

## Lessons from a Locomotive 15.03.20 AM

Have you ever felt prompted of the Holy Spirit? A prompting to dig a little deeper in scripture or in a word? On a ministry trip to Alaska, the pastor of a local church took me to the home of an elderly lady. She liked to collect old things and her late husband had a fascination with train sets. Sometime after my visit I felt prompted by the Holy Spirit to look into steam trains. I found some interesting facts about them.

Looking back in history before cars and trucks they only had horses and carts, no Greyhound buses or Qantas planes. They had stagecoaches to travel from town to town (6 people cramped up, with a team of horses pulling it along), horses to ride, sometimes with a buggy. Travel was slow and it took forever to get somewhere, especially if towing a tray or a cart with goods, like timber.

In **1606** de Ayanz a Spanish inventor, came up with an Idea that would eventually change the world. He found that if he boiled water, he could use the steam to drive a piston and created the first steam engine. 1698 **Thomas Savery** did the same thing but attached it to a pump, to pump water in a mine. 96 years later in 1794, **John Fitch** made the first **model steam train** that worked. 1830 the first American steam train was built in Baltimore "**Tom Thumb**" and it had 1.4 HP. 1831 **DeWitt Clinton** got 3 stagecoaches, put train wheels on them, tied them together, put them on railway tracks and towed them 20 km to New York (the first passenger train).

The UK built trains before America. When America started to copy their design, they knew that if they could find the key to making them more powerful, it could transform the USA. It would allow them to take people and goods right across the country. Trains would connect the remote towns to the Cities on the coast – bringing supplies and people, causing them to thrive.

The Lima Locomotive Company started to build trains in America in 1870 but the trains were still limited in what they could tow, most only a contained a few carriages with about 100 people. So, they discovered something that would totally revolutionise Trains. Their discovery – by changing one major thing, it would allow them to do what has never been done before, there would be no limit to what the train could do.

LIMA developed the "Superpower Steam Trains". Trains that could do what no other trains were able to do before. They had unlocked the key to unlimited potential. The key was discovered in the 1920's by William E Woodard: The key was to **increase the size of the fire box inside the train.**

The more fire on the inside, the more that train was able to do. 1920's Woodward had now developed a train that would eventually develop (7500 HP 5593kw), one of the most powerful steam trains every built. It was able to do the impossible for those days, nothing in the natural world compared. The railway would bring change to the nation of America.

**The only limitation to what the train could accomplish was the size of the fire inside.**

**2 Timothy 1:6-7** *"For this reason I remind you to **fan into flame** the gift of God, which is **in you** through the laying on of my hands. <sup>7</sup> For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline."*

Paul encouraged Timothy, his son in the Lord, to get on fire for God.

### **1. We need to stoke the fire to move forward**

One of the most important things we need to do is develop our relationship with God. Paul reminded Timothy of his Heritage, his mother was Unice and grandmother, Lois' (sincere faith in God). Timothy was a young pastor and Paul was giving him some important advice. He knew that life was going to get busy for Timothy, the worries of life and the burden of ministry. It's easy to get distracted and busy in life and not do the things you need to do in order to stay on fire. We need to spend time with God in order to develop that relationship with Him, not out of religious duty, but a sincere desire to know Him.

Daniel 11:32 KJV *"They that know their God will be strong and do exploits"*

**We need to develop a relationship with God to get to know His voice** - to be led by the Holy Spirit, to know what direction he would have you to go. There are times in our lives when God wants us to take time aside and seek Him, He will unfold the plan he has for you, not just about your destiny but on a day to day basis.

How do we get to know the voice of the Holy Spirit?

Through prayer, His word and spending time in His presence. Not to deliver the shopping list, but to speak to God and take time to listen.

Romans 8:14 *“Those who are **led by the Spirit of God** are sons / daughters of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”*

**We are led by the Spirit when we get know his voice.**

We need to be able to identify the voice of God, there are so many voices out there today, creating fear and uncertainty. Don't let **fear control you** like when you were in the world and had no hope. The devil may be the prince of this world, but Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is still on the throne and in control. Who better to give our lives to than the one that knows the future.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 *“For this reason **I remind you to fan into flame** the gift of God, which is **in you** through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”*

**Paul reminds timothy to fan it into flame the gift of God.**

Sometimes we just need a gentle reminder to keep on fire for God. To be reminded of our first love, when we gave our hearts to the Lord, being so excited about what God was doing in our life, being intentional with our walk. **Do whatever it takes to stay on fire.** Self-discipline – it is our responsibility to stoke the fire through reading the Word, Prayer and fellowship. Read books that build your faith, listen to online sermons or podcast from healthy/reliable sources.

2 Tim 1:7 *“For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”*

Acts 2:17 *“In the last days, God says, I will **pour out my Spirit** on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will **pour out my Spirit** in those days, and they will prophesy.*

## **2. Increasing the fire increases the capacity**

John the Baptist said: Matthew 3:11 *“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.**”*

Acts 2:1-4 *“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be **tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.** <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*

A handful of people on fire for God changed the world, not through their ability but God's anointing. Peter who denied Christ 3 times a few days earlier, preached boldly and saw thousands come to know Christ

2 Timothy 1:7 *“For God did not give us a **spirit of timidity**, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”*

**The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not just a personal anointing but a purposeful anointing.**

The anointing is not just to make you feel good in church, I love that feeling as much as anyone, but that's not what it's for, It's not there to make you shake rattle and roll or fall over on the prayer line (although that can sometimes happen), It's the power to do that which is impossible in your own strength.

Jesus said: Luke 4:18-19 *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to **preach good news** to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, <sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

Acts 2:17 *“In the last days, God says, I will **pour out my Spirit** on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.”*

**The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the enabling power of God to fulfil the Great Commission.**

Acts 1:8 *“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.”*

**And It’s also the anointing to see your visions and dreams fulfilled.** If God gives you a dream or vision, he is faithful to fulfil it. We need the fire of the Holy Spirit in our lives. When we are on fire for God there is no limit to what he can do through us. The disciples turned the world upside down.

I noticed that the whistle still works when the fire is going out, but the train doesn’t make any ground. Sometimes the fire has gone and we are still making all the right sounds - all the bells and whistles of church life but the fire has gone out, by trying to do it in your own strength and not by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the only problem is, the whistle doesn’t drive the train, the fire does.

Zech. 4:6 *“Not by might nor by power, but **by my Spirit,**’ says the LORD Almighty.”*

**The power of Synergy.** The only other way to increase the capacity is to use more than one locomotive.

Three reasons why trains have multiple Locomotives

1. **They were new** - sometimes when the first engine battled to keep going forward another would come along to help it get to its destination. If you're a new Christian, you need to have some people around you to keep you going in the right direction.

Eccl 4:9-10 *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: <sup>10</sup> If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up”*

2. **The load is too heavy for one to carry on its own** - One engine might struggle, but with more combined they can do it easily. It’s amazing what you can achieve if we are all pulling in the same direction. Be behind your leader and help them carry the load, there is power in unity, God anoints unity.

Heb 13:17 *“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a **burden**, for that would be of no advantage to you.”*

3. **When the terrain is difficult** - The hills and valleys. We all go through tough times (valleys) in life and it’s sometimes difficult to get on top of things again. Be in fellowship with those who can support you in the valleys and celebrate with you on the hilltops of life.

Heb 10:23-25 *“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup> Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

## Faith 15.03.20

Faith is a lifelong journey of understanding and leaning on God. It is not a formula that can be given, or the temptation would be for man to rely on his own understanding. Faith is, by design, given to draw you closer to He who is faithful. (Hebrews 11:11 (KJV) *“Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised”*)

Faith is a substance, as defined in Hebrews 11:1-3 *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* The word translated “substance” comes from the Greek **hupostasis** (Strong’s # 5287), which means “a placing or setting under, a substructure or foundation.”

The word translated “evidence” comes from the Greek word **elengchos** (Strong’s #1650), meaning “a proof, or that by which a thing is proved or tested; conviction.”

The context in question deals with the existence of the universe, for verse 3 says, “through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

Further, we know that God has given each one (believer) **the** measure of faith. (Romans 12:3)

The measure of faith” is the same for every believer, and it is the same faith that Jesus possessed. Different believers may have developed and strengthened their faith over time and by the Word, but their faith is no different than yours. You have that same capability. You can also have developed strong faith in one area, e.g. provision, but circumstances may come that you will need to strengthen your faith in another area e.g. healing. As Pastor Graham often says, born out of an old children’s ministry song “Faith is like a muscle, use it and it will grow; Faith is like a muscle, use it and it will show.”

### Basic Process of Faith (10 P’s)

From my experience, and still developing – always learning more about the character of God and how He works; faith rarely happens the same way twice. God determines the outcome of any situation; His timing is perfect, and faith has a perfect work – if we allow it. We can stop short of the promises of God – it happens, but that wasn’t His plan. We can try and work it out our own way – it happens, and Ishmaels are born. But in Him is perfect peace, and He cares for us, more than we can imagine. So, although my thoughts may only be a part of the journey of faith, perhaps they might be useful in helping us understand the process of faith.

1. The **Person** of faith: We are saved by grace, through faith. (Eph 2:8-10 <sup>8</sup> *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*). We have already exercised faith at salvation – we are positioned to live by faith. Our work, Jesus said, is simply to believe. Cows moo, dogs bark, believers believe. (Jimmy Mugambi?) You are a believer; you are a person of faith.
2. The **Problem** for faith: Each faith journey starts with a problem too big for you to handle on your own. If you can do it, you don’t need faith. The bigger the problem, the better the opportunity to exercise faith – lean wholeheartedly on who He is.
3. The **Promise** of faith: Every problem has a promise. This is the hope we have. The Bible is so full of the promises of God and in His Word is a promise specific for your problem.
  - a. Provision
  - b. Healing
  - c. Marriage
  - d. Children

You need to seek out the promise – this will be the foundation of your faith journey.

4. The **Proclamation** of Faith: When does the faith journey start? It is hard to say – but God said to Daniel (Daniel 10:12) *“From the moment you set your mind to gain understanding, and humbled*

*yourself before your God, your words were heard and I have come in response to them.”* God responds to words of faith. Not our complaints, or our tears or our good works – He is moved by faith. In fact, without faith, the Bible says, it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). When you have found the promise – you need to declare it – loud and over and over.

Romans 10:17 says that faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of Christ. Sometimes you need to hear God’s Word in your mouth for your faith to grow. 2 Corinthians 4:13 (NIV) *“<sup>13</sup> It is written: “I believed; therefore, I have spoken.” Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak,”*

Say after me *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* Say it again, louder. And again. Louder – so you can hear, so the enemy can hear and flee – God comes in response to your words, but you need to be proclaiming them.

5. The **Proving** of Faith: You will seek Him, find His promises, declare His Word over your situation – and then the testing will come. It sometimes seems things just get worse instead of better. Or what you thought would happen doesn’t. At this point you have some choices to make. Don’t fall for:
  - a. Panic – try and fix it – Ishmaels can be born.
  - b. Pity – it’s not fair – don’t accept Satan’s invitation to a pity party, nothing’s changed – God is still on the throne.
  - c. Pointless – just because it’s not happening your way, or because you can’t see what is happening doesn’t mean it isn’t happening. Believe, Trust, Lean

At the time of proving you need to dig in a little deeper – draw a line in the sand and declare *“I’m not going anywhere!”* 1 Timothy 6:12 *““Fight the good fight of the faith.”*

This will bring you to:

6. The **Position** of Faith: When you know that you know that you know – who you are, who you belong to, who God is, and that faith works! Romans 8:28 *“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”* You position yourself for the promise. My Grandmother taught me this. She died praying for over 50 family members to be saved – she died believing they would be even though she didn’t see it in her natural life, she knew her prayers would be answered – that’s faith!

Then you will enter:

7. The **Peace** of Faith: When you can do nothing more – resting in God’s plans and promises – no matter what happens – you find peace that surpasses all understanding. It may seem like nothing’s changed – but you are ok with that, because you know that God is in control. You allow His peace to guard your heart (what you are feeling) and your mind (what you are thinking). You may have to repeat some of these steps, faith can take time to bring the promise, but you will never go wrong trusting your circumstances with God. We do what we can do, those things we know to do (Prayer, Devotion, Fellowship, Witnessing), what is our responsibility and we leave the rest to God.

At some point we will receive:

8. The **Provision** of Faith: This is the miraculous moment you see the answer to your prayers. God breaks through the night, turns your mourning into dancing and it will usually be immeasurably more than you could ask, hope or imagine. We serve a big, big God who is still in the business of answering prayers, bringing miracles, making a way through the desert places.
9. The **Praise** of Faith: This should be ongoing through the Faith process. Taking time to thank God for who He is, to praise Him and declare His Goodness. It is so important to encourage ourselves in the Lord and to remember Him through every step in the journey, and even more so when you have

received the miracle. Ten lepers were healed, only two returned to Jesus to thank Him. Be of those two!

10. The **Point** of Faith: God bought you through, and He had a purpose in doing so. We are to now testify to others of what God has done. To share our faith journey with those who are going through similar circumstances. To give Him Glory and remind those around us that we serve a living God and to testify to unbelievers the goodness of God, His great love and mercy for all mankind. Even if it didn't work out how you thought it might – God will use this situation for good, and for the saving of many souls (Gen 50:20) and you can testify that He was with you in the storm.

To God be all the Glory!