

November 14, 2011

Next Steps

Small Acts of Greatness

[Luke 13.10-21](#) :: [Listen to Sermon](#)

I was reading the paper the other day when I came across an interesting article. According to the U.N., on October 31, the world population reached seven billion. Somewhere a baby boy or girl was born that pushed the population of our spinning blue-green planet to an unprecedented number. At first, I could only ponder the number. It is a bit difficult to get your head around the idea of seven billion people. I remember being a kid and talking about four billion. I struggled to imagine that many people then, and now we are almost double that number. The second thought I had was with respect to the state of many of those seven billion. I am well aware that many of the seven billion living souls on this planet do not live as I do. I am more than cognizant of the fact that many will struggle for much of their lives to etch out a living. Most will spend their days experiencing the bondage of poverty, illness, and various forms of tyranny. Simply put, they don't experience the life of freedom God intended. At first this makes me quite sad. So many people missing so much of what God intended. So many of "those" people. But when I really think about it, the life they experience isn't that much different than the life so many of us experience. We too spend most of our lives in bondage. Our bondage might not be to poverty, at least not to extreme poverty. Most of us have access to some form of health care and adequate governance. However, we still spend our lives in bondage and I wonder if our bondage is more insidious. Many of us spend our lives in bondage to emotional wounding, physical limitations, and spiritual dis-ease. These are our masters and they can be unrelenting in their hold over us.

As I consider the lives of seven billion souls, I realize that the heart cry of each of us is for freedom, a freedom that in one way or another eludes us. This gives me great pause. It makes me wonder what hope the majority of seven billion people really have. I suppose on our own, there is very little hope. But then again, we are not on our own. God has moved through Jesus to bring us freedom. In Jesus, God's Kingdom comes and His will begins to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. In short, in Jesus we find freedom. This is the very hope of the gospel. In his ministry we see that this freedom was not just a dream, but it was real and tangible. People found freedom from oppression in very real ways as he moved among them, touching, healing, and speaking of hope. I just have one question. How is this freedom to reach those that need it, today? How can Jesus be taken to the seven billion or so that need the freedom he brings? Wait. That's a little overwhelming. Let's start smaller. How can Jesus be taken to the seventy that I run across every day so they can experience freedom? In what ways might they discover the experience of freedom in real, tangible ways today? The last time I checked, Jesus wasn't

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moving around touching, healing, and speaking of hope to people. Then again, Jesus is in me. So what if I moved about touching, healing, and speaking hope? What if I became an agent for freedom? What if I, a resident of God's Kingdom, became its herald, not just in speech but in action? What could happen then? What would happen if a people and not just an individual moved in that way? What freedom might be brought? It might be that seventy could find what God truly intended and over time that seventy, well. . .before you know it seventy can turn into seven billion.

A fellow traveler,
Blake
Spiritual Formation Pastor

My Next Step

We encourage you to consider taking the following next step on your faith journey. . .

- **Engage:** God's Kingdom comes and His will is done as those who reside within His Kingdom act upon the realities of their life in Christ. This week consider how you might act as a family or individual to bring the freedom of Christ to others. You will find several opportunities by visiting our website www.browncroft.org.