

February 2012

Expending Energy

There was a lot of energy in the room as people talked about the challenges of living in a culture that is increasingly alien and even antagonistic to a Christian world-view. Feelings of frustration, being overwhelmed and perplexed hung heavily over the discussion.

As an outside observer to this particular gathering, I too was feeling frustrated. My frustration, though, was that I was getting thoroughly tired of conversations like this. Whilst discussions about the impact of culture on the church (and more specifically discipleship) are important, I just don't see a lot of positive outcomes as a result of all of this wrestling. I usually walk away feeling like a victim to the big bad anti-church world.

It's at times like these when you have to take in a good dose of truth! Jesus did not promise us that being his witnesses to the world would be easy ... but He certainly did assure us of His Presence and ultimate victory over darkness.

With all of the above sloshing about in my mind, I downloaded Jim Collin's latest book "Great by Choice". This latest offering builds on previous research; specifically in this case, identifying the behaviours of organisations who not only survive in times of major turbulence, but actually thrive.

Here's just two nuggets that I highlighted on my first read through:

We never blame circumstance; we never blame environment.

Those who spend most of their energy "reacting to change" will do exactly that, expend most of their energy reacting to change.

Jim Collins & Morten T Hansen "Great by Choice" 2011

There's an important place for wrestling with the challenges of making Disciples of Jesus in the midst of a culture that has turned its back on Christian truths and values. But we must balance these discussions with large slabs of the Word of God so that in our thinking, we do not allow darkness to descend and paralyse our mission. We take the unchanging Word of God and seek to apply it to an ever-changing world.

All too often our eyes are distracted by the things of our turbulent and very seductive culture. The force and pace of change is such that we quite naturally live in reaction to change. Our eyes must remain fixed on our unchanging Master, Jesus (Hebrews 12:2) so that His energies flow through our lives enabling us to fulfil His command to make Disciples.

Tania Watson
Executive Minister