

Verse: Jeremiah 12:5

Can we compete with horses? Yes we can, if we have a lion chasing after us. If we are in a river and a crocodile is behind us, we will.

The thing to spur us on is the sense of purpose. We are not here to consume resources but to make the world better. We must have a purpose in life. We are given examples of men and women with purpose, who did impossible things.

Moses - He led 3.5 million people. He had a purpose and that helped him to conquer an impossible task.

Joshua - He had a purpose to capture the land.

King Solomon – He had a purpose to build God’s temple.

Queen Esther – She had a purpose to save Jews.

Jesus – He had a purpose to save us from sin.

Paul – he had a purpose to bring the gospel to the Gentiles.

These went through great sufferings because they had purpose. To compete with horses, we need to have convicting purpose.

Richard Bach said: “Sooner or later, those who win are those who think they can.”

Philippians 4:13: “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.”

The pessimist complains about the wind. The optimist expects the wind direction to change. The Christian adjusts the sails.

As Christians, we take action to overcome the difficulties. It is a real challenge. In Malaysia, they say, “Malaysia boleh.” As BBTcians, do we say, “Boleh?”; “Can or Cannot?” We are a nation of ‘can-do’ people. How did we develop a ‘can-do’ attitude? When we broke away from Malaysia, we had nothing. Dr Goh Keng Swee saw the swamps in Jurong but he also saw in them, the industries of the future. It was not easy to get people to believe Jurong could be industrialised but he did. This is a man with a ‘can-do’ attitude. We also had nothing to defend us, with only 300 soldiers in Beach Road. Dr Goh then introduced National Service and today, our army is 2 million strong.

We have to translate the ‘can-do’ attitude to our walk with God. Paul told us never to get too comfortable. When he related how he was shipwrecked, he was not asking for pity but he was sharing his experience. He never gave up. He adjusted to challenges faced. He showed us how to compete with horses.

So, how can you develop a ‘can-do’ attitude?

1. Know who you are.

1 Samuel 17:37

“The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “Go, and the LORD be with you.”

Mac Lucado said: “Focus on giants, you stumble. Focus on God, your giants stumble.”

1 Samuel 17:45,46

David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the LORD will hand you over to me and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head. Today, I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.”

That’s the word of somebody who knows what he says. We are priests and kings. God is with us. He is our partner. Many people did great things because they depended on God.

When Robert Morrison was on a ship to China, the captain asked sarcastically if Morrison was going to make a big impression in China. Morrison replied, “No, but God will make a big impression.”

Morrison believed in God.

A boy was selling pencils to raise funds to build a \$30,000,000 hospital when he knocked on a lady’s door. Having heard what the boy intended to do, she remarked that it was a big goal for a small boy. However the boy told her he was not alone. Another boy down the street was also doing the same. They were doing it together. He had confidence in someone his age. How much more should we have confidence in God who has no equal? When we do things for Him, we are partnering with God who is unsurpassed. We must know our position in Christ as we serve.

2. Say what you know.

There is life in our words. Let’s look at some people.

Paul declared: “I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength.”

David declared: “I have killed the lion and the bear. Now I can kill the giant!”

Job declared: “I know that my redeemer lives...”

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego declared: “If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But if He does not, we want you to know, O king that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

This is a wonderful reminder of the kind of confidence we have. Be careful what we say as we serve God. Say what we believe. Saying it takes commitment. At the altar call, we say it with commitment. There is a big difference between interest and commitment. With commitment, one never allows things to stop him from achieving his purpose.

A wife wanted to buy a Jane Fonda power-rider. Instead of buying one, the husband thought it would be better for her to try out first. He managed to borrow one. The wife tried and found it good the first day. On the second day, her muscles started to ache and on the third day, the husband returned it. The wife was interested but she was not committed. Be careful what we say. We need good communication. We also need conviction to say what we know.

3. Start where you are.

We must bloom where we are planted. There is a purpose why God gives us 60 years lease in this place. We start from where we are. The people here will still be untouched after 60 years if we do nothing.

Mother Theresa gave her life in Calcutta. To all those who wanted to help her, she said, "Find your own Calcutta." What is your Calcutta? It could be your office, union, school or hospital. Always start where you are.

Judges 3:31

After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. He too saved Israel.

Shamgar was a farmer. He had a purpose to defend his farm. He started in the farm. What can we do? That leads me to the 4th point.

4. Use what you have.

What is the famous saying of the character, Phua Chu Kang? He said, "Use your brains." You won't believe what kind of resources are in this church. We have accountants, scientist, teachers, bankers, etc. Are the members using what they have?

Nick Vujcic was born without limbs yet he accomplished the impossible things. He is a Christian who goes round the world to inspire people. He could have gone begging but instead, he used his handicap as an opportunity to bless others. We are to use what we have.

Shamgar used his ox-goad.

David used his sling and 5 stones.

Moses used his shepherd staff.

Jesus used the 5 loaves and 2 fishes.

Many of us have the resources but don't use them. What else do you want? If Nick had joined the worship team, we'd be amazed what he could do.

5. Do what you can.

4 Simple strategies to do what we can:

a. Pause and Redirect.

Redirect negative things and make them positive. There will be new adventures.

b. Divide and Conquer

Spend one month to observe how others do things. Do a bit at a time.

c. Stop and evaluate

d. Rejoice and celebrate

What you do not recognize, you do not celebrate.

What you do not celebrate, you do not enjoy.

What you do not enjoy do not last.

Enjoy what you do. Otherwise, there is no point doing. Elder Jeffrey Goh constantly asks himself how he can further expend his energy. In a Family Gate meeting, he finds ways to contribute. You need to find your hallelujah quadrant. Find something that gives you a sense of purpose, blessing and impacting lives.

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.

According to His power, He is at work within us. Have you attended the W&I session once? If you have not done so, how about dropping by? If you have not invited someone to an evangelistic event, can you bring someone this year? If you have purpose, there will be the motivation to do so. God is calling us to build capacity. For those not serving, can you step forward and ask God, "What can I do for You?"

End.

Questions for discussion

Q1. Based on Philippians 4:13, share a personal experience where the reality of the verse came through clearly in your life.

Q2. Based on Proverbs 18:21, why must we be careful to say what we know? What do you understand by the fact that we need confidence to say what we believe and conviction to act on what we say?

Q3. In Luke 24:47, Jesus commanded his disciples to start preaching where they were, starting in Jerusalem. Mother Theresa started where she was sent, in Calcutta. Where is your Jerusalem, your Calcutta? What are you doing now where God has placed you?

Q4. Looking at 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 27-31, what do you think are your spiritual gift/gifts and how are you using what you have for the glory of God? What motivates you and what is holding you back?

Q5. Do you think you have some more capacity that God can use for this year 2012? Are there some new areas you would like to explore to build your capacities? Share some possibilities you are considering so that others can pray for you. Remember that saying it takes commitment.