Politics, Plagues, and Hardships

This month’s Serve is written by Dr. Bill and Deb Edmondson, BMM missionaries in Boston and leaders of Boston and Beyond: A Globalized Cities Initiative. The Edmondsons’ piece is a call to faithful discipleship amidst a quickly-changing and increasingly godless society.

Old and reliable promises
It is a new year with new challenges seated alongside old and reliable promises: “I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). In addition: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations ... and lo, I am with you always ...” (Matt. 28:19-20). God’s promises outlast politics, plagues, and hardships and press us to trust and obey.

Politics, plagues, and hardships
Consider three examples of God’s faithful promise and man’s trusting response. I am reminded of Joseph who victoriously served in a less-than-democratic administration. It was through Joseph that God preserved the
people who became Israel, from whom the Savior came.

I also think of the Apostle Paul who ministered under the tyranny of Rome. It was this man, the Apostle to the Gentiles, who by the sovereign hand of God, was taken as a prisoner to Rome. From the geopolitical center of Rome, the Gospel was able to travel globally.

Finally, it was the faithful Baptist missionary, Adoniram Judson, born not long after the Revolutionary War, who served the Lord during the time of the War of 1812. He died not too many years before the Civil War and served under a Nebuchadnezzar-like ruler in Burma. He lost two wives, several children, and many missionary colleagues while serving there. Burma also claimed Judson’s life as well. Yet he was instrumental in opening Burma to the Gospel, a place missionary William Carey advised him to forget, believing it was beyond hope.

Joseph, Paul, and Adoniram Judson did not allow the politics, plagues, or hardships of their day to stop them from faithful and victorious service. Instead, they joined God in His sovereign dealings in order to accomplish His will.
Action steps for 2021

Consider these three action steps in seeking to serve faithfully in 2021:

1. Continue asking God for wisdom to discern how He is working to build the body of Christ. One thing you can be sure of is that God is working His plan. Therefore, exciting days are ahead. It is your responsibility to discern His plan and join Him.

2. Be aggressive but wise as you minister in a pandemic-laced world. Do all you can to take health hazards under consideration. However, trust the Lord with discipleship opportunities and make them a first priority.

3. Get creative to use every means possible to evangelize those that have yet to believe, to disciple those that have believed, and to encourage those around you to be doing their part. If you’re not using online tools in this way, get set up. If your practice of ministry needs tweaking to be obedient to Christ in 2021, be ready to change.

By God’s grace and almighty power, we all must endeavor to follow the example of Joseph, Paul, and Adoniram.
Are you called to serve or think you might be visit www.bmm.org to find out more about our career missionary, short-term, internships, and other missions programs. Applications are now being accepted for all programs.