



2020 MONTHLY DEVOTION

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Leadership Characteristic: [COMMITTED TO CHRIST](#)

Acts 4:1-13

Peter explained the healing of a sick man this way ***“let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’ There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we much be saved.”*** Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus. Acts 4:10-13

What does it mean to be committed to Christ?

A Christ-centered (or Christocentric) life is one that is focused upon a commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord. It is a life of connection, prayer, surrender and forgiveness.

Reflecting on my journeys to Tanzania and the people I have met and worked with brings to mind first and foremost a people fully committed to Christ. Beginning with my very first journey to Tanzania in 2005 I was struck with the Christocentric life of the people of the ELCT (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania).

Prayer and trust and faith in Jesus is upper most and central to daily living. One prays upon awakening, one prays before starting to drive the car, one prays upon arriving to one's destination, one prays for each other, one prays for those one meets along the way, one prays before beginning any meeting or task and upon completion. You get the picture? These prayers are not silent but given to the Lord with voice and praise. Prayer is a very natural and continual action.

God has presented me with many opportunities to walk alongside our brothers and sisters of Tanzania. One of those opportunities presented itself while I was at a village called Chomkaroma. We were there to refurbish a clinic that was about to reopen. We spent a week with no electricity, no running water, and “squatty potty” toilets outside the compound that required an escort to use. We had a bed, people who loved us, and we were working “bega qua bega” shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of the village to paint and rebuild the clinic.

While on my way to the facilities one day I saw a young man who was begging. He was afflicted with some type of muscle disorder perhaps cerebral palsy or such. He was one of the 'least of these' to be sure. In my moment of haste, I turned away from this "beggar." I was fearful of contributing to him, wondering that if I gave to him then many more like him would gather and surround us, that we would be bombarded with 'beggars.' That was a mistake on my part. After turning away and realizing what I had done I asked Jesus for forgiveness and turned back to find this young man. He was gone.



What I didn't realize was that other members of our team were following me outside and when they saw that I turned away, they turned away as well. Sadly, they followed my example and for that I am forever regretful. In that moment, I took my eyes off the cross and became very selfish and self-centered.

Do you pray before every activity that you do? Do you keep your eyes focused on Jesus even through the haste of the day? Have you ever crossed to the other side of the road to avoid someone or something? Sad to say, I have and I continually ask Jesus for a 'second chance.' God continues to give us 'second chances.' Open your heart and mind to really living your commitment to Jesus and seeing those opportunities that God sets before you. Pray for your openness to stay of the same side of the road as the one you'd rather not encounter, and be the light of Jesus to someone you least expect.

-Travel light, Live light, Spread the light, Be the Light!

Pray together

*Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (Sundays and Seasons, Jan. 26, Lec. 3
3rd Sunday after Epiphany)*