



# RIVERS OF JOY MINISTRIES

NEWSLETTER  
1 June 2016

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Rivers of Joy Ministries

Dear Pastor

Greetings in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. I thank God for your life and commitment to this ministry and above all to God's service. Here is my latest Pastoral letter for you all. Please share it with your people. It is very important that your people can be blessed with these great teachings.

## **The Word of God**

### **Be strong and courageous!**

It is a reality of life that there will be challenges and difficulties along the way. There will be many moments when your faith will be shaken, when your determination will be tested, when your commitment to follow Jesus will be challenged. That is life! Denying the reality of that is simply being blind to reality. Being super-spiritual will probably lift your feet from the ground but will not help you really! So do not worry if at times you feel challenged, if you have questions going around in your mind, if you are afraid of what might happen; that is simply being human! And remember that you are human before being a born again christian. However .... as a christian your faith and my faith rests on the fact that we serve a faithful and trustworthy God who loves us deeply and cares so much for us. God will not live your life for you because will simply make you a puppet on strings but He has promised to protect us and provide for us.

God is there 24/7 to give us strength and courage and if need be battle against our enemies for us. That is why God had to tell an unsure, anxious and fearful Joshua "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9) And in the space of that chapter God repeats the same command four times! God knew Joshua and God knows us! So what ever challenge or problem or sickness or debt you are facing today remember what God is saying, be strong and courageous because I am with you! What ever the enemy will throw against you, be strong and courageous! And if you feel unsure, fearful as Joshua was, be strong and courageous! With God on our side we have nothing to fear! Hallelujah!

## **School of leadership**

### **How can I grow my church?**

- 1) The short answer is, you can't.
- 2) You can faithfully scatter the seed of the Word, but only God can make it grow ([1 Corinthians 3:6](#)).
- 3) You can faithfully call people to turn from their sin and trust in Christ, but only God grants faith and repentance ([Philippians 1:29](#)Philippians 1:29; [Acts 11:18](#)).

4) You can alert people to the danger of their state, but only God can raise them from spiritual death ([Ephesians 2:1-5](#)).

5) That's not to say that your efforts to faithfully preach and pray and lead don't matter. It's just to say that you cannot create any spiritual fruit. You cannot convert a sinner. You cannot cause a Christian to overcome a sin. You cannot cause your church to grow in the ways that matter most. That all finally depends on God's sovereign and omnipotent grace alone.

6) Numerical growth is not always equal to, or the best indicator of, spiritual growth. The bare fact that more people show up on Sunday morning does not mean a church is growing spiritually.

7) Therefore, any strategy for growing a church that promises success based on what you do, without taking into account that only God can bring genuine spiritual fruit, is fundamentally misguided because it is aiming at numerical growth to the exclusion of genuine spiritual growth.

8) On the other hand, if you're a pastor, you have the responsibility to faithfully preach the Word, pray, shepherd the people, live a holy life, and trust that God will bring fruit in his own time. Not only that, but as you faithfully preach, pray, and lead, you should expect God to bless his appointed means for saving sinners and sanctifying saints. You should expect your church to grow, both numerically and spiritually. So preach, pray, lead, and expect God to bless your efforts.

God bless you all!

**Bishop Alex Tana**

*General Overseer*