

Good morning Friend,

Attempt great things for God . . . expect great things from God. – William Carey

Our team is in Kolkata, India (previously called Calcutta). This morning we ministered at the Carey Baptist Church. The church celebrated its 200th anniversary last year. It is dedicated to William Carey, the founder of modern missions. Through the years hundreds of pastors have preached here, including Adoniram Judson, George Muller, Luther Rice, Corrie ten Boom, Winnie Bonner, and Bob Pierce. The quotation at the top of this letter was said by Carey. It was also lived by Carey. As a result, Carey experienced *great things from God*.

How do you feel about the quotation? Some of you like it. Some of you are not so sure you like it. Let me agree with your hesitation for a moment. Perhaps you think it sounds too much like “me, me, me.” I, too, want to be sure that it’s God’s glory that matters. Not my glory but His glory. So let’s search the Scriptures and look for some answers to the question. He alone is great. He alone is glorious and awesome. We must begin there. Now let’s proceed.

What can unlock *the great things* that He longs to do TO us and THROUGH us. Let’s look at four keys.

PRAYER is a key. God said, through Jeremiah . . . *Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know* (Jeremiah 33:3). This theme is interwoven through both the Old and the New Testaments. James stated that . . . *the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.* (James 5:16) James then used Elijah as an illustration to show us that great things are released from God as we pray (verses 17-18). James simply stated that . . . *Elijah was a man just like us . . .* but he prayed a couple of big prayers about rain and God responded. Perhaps you can point to an instance in your own life when prayer made the difference.

POWER is also a key . . . not your power . . . not my power . . . but **God’s** power. When Paul wrote the Ephesian letter, he gave us some rich teaching about His power. I’ll just point to two of his many references to His power. He prayed that the readers would grasp *God’s incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead* (Ephesians 1:19-20. He continues in Ephesians 3:20 . . . *Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.* Perhaps if we kept this thought always before us, we would be leaps ahead of where we are or have ever been.

SERVICE is another key. Jesus says . . . *You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all* (Mark 10:42-44). It’s a mind-set. It’s a heart-set.

LOVE is a key. In First Corinthians, Paul richly teaches about spiritual gifts. He concludes chapter 12 by stating . . . *Eagerly desire the greater gifts* and then he abruptly speaks about the most excellent way. The more excellent way is love (I Corinthians 12: 31). This is fully expanded in chapter 13. Do you see what Paul is doing here? After talking about spiritual gifts, he gets to the greater issue of spiritual

graces, or spiritual fruit. He insists that character surpasses giftedness. I'm convinced that spiritual character will always go further than spectacular gifts. And it endures.

I'm ready now to fully embrace Carey's thought. Here it is again . . . *Attempt great things for God. Expect great things from God.*

Be encouraged,

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