

NCMI EQUIP South Africa 2013

Session 1



A Fresh Commissioning

by Tyrone Daniel

I know Isaiah 6 is a well-worn text with me but I'd like to start here and talk about a fresh commissioning I believe God has for us all. As we look at this text, let the Lord show you afresh what it is we need to see from it. Receive more than just another message but rather something of the Father's heart. Because it's the Father's heart that's going to motivate us into our future together and keep us on course as we face what we face and embrace the bigness of what we still have to walk in.

We're going to break into new regions and cities. But a passion for Jesus, for people and His Kingdom is what will get us there. We don't want to lose what we've got, we want to take it with us into the future. It's going to take a people that are motivated by Jesus, looking to Him, and receiving His wonderful, magnificent heart.

Many times it's preached that Isaiah 6 is when God commissioned Isaiah, but this is not the case. Isaiah had been preaching for eighteen years before this happened. That's important because something changed in Isaiah's ministry when God decided to reveal Himself afresh. Isaiah's revelation changed; the nation changed; and even Isaiah's prophetic language changed because of what he saw here.

I believe there are things that need to change in us so things will change out there. We can't just continue to embrace what we have and think it's going to bring a change. God wants to show us something more of His glory. Because when we see Him in His glory everything changes. Ministry becomes a pleasure rather than a burden. Leading becomes the joy of your life rather than something you have to do. The pressures to perform fade away as we see our God. When we're pointing people to Jesus and to His divine glory, rather than all this other stuff, ministry becomes a lot easier.

If you've been in ministry for many, many years and are hanging onto the principles of ministry and walking with Jesus, I thank you for that because we need to live by the Word. But we also need His Spirit to fall afresh on us. Because the Christian life and ministry is Word and Spirit. It's a personal walk with him; not ministering out of a textbook. And clearly this move of the Spirit – a personal revelation – was needed in this time of our Isaiah 6 text.

Isaiah 6

1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. [We need to see that again!] 2 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: with two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.’

4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

5 ‘Woe to me!’ I cried. ‘I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.’

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, ‘See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.’

I have to ask: what do we see when we worship this King? How do we describe Him to others? It's so vital for us to see the right thing. He is the exalted King, not some man who walked the earth with white teeth and clothes that were always clean – a wonderful gentleman who never offended anyone and was concerned about what man wanted rather than what God wanted.

Jesus offended people. You and I can know Jesus from a distance and never offend anyone. But when we begin to follow Jesus, then people are going to be offended, because Jesus offends people. When we begin to follow Jesus, it's a whole different ball game.

This prophet saw something magnificent – the King. I've shared this many times, but after Isaiah saw the Lord he saw himself. For the first five chapters of Isaiah the prophet is saying, “Woe to you!”. But after he sees the King his first response is, “Woe is me! I am ruined! I am a man of unclean lips...” Then, after seeing himself, he sees others and continues, “..and I live among a people of unclean lips.” He now understood something of himself and of others.

But then the Lord sends an angel to touch his lips. I love that. But what would have happened if the Lord just left Isaiah in that moment of seeing God in His glory? Of seeing the ruined self he was and those he lived with? It would have been the end! But the Lord in His graciousness and goodness and love revealed His redemption as this man fell down. He lifts him up and pronounces him as clean.

What a picture of this incredible God who loves so much that He brings redemption. But still, what if

He now only left it there? How sad that would be, because clearly the outcome of this whole revelation from God was to stir this man's heart to get out there and fulfil the call of God and reveal what he had seen to others. It's only after God pronounces Isaiah as clean that the Father asks the question, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" (vs 8). I don't believe Isaiah even had an option. Why? Because of what he saw – the Lord. And so he responds, "Here am I! Send me!"

A stirring in our hearts together

I believe there's a fresh stirring in the heart of the Father for us to say in our togetherness, "Lord, here am I, send *me*." There's a personal response required here. It's not, "Here am I, send *them*! Because I'm pretty hooked up right now."

I don't believe all of us have to go to far away places in the world but I do believe there's a fresh commissioning from God. He wants our hearts to be His heart. Because there are nations and cities and places that are wide open for us and God's looking for people – our people – to be stirred afresh. Not by some vision or mission or some guy in the front encouraging us, but by being undone after we see God in His glory and experience redemption. He wants us to be undone by His heart. God is asking us again, "Who will go for us?"

Born into it

I was born into this thing of going. But let me tell you – that's not enough. I was born in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia at the time) and my dad was on a mission, knocking on doors and inviting people to attend where he was preaching about Jesus. I lived there for six weeks of my life and then we moved to South Africa – Durban then Johannesburg. We lived here for seventeen years. Then we moved to Australia; then we moved to California; then we moved back to Australia. And now I'm in Denver, Colorado.

But even being born into this is not enough to be motivated. It's not enough to read of the old revivals and old men and women who paved the way and say, 'That's great... I wish one day...' None of this is going to hold us as we go forward.

What is going to hold us is this ongoing revelation of the King and an ongoing 'undoing' in our lives by Jesus. After seeing the King in His glory, how can we not tell the world? After what we've experienced? After what we've walked in? Of who we know?

Are we still passionate about Jesus first and not the mission? Because the mission gets difficult and hard, and where we're going is even more difficult, and if we're not passionate about this King the mission will dry up very quickly. As we face tough situations, we're going to bail the ship quickly,

because the mission's not enough to keep us. We need to be captivated by the One who we have the mission for.

Needs of man and our inheritance

In the last little while I've seen many in church leadership begin to look at the needs of man and run after that, instead of presenting something of the glory of the Lord. The needs of man sink you quickly because there are just too many. Remember, God is the source of life. He is what all people need and what most people want. If we have this revelation of Him and this partnership and relationship with Him, then we can reveal Him wherever we go. It's the divine glory of God that people need, not some clever bail-out that we can give.

I believe some of the bail-outs are all part of it but it's not the main focus of what we're called to. The Lord has an inheritance for us. There are more doors open today for us than there has ever been in our 30-something years of history. This is a now-reality, I'm not talking in faith when I say this.

I got to spend some time with my dad last year and it was wonderful to just listen to him. He's the only other guy who's ever led this team, and it was wonderful to hang out with someone who has done this too. He's not a big talker as many of you know, but when he talks I listen. He's not that emotional either. He's a passionate man but he doesn't cry a lot. He began to tell me something of the dream he dreamed with the guys in the early days of what we're doing. It was radical. But I stopped him at one point and told him, "Guess what dad, a lot of what you're dreaming of, by the grace of God we've walked in it and gone beyond." And he began to weep because of the faithfulness of God. Because of the surety and promises of God.

This stirred and encouraged me. We should also be dreamers in this season. Because the guys who are coming behind us are going to walk in the things we're dreaming of now!

God's got a whole lot more for us. But we're not going to get there if we're a people who are passionate only about the call. We need to be a people who are passionate about the King of the call. Some of you have settled. Not because you're getting old but because you've lost that passion for Jesus. That passion is the motivating factor for everything we are and we'll ever be.

I keep coming back to this: If we lose our passion for Jesus we lose our passion for everything. We've got to be intentional and build towards this and make sure He's the focus of everything and He's getting the glory for everything. Because, according to the Bible, in Him all things hold together. If we want to be biblical we better be living and preaching that.

Jesus is not an optional extra for when we get tired. He is the motivating factor and we need to live

that. In the busyness of ministry we can't lose that. When I stop looking at Him I want to stop ministering. Let me tell you, it's liberating to live in this place. I'm still a man but my King is incredibly important to me.

Who or what is the passion of your life? Is it your church? Your neighbour? Your spouse? Your call? No, Jesus.

Clearly there's work to be done

We're in a defining moment right now – it's a new season and there are new places for us to go. According to statistics I currently have (and I realise there may be some later statistics), every 25 minutes, 3000 people get saved around the world. Surely that's worth a praise!

That's the good news. But now for the rest. As of April 2012, there are approximately 7 billion people on earth. Of those, 11 percent (about 750 million) are willing to claim Jesus as their personal Lord and saviour. But about 2.6 billion people – 38 percent of the world's population – have heard the Gospel but not yet accepted Christ.

At present, just over 50 percent of the world's population - 3.5 billion people – have not heard the Gospel and most of them do not have a realistic opportunity to hear it right now. Of the 11,640 distinct people groups on the planet, 6,734 of these groups – roughly 60 percent – contain between 0 and 2 percent evangelical Christians.

I'm not saying this to depress us. Maybe you have later statistics that put things in a different light. But regardless, clearly there's work to be done. Clearly we have a mandate under God to reach the world before Jesus comes back. Clearly it's unfair that you and I have heard the Gospel a second and third time while there are millions of people who've never heard it for the first time.

These people are in our cities, our regions, in this nation and in Africa and around the world. Millions have never heard of Jesus. I don't know what that does for you, but it arrests my heart because I've seen the glory of God and I know why He has shown me, and why He has shown us, who He is – because He's called you and I, in this day and age, to live out this mandate intentionally and show the world how awesome Jesus Christ really is.

When I read these statistics I know God's given us a mandate. I know God has entrusted you and I with the world. He's entrusted us with South Africa and Africa. We don't own it but we've been put here to reach it. Which means we've got to reach it.

People have longed for what we have the privilege of walking in. It doesn't mean it's easy. We need to

always remember that it's going to cost us everything. I believe Jesus is coming back on my watch – I know some of you fight me on that. But I say this because I intend – I don't say this arrogantly – to do something about those statistics. The Bible says in Matthew 24 that this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to *all nations* as a testimony and *then the end will come*. Do you believe we can still speed up Christ's return? How? By introducing people to this King we're so passionately in love with.

Business people, you're not rich for you. Your businesses are not so you can be set up for your generations to come. With all due respect, God wants you to be wise with your money, but surely where it matters most is souls and churches and people. Not just where you support some ministry but where you sow your life into this Kingdom to see it advance. Let's get the word of who Jesus is out there. Let's preach the Gospel everywhere we go so this King can come back soon and we can spend eternity living in the reward of what we did here on earth.

A blessing to the nations

The Lord said to Abraham in **Genesis 12: 1 – 3**

‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

2 ‘I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.’

Do you believe that this is the call of God for us right now? The nations will be blessed through us. God still has that mandate for the church. It's the calling of our lives to see the world blessed because we're living in the blessing of what God promised.

The call in the New Testament

In the first five books of the New Testament you can find an aspect of the Great Commission highlighted.

Matthew 28: 18 – 20 speaks of the *depth* of the Great Commission

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

This must ring out in our own lives; our families; our local churches; into our togetherness and right across the world. We've got to own it together if we believe this is in the word of God and it's His heart for where we're at.

Mark 16:15 speaks of the *breadth* of the Great Commission.

15 He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to *all* creation.

Luke 24:46 – 47 speaks of the *surety* of this Great Commission.

46 He told them, 'This is what is written: the Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

John 20:21 speaks of the *model* of this Great Commission.

Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'

Acts 1:8 speaks of the *extent* of this Great Commission.

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

This is what Jesus left for us to do but the Great Commission didn't start with the Great Commission. If we believe it started there we're running after a mission rather than the heart of the Father. It's our Father who started missions – the heartbeat of the Father is souls and people. We've got to back up and see that this all started in God's own heart. It's not some good idea or even the last thing Jesus told us to do. It was on God's heart before it was on the church's heart. It started in the Father's heart because He has a heart for people and a love for the *whole* world. This has never left His heart.

If we're going to represent the Father well, then we're going to have to have His heart, and that heart is people and missions and this Great Commission. God is a missions-minded God. The Gospel is a missions-minded message. If it could not save every sinner there would be no reason to take it to every nation. The Bible is a missions book. The Great Commission is a missions mandate that identifies the

local church as the centre for world evangelism. When the Church ceases to be mission minded it betrays its trust.

The church has lots of responsibilities as we know, but it only has one mission – to evangelise the whole world. So Jesus can come back.

Here are three foundations of any true missions focus. If these are not happening in our lives, let's adjust and ask the Lord to show us and reveal what we must do. Let's change these things so people are not running without vision but rather with this mission from heaven with the right heart and foundation. Then we can break into new regions and take the cities and the doors that are open to us.

1. A compassionate God

John 3:16 is a well worn text that's for the lost but it's also for the Church.

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

For God so loved *the world*. Right here we see something of God's compassionate, extravagant, infinite and everlasting love. Do you love this about Him? His love is incomprehensible – it surpasses knowledge (Ephesians 3:19).

And his love is indiscriminate. It's for *all people*. Now I know not all people will be saved, but I'm convinced that God wants all to be saved. If you believe in predestination that's great and I'm delighted for you, but surely you still believe that God wants all people to be saved. Because the Bible says so (1 Timothy 2:4). He gave His Son for all, not for some. His extravagant love is not just for the good few but for the worst of the worst. While we were yet sinners, says Romans 5:8, Christ died for us.

Do we live like this? Are we indiscriminate? Or do we choose who or what we like? Saying we like this region or that place? Well it doesn't matter what we like – where is God sending us? Hopefully He'll give you a heart for the place He sends you, but those people we don't like, someone needs to reach them, because God loves them.

God's love is exhaustive. Not *exhausting*. It's for everywhere and all people. He wants no one to perish (2 Peter 3:9). It's an expressive love – he “gave” his Son. It's one thing to have an extravagant love but another to do something about it. The Father both promised and provided a saviour.

If we're building churches and people and pointing people to Jesus, and serious about our mandate

and mission, we've got to have a compassionate heart because God does. Our future missions programmes, as it were, need to be built on this very foundation of a compassionate God. We build and live accordingly.

2. A compelling message

We're all living and ministering in different regions with different cultures. But regardless, this Gospel is a compelling message. It's good enough. We don't have to change this message and water it down.

The Gospel is a distinctive message. It's not like any other message – so why do we make it like another message? There's no other way to the Father but through Jesus. God made it like that! God is stirring his Church afresh to stay the course and present this message in its entirety and truth. It's good enough. It can and does save. As Paul said, "...it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes." So we're not ashamed of this Gospel.

Paul says he was indebted to this Gospel in Romans 1:14 – 16. He even says, "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" in 1 Corinthians 9:16. We need to be like that about our message.

All these other religions, as you know, are about finding God and reaching out to do what you can to do right. But we know that God did it all to come to *us*. Hinduism preaches a four-fold path to salvation. Buddhism leads its followers down an eight-fold path to salvation. Salvation offered by Islam rests upon five pillars. Catholicism - forgive me for going there – sees salvation given by fulfilling five sacraments. But the Gospel centres on a person for salvation. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:16). Peter said in Acts 4:12 that there is no other name by which we can be saved. Apart from Jesus there's no salvation.

Other messages tell people what to do to be saved. This message we preach tells people *what's been done* to be saved. Are we keeping people free? This message liberates sinners and saints alike. And as we see sinners liberated, we need to keep them liberated in the Church today. I'm convinced that the Lord is calling for the Church to preach the finished work of Christ again. Not just to preach it but live in it and lead accordingly.

My son loves clothes. So one day I bought him a shirt and he hung his shirt up. He kept thanking me for the shirt, saying how great the shirt was, but he never wore it. Then one day he actually put it on. I realised on that day that he really did like his shirt. He wasn't just thanking me for it, he was actually wearing it! Stop thanking Jesus for your shirt of redemption. Put your shirt on! That tells him you really like what He did!

We've got to be free and settle our identity and understand the finished work of the cross. I know I

can get stuck here, but when He said it was finished, it was finished.. The curtain in the temple was ripped from top to bottom – which means that God initiated our reconciliation with Him, not man. The curtain wasn't just cut in half to make it easy to sew back up again. No, it was destroyed. But the church seems to spend all this time trying to sew what He destroyed – saying you need to find a man, some other mediator, to speak to you on behalf of God and let you know what God is saying to you. No, come to meet God for yourself – you have access to Him constantly, because Jesus said it was finished. Keep it finished.

People are getting saved into something that's killing them and the life of God. We've got to find our identity back in what He did. As Romans 6 says, we died with Him and were raised with Him. We need to stop being like a yard dog – which digs up all the old bones. So many Christians keep thinking we need to dig up the old bones of our sins. Under the blood it's dealt with and finished. Let those bones be dead.

But unfortunately, a lot of people also just leave their theology there – just talking of Jesus' death and burial. But how do you put a shirt on if it's all death and burial? He didn't stay there, He came out remember? If He didn't come out, we wouldn't be here! Jesus failed if He didn't come out! But because He came out we are now raised with Him and seated with Him next to the Majesty of heaven. Friends, do you see yourself like that? We need to settle that otherwise we won't walk in what we want to walk in.

At our church once I took a white shirt and asked everyone if they agreed it was a white shirt. They all agreed, of course. I dipped it in a bucket of red dye and then asked who believes that it's a white shirt. No one believed that – now its a red shirt! So stop referring to the red shirt as if it's a white shirt! When you come to Jesus your identity has changed – you're no longer a white shirt but a red shirt!

We're sinners saved by grace, yes. But now talk about being a saint. We're a new creation. We're no longer as we were. Our situation, culture, church, or ministry, or past doesn't define us or our future. Because of Jesus we're a new creation. Period. I'm no longer the person I once was.

This is an incredible message we have. It's life changing and powerful. Let's not water it down or make it sound like another message so people don't know what we're actually sharing. Yes, we need to change our language and so forth to help our different cultures understand it. But we don't change the actual Gospel for our culture. The church today needs to ask if we are answering the questions the world is asking in our Gospel message. We have a distinctive, dynamic message.

But even though the Gospel is the 'power unto salvation' as we see in Romans 1, it actually has a limit. It cannot save until it's first believed. It cannot be believed until it's first heard. And it cannot be heard until it's first preached. We're all waiting for His return but so many have never even heard of His first

coming! Someone has to go tell these people the great news.

3. A commissioned church

Matthew 28:18 – 20 says:

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’

Jesus said, “**All** authority.” I've met people with authority and they can really do what they want. I've been in a country where the people, sadly, feared this man who ruled that country with an iron fist. He could do what he wanted. But I know someone who has more power than that man. I know someone who has all authority in heaven, earth and even under the earth. That sums it all up, don't you think? There's no more authority anywhere needed. And that one we know came and said He is commissioning His people with His very own authority.

We – you – have been authorised by the power of Christ. We can have courage to live and preach it. And more than that, he assures us that His presence will go for us. That's got to make us even more courageous!

We need every believer involved, somehow, in all of this. When any church loses their spirit of the Great Commission, that church surrenders the very reason for their existence. Multitudes are born and multitudes die every day. Whether or not people are prepared to reach the lost, they're still going to die.

Missions are inclusive. It's all of us. No one is exempted from the responsibility to evangelise the lost. Christ's command means you're either sent or sending, but you cannot remain uninvolved and be obedient to Jesus. You can pray and give and go.

This message is not only about God's heart for missions but also our heart in doing our part. Every person evangelised is the goal – the domain of missions is *all the world*. The demand of missions is every creature. We've heard it before – if the world is not your parish then your parish will become your world.

Response

So how do we respond? How do we do this?

1. Be captivated by Jesus

We go back to the start – we've got to be captivated by Jesus. Once again, look at Isaiah 6. If you're not captivated by Jesus, none of what's said here will pan out.

2. Be committed to this Kingdom

3. Contribute to His church. Live in the local church.

4. Be convinced of His truth

5. Be concerned for the world

6. Stay connected to sinners

I'm amazed by how few Christians even know sinners. Get connected to the sinners but not at the neglect of the saints. Get the saints connected to sinners. We can't just hang around with elders all day! You better change your language and find what these sinners are on about. 70 percent of the city I've been called (Denver, Colorado) have never even heard of Jesus or been churched. These are American born and bred. You've got to stay connected with sinners, it's the heart of the Father.

7. Stay consistent in His call

There's a cost to all this. We exist for others, not ourselves. The world is waiting for God's church to tell them what we see and who we know and what we continually experience. It's God's very heart.

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