

*The crowds kept him from leaving them. But he told them, „I must preach the Gospel of God’s kingdom to other cities also, for I was sent to do so.“ (Luke 4: 42-43)*

People around the Lord Jesus wanted him to stay with them. They liked how he helped them and wanted to keep Him for themselves. But he clearly tells them, *„I have to go to other cities.“* It wasn’t that he didn’t like these people. He just saw the need to show the others the way to salvation and new life...

The apostle Paul did the same! For some time he worked intensively and persistently in one place with one group of people. If he could, he stayed a year, two or three at the most. And during that time there were several generations of disciples around him. That is, disciples who reached more disciples and they reached more, in more and more places.

Here and there, one of the believers devotes a year, two or three to one unbelieving friend. Sometimes it bears fruit, for which we are very grateful. But when, after those years, instead of accepting Jesus, such a friend expresses that he has had enough and breaks off the contact, the question is whether that long time of personal care has been well invested. If it weren’t actually a loss at the expense of many others who would have come much closer to the Lord during that time.

Yes, some need more time. However, when nothing has happened in someone for months or even years and we are still trying, it can be a trap for us, for our time, for our mental capacity, which others would use much better. It can be a trap also in terms of the creeping feeling that the Gospel is not working here or that people do not want to hear it. Did something similar happen to you?

For loved ones and relatives, it makes sense that we „stay with them“, that we serve them for a long time and look for various forms. However, in relationships in general, it is good to work with many people at the same time. Some are interested, they get closer, so we need to be prepared to share the clear Good News, including an example of how to surrender to the Lord Jesus and to really begin to follow Him. Others, for some reason, move away over time without making any serious decision. So we need to focus on others – new ones, who may be coming closer in the meantime. Some temperaments establish new relationships rather slowly and gain trust only gradually, so we need to develop more relationships at the same time.

I have several dozens of „unfinished people“ around me. Sometimes they get a question from me, a suggestion, or invitation for Discovery, and in the meantime I tell them my personal story and clear presentation of the Good News. Some move step by step in the direction to Jesus. While others tend to move away.

My prayers develop roughly accordingly. I would put a new person with whom I had a deep spiritual conversation into my prayer list, and I will pray for him for some time. When we have another good conversation about Jesus, I am thrilled. When we don't meet for a long time, others will overtake him in my prayer reminder...

Every person or couple or family has only certain „social capacity“ in a given period of life. By that I mean that they can develop only a limited number of relevant relationships. Some people considered us interesting and pleasant company, or even wise counselors, or close friends. But it turned out over time that they were carefully armored against the spiritual stimuli we brought up. So, we were looking for a way to free up our social capacity for others who are open to Jesus.

In the sixth chapter, Luke speaks about a crowd of disciples. (Luke 6:17) I would say that the Lord Jesus had thousands of „people in progress“ around him. It is no wonder, then, that when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus, 3,000 people appeared on the first day to change their minds, be baptized, and publicly join Jesus' followers.

Of course, if you planted God's Word yesterday, and the response was not immediate, it may take a few more days or even weeks. And someone will not bring the harvest at all. On the other hand, do not get stuck in contact with a single person for too long, to whom you would devote all your efforts and because of which you would not have capacity for others who can approach Jesus faster.

*Lord Jesus, thank you that you have had me among your „many in progress“.*