



Hudson Taylor, The Dead Man

"You are a dead man!" the doctor exclaimed. "Go home as fast as you can and get your affairs in order before it's too late!" Hudson Taylor was in London studying medicine in preparation for missionary work in China. While performing a dissection, he pricked his finger with a contaminated needle and was immediately infected with malignant fever. The average man would have fled home horrified, perhaps cursing God for his misfortune, but Taylor calmly replied, "If I should die, I will have the joy of being with my Master in heaven. However, I believe that I shall not die, for God has a work awaiting me in China, and however severe the struggle, I must be brought through." Hudson Taylor died that day. No, not physically, but inwardly he had completely resigned himself to the will of His Heavenly Father and was prepared, by life or by death, to glorify His name. Hudson barely made it to his house where he collapsed on the stairs and had to be carried to his room. Two of his fellow students who had encountered the same misfortune died of the fever, but not Hudson Taylor. After days of intense physical suffering, he recovered. God was not finished with this man of faith, and now, having come through the fire for the finer, Hudson went on to be one of the most greatly used men of God this world has ever seen. Let us ask ourselves this question. Have you died yet? No, your heart may still be beating, but have you died to self? Is your life, its circumstances, activities, and ambitions, entirely committed to the use of the Lord Jesus Christ? The question is not, "Are you trusting Him?" The answer to that question is assumed when you ask yourself "Does he control me?" "Does He control you?" Do you see and accept His divine hand in all the downfalls and uprisings of your life? Have you prepared yourself as a finely-tuned instrument, ready at a moment's notice to fly to His service whatever it may be, or are you living according to your own whims? Can it be said of you, my friend, that you are a dead man?

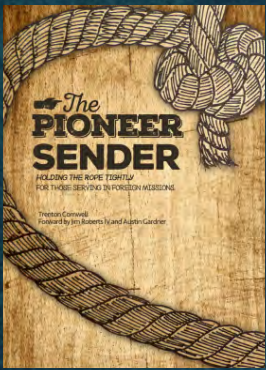


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The Pioneer Sender by Trenton Cornwell challenges those who “hold the rope.” Trent believes that one of the greatest needs in modern missions is for pioneering to be done by those who send and outlines a strategy for senders to implement. This book is filled with personal stories that will challenge you as you play your God-given role in missions.

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Do you have a Coach?

A big mistake we make many times in ministry is that we think we know enough or have learned enough to be successful. It is interesting that the best sports players out there (Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan, etc.) all have a coach and realize they need a coach, yet we “average” guys think we are ok. A coach is one who instructs you, tells you how to improve, and corrects you when you are not doing it the best way. Yes, professional players have natural talent but they also know that their talent can and must be perfected; they need someone to “coach” them. Here are a few thoughts if you are going to become good at what you do or want to do:

1. You must be coachable. Realize you do not know everything. How do you receive correction? Pride can stop you from being better at what you do.
2. Realize that your coach is looking out for the best for you. A mentor or coach is going to help you see areas you do not see and angles you never thought of in order to be better at what you do. Be smart and allow someone to help coach you. Realize that they are and will be looking out for the best for you. Don't allow the immature attitude, “They are trying to hold me back” to creep in. It is exactly that attitude which will definitely hold you back!
3. Take advantage of the coaches you have in your life. All of us have coaches in our lives if we would just look around – parents, pastors, friends, spiritual leaders, etc.
4. Learn to ask for help – You are not being a baby if you ask for help; it is smart to ask for help. Swallow your pride and ask for help. Most coaches are free and willing to help, so go find one or more and ask him/her to help you to become better at whatever you are doing.

The principle of coaching is not only needed in the sports or business world, it is also needed in the spiritual realm (missions, pastoral, youth, SS class teacher, etc.) One of the greatest failures I have seen in a new missionary is not having a coach to show him what to do and what not to do. The common thought is that after so many years you will learn, but bad habit + bad habit = many bad habits. If someone is not corrected, he will soon be stuck in a rut of doing things in the wrong manner. While it may feel good to have someone say, “Great message!” or “Looks like you are doing a great work!”, it only builds the ego. Compliments with no instruction do not make you a better preacher, teacher, or missionary. A coach may say, “Good job!,” but he will follow up with a lesson of what needs to be corrected, changed, or improved. I challenge you to find a coach and become a better worker!

Here to Serve,
Jeff Bush
Director of Vision Baptist Missions