

“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman



Today Scripture Reference
1 Corinthians 9:16
Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me



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The TCL E-Leadership Resource Why Do You Do What You Do?

It is with pleasure I can report that my recent, second trip to Nigeria has borne much fruit. My partner, Jeff Witzke, and I were rewarded as many of the pastors and leaders we taught told us how they were blessed by our teachings on leadership and finance. We both spoke to pastors and students graduating from their first year of training at Rev. Ebenezer Oke's Life Development Centre. My charge to them was the same as my challenge to you today. “Why do you do what you do?”

This is a valid question for ministry leaders and business leaders ... and so I ask again ... why do you do what you do? Is it your calling? Is it for selfish ambition? Are you “compelled to” out of obedience? Is it simply out of love for what you are doing? Or do you dislike what you are doing and are just stuck?

There are two things I dislike ... no, I detest ... heat and humidity. I still await the day the Lord will use me in northern Wisconsin in the winter. In the meantime, I continue to travel and teach experiencing what I detest. In the first few days of each of my last three trips to Africa, I have inwardly committed never to come back. Along with the heat and humidity, the poverty is felt intensely. One experiences an overwhelming and potent feeling of helplessness. Why go back? What can one average American leader/teacher do?

Paul laments his rights as an apostle when he states in 1 Corinthians 9: *Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me.* This leader shares one thing with Paul, and that is that I return to Africa because I am compelled to. I wish I could boast and say that I do it voluntarily. That would be a lie. I, like Paul, worry about rejecting the powerful inner work of the Holy Spirit in my life. Woe to me if I did not return when I am able.

I remember the last day teaching. As I spoke to them about their future, I consciously could not believe the words that were coming out of my mouth “wh ... whe... when I return” ... I could not believe what I was saying. Return? Here? Again? Then something else happened (again). At the end of each trip I would gaze into the eyes of people hungry not for the food of the stomach, but for the knowledge God gave us to deliver. The personal testimonies of gratitude given to us, and the hospitality of an African that it takes 10 Americans to match raise a level of compassion within me that surpasses the temperature and humidity. I love Rev. Ebenezer Oke and what he is doing at the Life Development Centre in Nigeria. I love every one of the Nigerians I met. And I feel great empathy when gazing intently into the eyes of their children, as I silently pray for God’s blessing upon their future.

Eventually I basked in the air conditioning of the British Airways 747 as it began our trip home. On the one hand, I found contentment in enduring another trip to an environment I detest. On the other hand, I found great guilt in comparing what I “endured” to the price Christ suffered and paid for me, or even to the daily challenge of Rev. Ebenezer Oke and those he leads. In the big picture, we as Americans have yet to suffer for Christ.

That is why I do what I do ... and I thank God for each of you who help me do it.

Let there be NO guilt if you have not traveled to Africa. However, I must ask you again. Why do you do what YOU do?