

Called to Serve

I have come to know Jesus Christ when I was 15 years old. It happened when The Salvation Army came to our place to start a ministry. When I saw them marching along the streets with their uniforms, I became interested to get to know them. That interest became the beginning of my relationship with Christ.

I enjoyed being a part of every activity that the army were doing in our place and in the neighboring villages. I became so involved to its activities that I don't want to miss any of it. The joy to serve God has become my inspiration. I felt fulfilled and encouraged whenever God was using me in the ministry.

A time had come when I felt emptiness in my life in spite of all that I was doing in the corps. My life during that time evolved to three places: home, school and church. To my family, the church has become a home to me already because whenever they can't see me around, they knew that I'm at the church. But in spite of all the time and energy that I was giving to the church it seems not enough. Then I realized that God was calling me for more and that was a call for a full time ministry.

To say yes to the call to serve God in a full time status was difficult. My heart and my thoughts went back to how the family was looking up to me as a help to them. I remembered how my brothers had stopped schooling to give way to my schooling so I could finish my college course expecting that I will take time to help when I graduate. I remembered the cost of the call to me. It's means frustration to my family especially to my parents. It means the giving up of what I held dear in my life. To my sister, it means not going to the corps anymore because my parents hated the army because of the belief that the army had taken me away from them. To me it means sacrifice but to God it was a call to trust and obedience.

My response to God was delay. It seems to be the best strategy than to say no. I'd asked God to let me do my responsibilities to family first, so that they will not be pointing their fingers to me blaming me of their failures because I have not done my part as expected. I did things my way. However, the Bible is always true. God gives rewards to those who obeyed but to the disobedient they reap the consequence. God gave me lessons from the experience. I realized that effort without God's blessing is like having a pocket with a hole in

it which make the pocket remain empty in spite of what you put into it. No matter how hard we work or how good we are if it is outside God's will, there is no success.

I was put in a position where I felt like I have no choice but to obey God and to trust him of whatever cares I have for my family. I realized that God knows the desires of my heart. If I care about my family, I believe God cares for them too. I put them in God's hand and then I start stepping out in faith.

Stepping out in faith was a real test of faith to me. God called me at a time when I have nothing. I was given a Field Assistant appointment to a place away from home which means there is no turning back. It was like the Israelites when they set out to go to the promised land. God has led them to a place of no turning back to a place of trust. From nothingness God showed his power and the abundance of his blessing to me.

My parents did not give approval to my plan to enter Officer Training College. Therefore, I can't go back to them for help. I was given a list of things to prepare prior to entry to Officer Training College. The list was three pages long. In the list were supplies that I will be needing while at the College for two years. The list was impossible for me to comply but God had provided. A miracle. I have kept that list with names of donors for a long time. When temptation to turn back visits me, I turn back to how God met my needs in the past.

From home to Field Assistant appointment to Officer Training College, God sustained me. He has given me more than I have expected. Also, He had extended His provision to my loved ones. My father has finally become permanent from his job then received a promotion which means an increase of salary. To my two brothers and sister, God gave to them their source of income that makes them independent. God opened my heart to the truth that he can do more than what I can do. He can supply the need of my loved ones more than what I can give to them. Then I realized, God has already prepared so much for me, he was only waiting for me to trust and obey Him so he can open the windows of heaven and pour out the blessings that he has withheld for a long time because of my delay to respond to the call.

Now, whenever I recall a time God has called me, I can always look back without regrets for responding to God's call. It amazed me to see how God

blessed us whenever we choose to obey Him. Whenever I start to think of the blessings God has given me, all I can say is “ who is me Lord that you have brought me this far? The truth is I am nothing.” But God trusted me more than I trusted myself. I know my limitations, my weakness and frailty but He still had chosen me and set me apart. The call to serve the Lord was an opportunity God offered to me. I don't deserve but God still God called me anyway. The truth remains the same just as Rick Warren has said in his book the Purpose Driven Life “ It's not about me but it's all about God.” Before God called he knew me and what I need. All he was asking from me was trust and obey. Then according to what I need God pour out His blessing to me and extending it to all I love.

"I entered Officer Training College last June 1992 and was commissioned as officer 1 May 1994 with a sessional name “Crusaders for Christ Session”.

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