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Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus

Christ who has blessed us to sit in Heavenly places in Him. I trust that you and your family are doing well and that the blessings of the Lord are rich in your lives.

Our ministry theme for the month of August is Outreach. When we think of outreach, we think of reaching out to those who do not know the Lord. We think about reaching out to those who are suffering, destitute or in need of help. Simply put, when we think of Outreach, we think of Evangelism and Missions.

Outreach is critical to the life of the church. Giving tithes and offerings are certainly necessary if we wish to keep the doors of the church open. Supporting your church with your presence, time and talents are also necessary if a church wishes to accomplish its

ministry goals. However, if we don't endeavor to reach out to lost and help those that are hurting, we will soon die out and cease to exist. Though funds and support are both desirable for the success of the church, the reality is that without souls to minister to, our funds and efforts may be in vain.

Though Outreach is critical to the life of the church, it is one of the endeavors that we seem less committed to. The late Roland Q. Leavell in his book, "Evangelism: Christ's Imperative Commission", stated that of all the reported Church members 95 percent have never won a soul to Christ. This is not just Church of God in Christ members, but Church members across all denominations!

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One reason that Outreach is often neglected is because we are always under the impression that it is always someone else's responsibility. When it comes to outreach, church members often emulate the conduct of the 4 infamous church members, whose names were Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody.



When it came to winning souls, Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Believe it or not Somebody started complaining, that it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done! But when it comes to soul winning, I like the message that the Williams Brothers expressed in their song, "I am just a nobody, trying to tell everybody about somebody who can save anybody"!

The reality is that Outreach doesn't have to be complicated, intimidating nor difficult. We can pattern our strategy after Jesus, who started his ministry with a simple principle of *each one reach one*. A brief study of John 1:35-47, which records the calling of the disciples of Jesus provides a sequence that we can follow:



*Jesus called John and John followed the Lord (35-42)
John reached Andrew and Andrew followed the Lord
Andrew reached Peter and Peter followed the Lord
Jesus called Phillip and Phillip followed the Lord (43-46)
Phillip reached Nathanael and Nathanael followed the Lord*

Each of the disciples was reached one by one!! And from this noble band of men, the word of God was preached throughout the land and the Gospel message went around the world. Each one of them continued to reach one.

Also notice in Jesus' example, that outreach does not have to start with people who you are uncomfortable with, but with people who are already in your immediate circle. This may include family, friends, co-workers, neighbors and associates. Also notice that each candidate had come in contact with the Savior and was impacted by his presence. As a result they were beaming with so much excitement and joy that they were compelled to share the source of their excitement with others.

Though the church has a tremendous need for Apostles, Evangelist, Prophets, Pastors and Teachers, there is also a tremendous need for the person who would just go and tell somebody about Jesus.

During this month of outreach, let's rescind the grim statistic that 95% of Christians have never won a soul to Christ. Let us do our part to fulfill the great commission by helping to build the Kingdom one soul at a time!

Be Blessed,

Pastor Michael Richardson