



OPPORTUNITIES FROM CHALLENGES

Rev. Yoman Man

2020 was a year full of challenges – on our health, on the global economy, and on the missions front. Gospel workers and missionaries were under “house arrest” with churches closed and gospel seekers in seclusion due to the pandemic. So it seemed great limitations were placed on traditional evangelistic ministry. However, God’s way of spreading the gospel is often beyond our expectation. Philip would’ve never thought that he would find a chance to tell the gospel in the wilderness, but that was the best opportunity to meet the African official. Paul also would not have expected to run into the desperate jailer about to commit suicide in the dark of the night. God provides gospel opportunities through His blessing and planning, which are not bound by environmental or human constraints. Gospel messengers should heed the lead of the Holy Spirit to focus on targets and timing and ask God to turn challenges into opportunities.

2 Timothy 4:2a said, *“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season.”* There’s no opportunity without challenge, and vice versa. Whether a roadblock is a new opportunity to continue forward, or a challenge we need to stop and face, or an obstacle demanding us to regroup, it all depends on God’s guidance. More than a hundred years ago, a seminary student in Chicago was preparing to go to China as a missionary but ran into obstacles. So instead he focused on preaching the gospel to the Chinese in Chicago. Although his fruits were few, yet God chose his future missions co-worker from among the new believers, much like the story of Paul and Barnabas. In the Acts of Apostles, the missionary journeys of Paul himself were also replete with challenges and opportunities. And in many of his wise decisions of the missions strategy, it was actually the Holy Spirit guiding the way.

Colossians 1:28-29 said, *“We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me.”* This was Paul’s teaching to the church facing challenges from heresy. He reminded believers to be focused on Christ, be flexible, be teachable, be diligent, and be reliant on the Lord.

Paul inspired believers to break through limitations with creativity by using *“all wisdom”*, and it led to new approaches and methods of spreading the gospel throughout the history of missions. Thus, the power of the gospel manifested in many parts of the world. In these challenging times we must work together for a breakthrough. Missions organizations are just the help churches need now to unite believers of the same vision and goal in search of new ways to work. It is good for a church to have breakthrough, yet that’s insufficient by itself to turn the challenge of the times into an opportunity. But if several churches work together for a breakthrough, it’d be a boon to the evangelistic ministry, and missions organizations can play a significant role.

Paul also said, *“struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me,”* by which he meant we all possess God’s great power in order to *“present everyone perfect in Christ.”* It is important that we understand this about ourselves, that we are all vehicles for the power of God. But many are surprised to see Paul said he labored. Did the great apostle Paul, endowed with God’s great power, still had to labor? Yes! We still need to be diligent because it takes our effort to turn a challenge into opportunity. And while it’s not always easy to work with others as instructed in Philippians 1:27 *“...contending as one man for the faith of the gospel,”* but the work is worthwhile, and we will succeed if we work with God.

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PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Ask God to send His messages for Rev. Douglas Wu's weekly sermons, and that His Words are accurately preached!
2. Please pray for sister Zhang and brother Lin so they could consistently participate in the Tuesday Practical Bible Study class.
3. Please pray for Rev. Douglas and Whitney's renewal of their South Africa driver's licenses. Ask for God's grace so the process can be completed smoothly.
4. Ask God to lead the ministry of Alex and Nicole Ko in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, and to protect them during their visitations, as well as to remove obstacles such as power outage or app problems in their online meetings.
5. Crimes in South Africa are still rampant! Please pray for the crime situation and for peace during Christmas and the New Year.
6. Pray for the successful co-development of COVID-19 vaccine between Brazil and China, and for vaccination to quickly start in Brazil to lower the death and infection rates.
7. CIM Brazil's STM team will go to the northern cities of Sao Luis and Rosaria between January 1-11 to serve with the local Assembly of God church there. Please remember Rev. Jorge and Mara Loo, and their co-workers, Mr. & Mrs. Zhou in your prayers.
8. Pray for Rev. Jorge Loo's work with the Chinese Alliance Church in Sao Paulo and Campinas in planning to start weekly online Bible study fellowship using Zoom beginning early next year.
9. Ask for God's protection on the family of Rev. Jorge Loo from COVID-19.
10. Pray for CIM Canada's cross-cultural evangelistic ministry in Ghana, Togo, and Ukraine. Ask God for wisdom and guidance on the timing for the STM team to go to work in the harvest field.
11. Pray for God to provide CIM Canada more financial support in 2021. Although much of their ministry has been suspended, but they still must bear the financial obligations to their working partners in supporting pioneering work in local churches and teachers in village schools.
12. Ask God to provide wisdom to CIM co-workers in performing their duties in the ministry entrusted by the Lord. Pray that God will move more brothers and sisters to join the service so God's kingdom would be more prosperous. Pray for God's abundant provision for all the financial needs of CIM.



FINANCIAL REPORT

November 2020

	Income	Expense	Balance
General	\$9,217	\$8,128	\$1,089
Missions	\$11,168	\$7,579	\$3,589
Total	\$20,385	\$15,707	\$4,678

To contribute to CIM ministries:

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- 2) Donate online via credit card, go to: www.cimusa.org Click on "Give" and follow directions. Thank you!



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