned me before. Now He is giving me a graduate level course in trust entitled “Lingering in His Presence.” It feels to me like that scene in Indiana Jones where he steps out into seemingly thin air over a chasm. He can’t see the rock bridge until he takes a step—a huge step of faith. But, I’ve come this far by faith and He has never failed me yet. I hope what’s next involves medical missions, which is my “first love” in serving Him, though I’m eager to follow, whatever He has in store. I hope you are as well.

My life verse that I first claimed in college is:

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
—Matthew 16:24, ESV

I’ve endeavored to be “one” of those “anyone’s.”

Christ knows what it is like to transition—to leave His home in heaven, to willingly bear the sins of the world though He was without fault, to rise from the dead and to ascend into heaven. As we trust ourselves to Him and do His will, He promises us His presence not matter where that is:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”
—Matthew 18:19-20, KJV
Food for Thought

Goals change along with life’s circumstances:

A couple of years into my hospice work, I attended an ALS Support Group. There I met a gentleman suffering from ALS. For as long as he could remember, he’d been generous with his time—doing chores for others. His perspective and goals changed once he needed caretakers himself. He watched them constantly scurrying around to take care of him. Finally, he learned to say to them, “Just sit.” He saw the value of taking the time to talk with people. To listen. His message stayed with me. – Barb Cox, BSN, MA

Show Me Your Dreams

by Rev. Stan Key

Scripture reading: Genesis 32:22-32

The Mark of the Spirit

“And in the last days...I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams” (Acts 2:17, ESV).

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came with the sound of a mighty rushing wind. Fire from heaven descended on each of the disciples, and they began to speak in other tongues (Acts 2:1-4). But when Peter stood up to explain to the watching crowd the significance of what had happened, he hardly mentioned signs and wonders. Neither did he talk about how the Spirit empowers believers or purifies the heart. Rather, quoting the prophet Joel, Peter explained that what had happened was the long-awaited gift of the Spirit, and the proof was the fact that men and women, young and old, were enabled to “see visions” and “dream dreams.”

The book of Acts describes how this Spirit-inspired ability to dream took a group of timid disciples hiding behind closed doors and thrust them out into the world. They were driven by a vision of a time when the kingdoms of this world would become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ where He will reign forever and ever (Revelation 11:15). Reading Acts helps us understand what Spirit-inspired dreaming looks like:

- **It will be big.** Little gods inspire little visions. But a big God can only give birth to big dreams! The gospel spread from Jerusalem in ever expanding circles: Judea, Samaria, the ends of the earth. God kept calling them to think bigger, bigger. William Carey launched the modern missionary movement in 1793 with the motto: “Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God.”

- **It will be new.** When the Holy Spirit inspires a dream, it typically feels like the travelers felt on the Starship Enterprise: boldly going where no man has gone before! Acts tells how the early Christians began doing things they had never done: mass evangelism, healing ministries, food distribution to the poor, cross-cultural missions, etc.

- **It will be holy.** A big dream in an unsanctified heart is a bad combination! The Holy Spirit can only give birth to holy visions and dreams. If a dream is ego-driven or characterized by selfish ambition, you can be sure that dream did not come from the Holy Spirit of God! God sent His Holy Spirit into the world not to take away our ambition but to sanctify it!
• **It will be costly.** Though it is easy to talk about vision in terms that make it sound exciting and adventurous, don’t be fooled. To be faithful and true to the vision of God will cost you everything! If there is no cross in the vision, you can be sure it didn’t come from God.

• **It will be evangelistic.** The vision that comes from God will always be rooted in the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. It is not about building your kingdom, but His! That is why 3,000 people were converted on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached the first gospel sermon. He was dreaming of the day when “…everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21, ESV)

Tell me your dreams and I will show you your future! If you have no dreams or if your vision is selfish, you need a personal Pentecost.

point to ponder • Are your dreams and ambitions holy?

prayer focus • For someone who has no vision.

“God gives us the vision, then he takes us down to the valley to batter us into the shape of the vision...Every vision will be made real if we will have patience.” – Oswald Chambers

**CMDA’s Center for Well-being**

**Food for Thought**

*Regarding “vision casting,” this is generally a leader skill, and we would encourage individual client leaders to not only “share an inspired vision,” but to “inspire a shared vision.”*

“One of the core competencies of coaching is ‘Planning and Goal Setting.’ Each individual client is encouraged to set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic—or relevant, time-defined) goals. Some of the principles of goal setting can be found in the following resources:

*The Principle of the Path* by Andy Stanley  
*Living Forward* by Michael Hyatt & Daniel Harkavy  
*How to Develop Your Personal Mission Statement* by Stephen R. Covey  
*Free to Focus* by Michael Hyatt

– Director of CMDA’s Center for Well-being Dr. Steve Sartori

**Food for Thought**

*Goal-setting techniques are used by top-level athletes, successful business people and achievers in all fields. They create a long-term vision of what they are after and the short-term motivation to take action...*

*If goals do not hold any attraction any longer, then let them go. If goals aren’t met, don’t dwell on the failure. Look at what can be learned and what could have happened differently to create a success. – Notes taken from Goal Posts by Norman M. Boone, MBA, CFP, in Wealth Manager, June 2006*

**The Last Word**

*Because he is God, he is maker and giver of time. Because he is Man, he has given true heed to time. Because he is both God and Man he is the best judge of the spending of time. Unite yourself to him by love and trust... – The Cloud of Unknowing*
Announcements

Remedy West Missions Conference
On October 5-6, 2019, a dream comes true. CMDA will launch its first REMEDY West medical missions conference at California Baptist University in Riverside, California. Healthcare professionals, will be challenged in your faith and vision no matter where you are on your career path. You will also have a delightful opportunity to meet and talk with perhaps hundreds of your future colleagues as they consider how God wants to use them to embrace the remedy for physical health and eternal life throughout their careers. Please mark the dates on your calendars, phone, computer, pads and paper for October 5-6, 2019. We’ve planned this conference schedule so you can avoid SoCal Friday afternoon traffic. Plus, we’ve left both Saturday and Sunday evenings open for travel and other events in your life. For more information, visit www.cmda.org/remedywest but you’ll have to hurry.

Global Missions Health Conference
The November 7-9 Global Missions Health Conference at Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky will soon be here. Have you registered? If you’ve never attended, this is an opportunity you will not want to miss. Missionaries have a choice to stay in the homes of church members so that keeps the cost low. You’ll not find another conference where you can rub shoulders with hundreds of students who might become your colleagues. Visit www.medicalmissions.com/gmhc to learn more and to register.