

Cross-Cultural Perspectives

Beyond

I recently had the privilege of attending the North American Youth Congress in Nashville, Tennessee. Over 18,000 young people gathered there. What a sight! The theme of the conference was “Beyond.” That provokes thinking. “Beyond” calls for us to go farther or do something in addition to what is presently being done. God has planted a piece of eternity in the hearts of men (Ecclesiastes 3:11). He has designed us for impact! We are more than conquerors and will leave a legacy in this life.

This past week, I attended the memorial service for Sister Barbara Willoughby, a true worshipper and faithful soldier. She was faithful to the very end, always looking forward, and always looking upward. That is the way it should be for all of us. There is always a pull upward; beyond. There is still a longing in my heart to conquer, to advance, to move forward, and upward. I want to go, “where no man has gone before.”

Years ago, I heard there was a program that boasted, “Space...the Final Frontier...Its five year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before.” According to *Wikipedia* “it has been suggested that the quote was taken from a White House booklet published in 1958. The *Introduction to Outer Space*, produced in an effort to garner support for a national space program in the wake of the Sputnik flight, read on its first page: “The first of these factors is the compelling urge of man to explore and to discover, the thrust of curiosity that leads men to try to go where no one has gone before.” I don’t want to lose that compelling (Spirit-prompted) urge that causes me to go where no one has gone before. What a rush to walk into a village somewhere in the remotest corner of the world and know that we are the first Gospel-carrier to step into that area.

I will dream beyond:

I’m still a dreamer at heart. We need to be careful when we spend more time speaking about the past, than we do about the future. Revive your dream. Don’t live one day without a dream or a vision.

I will go beyond:

There is nothing like preaching the Gospel in the regions beyond. “So that [we may even] preach the Gospel in lands [lying] beyond you, without making a boast of work already done in another [man's] sphere of activity [before we came on the scene]” (2 Corinthians 10:15-16, AMP).

I never tire of lifting my eyes, looking to the fields, white already to harvest. Every farmer's dream and prayer is a ripened, full harvest field.

I will give beyond:

We can give beyond our ability; beyond our power. "How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves" (2 Corinthians 8:2-3).

"For, as I can bear witness, [they gave] according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability; and [they did it] voluntarily" (AMP).

I will commit beyond:

I am willing to pay the price of getting from here to beyond. "I do not consider, brethren, that I have captured and made it my own [yet]; but one thing I do [it is my one aspiration]: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward" (Philippians 3:13-14, AMP).

God is calling us onward and upward. Paul was consumed with this type of attitude. It was always going beyond. There was always one more place that needed to be reached.

I'm going beyond! Meet you there!