

"CROSSING THE TRACKS." by Bishop Tony Miller

When I was a little boy I would often stay with my grandparents while my parents were away on business. It was a great time for me as my grandparents were very influential in the formation of my life and dreams. Much like Timothy, I had a "heritage of faith" from my parents and grandparents.

One of the things I remember most about being at Grandmother Miller's was that she lived near the railroad tracks. Being "all boy", the outdoors was my domain from early morning until dark. My friends and I would build forts, play sports and go exploring, even though her house was inside the city limits. One day my grandmother found us playing near the railroad tracks.

Knowing our nature well and realising that her concern for our safety would not be enough to keep us from venturing near there again, she took the time to teach us how to navigate life around the tracks. She even taught us how to cross the tracks without being hurt!

One of the things she pointed out were the signs that warn pedestrians and automobile drivers alike of the trains that will occasionally come down the tracks. I learned that the signs were not to forbid me from crossing and going ahead to another part of the city, but rather to warn me that I must proceed with understanding and caution. We were taught to STOP...LOOK...and LISTEN - before we proceeded with care.

As the church is confronted with change in this new millennium, and all the adventures it holds for us, the word of the Lord is calling us to exploration - to move into a new place of opportunity and impact. These new opportunities will require us to leave our old methods and paradigms concerning church, our culture and the world we are called to affect, and embark on a journey of discovering new strategies and expanded vision. God is challenging our comfort zones as we are learning how to effectively live old-fashioned faith in these newfangled times!

In 1 Chronicles 12:32 we find one of the key elements of David's mighty men - the sons of Issachar. The Bible declares, "...they understood their times and they knew what to do". I believe that same anointing is presently resting on organisations like Links International. They are hearing a clear sound. There is a clear understanding of our times...our secular culture, the Gen Xer's, the Post-Modern Society, as well as the emerging apostolic and prophetic movement. There is emerging within the hearts of leaders throughout Christendom new methods of ministry and an effective response to the needs of our world. Cutting-edge leadership is no longer just thinking "out of the box" but has moved to a position of "beyond the box"! Much of the major 'power centre' of this generation did not grow up in the confines of the religious order we call the box, but rather are men and women who are hearing the voice of the Lord and obeying, never allowing the patterns of a previous order to define who they are or what they can accomplish!

Let me encourage you, whether God is speaking to you about a new season in the ministry you have been called to steward, or in your own personal life and family, don't stay stuck on one side of the tracks for fear of calamity if you cross. Yes, we move forward with care, but we must move forward! If you spend your whole life playing it safe, you will miss the once-in-a-lifetime-opportunities that are around us everyday. Don't be afraid of making mistakes...you will! Guaranteed! But learn to laugh at them and learn from them and move forward! So often failure is the womb that success is conceived in!

Far too many people are locked up behind the walls of fear and insecurity, incarcerated by the opinions of those around them or the opinions of previous generations. So what if your adventure of faith takes you beyond the previous norms of life? Many of you are dying of sheer boredom.

What if you are at an intersection of life facing the possibility of crossing into new territory? Don't stop - expand your horizons, discover another part of God's world! It may not be across the globe - it could be across the street or across the hallway at work. It may be a new facility for worship or a new opportunity to use your gifts serving in an arena of ministry you have never worked in before. It could be ministering at the country club or as a volunteer for the next cross cultural missions trip.

There is another world waiting for you to enter! Calmly remember to STOP, LOOK and LISTEN. These three simple principles are not barriers to our progress, but protection for us as we cross the tracks into new arenas of life!

Bishop Tony Miller

Tony Miller founded Destiny World Outreach in 1991, a national and international ministry with an emphasis on training and equipping front-line pastors and leaders through conferences, crusades and leadership development resources. In the past nine years, over 100,000 pastors and leaders in over 50 nations of the world have been trained face to face through the ministry of Destiny World Outreach, with crusades reaching upwards of 50,000 nightly.