

MAIN QUESTION: What if God could use you to start a movement on your campus that would drastically change the future?

St. Thomas, "the doubter", was a person that we all know predominantly as the disciple that doubted whether Jesus was raised from the dead. However, after he was confident in Christ's resurrection, his passion to follow Jesus surged forward into action. St. Thomas landed in South Asia, particularly in the southernmost tip of India near Kerala in 52AD. He was eventually killed by the inhabitants and died for his Faith, but his love for Jesus drove him to new places, to new people, to share about the one and only begotten son, Jesus. My friends, I probably would not be here today if it were not for St. Thomas. All the South Asians you see here at Urbana would not be here today if it were not for his efforts. We are his legacy. 2,000 years later. He started a movement that continues to have implications today.

My friends, what if God could use you to start a movement on your campus that would drastically change the future?

ROADMAP:

1. *What is a movement?*
2. *What is an apostle?*
3. *Five tips on how to lead an APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT*

A. WHAT IS A MOVEMENT?

They are large informal groupings of **individuals** or **organizations** which focus on specific **political** or **social** issues. In other words, they carry out, resist or undo a **social change**.

B. WHAT IS AN APOSTLE?

Are apostles Spiritual Jedi Masters? (share stories from Pentecostal Church experience)

Do they not exist anymore? (share Ep 4:11) – gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds, Teachers

I've seen all of these gifts but not the Apostle... why? Maybe because we don't have a shared definition.

*Someone, please use some regular words to describe the role of an apostle!! **Here are four facets of the Apostle:***

1. They are Spiritual Entrepreneurs – they start new things for the Kingdom

They seek the extension of God's kingdom. Initiating new works to bring people to Jesus is apostolic. You see evidence of that in Paul's desire to go to places where no one has yet preached the Gospel. He didn't want to build on someone else's foundation." People with the apostolic gift see over the horizon. They're able to look at the spiritual landscape and see where God is working... there is a distinction between apostles and missionaries who also carry the gospel to the unreached. Apostles are eager to establish communities and not merely converts. **"The apostolic gift leaves missional communities in its wake."**

2. They are Space Makers – they invite new leaders and ideas to the table

Apostles are keenly aware of all the other gifts. They want to see all the gifts flourish so that healthy churches can be born." Ferguson calls this the "space making" role of apostles. "Apostles get great joy from disappearing into the background," he says, "and allowing room for the other gifts to emerge and grow." This aspect of apostleship helps counter the notion that apostles are only concerned with the extension of the kingdom and not the shepherding of souls. **"You really cannot exercise the apostolic gift without thinking about a team," This is because apostles cannot accomplish their mission of planting missional communities without the other gifts being present.**

3. They are Extenders and Connectors – extend resources, connect people

Paul functioned as a spiritual father to those his apostolic gift had raised up. The priority should be on relationships. This is part of the apostolic function. **These connections are more than feel-good; they have a very pragmatic function. This relational capital is necessary to overcome the problems that every missional community will eventually encounter.** This is the central motivation behind most of the epistles Paul wrote. Unfortunately, the importance of relationships often gets eclipsed by organizational structures. This may be another reason the apostolic gift has been overlooked. **The model for churches connecting to each other should be a family, but in the West we've made it a corporation. This is why the relational function of the apostle has been replaced by the organizational function of the CEO.** Apostles aren't only concerned with carrying an organization from generation to generation, but making *new* generations. It's about reproduction. It's familial. It's relational.

4. They are Spiritually Sensitive

To state is simply... apostles pray... listen and obey. Throughout the New Testament, Paul would go where the Spirit told him to go, and even stop in his tracks when the Spirit told him to stop. You see, my friends, it **IS GOD THAT INITIATES, and we are CALLED TO PARTICIPATE...** much like a surfer, we jump out in front of the wave and ride it... The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Mission and it is starting waves all over the place; therefore, we must be spiritually sensitive to jump out courageously in front of the wave and ride it!... it is the abundant life full of adventure.

C. NOW PICTURE AN APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT

A group of people that have the characteristics of an apostle, they are not all necessarily apostles, but together they have the characteristics of such an apostle. Think about it...

1. A movement that starts new things and leaves missional communities in its wake

(insert the story of growing the North Texas and Oklahoma area from “the place where chapters come to die” to what it is now... lively and thriving)

2. A movement that creates space for new leaders and ideas to thrive and be made known

(insert story of Jason Thomas creating room for me to become the AD in Red River)

3. A movement that extends and connects people and resources together for the Kingdom

(insert story of LOFT Church reaching out to the Imam and local Mosque and how they came to our Sunday services)

4. A movement that is spiritual aware and sensitive to God's direction, nimble to go

(continue story of how Pastor Sam from LOFT Church prayed about the Mosque and preaching at Hindu wedding, etc.)

D. YOU CAN LEAD THIS KIND OF CAMPUS MOVEMENT

1. Identify the Apostolic Imprint

(insert Baylor University story – apostolic African American male named Christian shows up while we are praying... totally awesome.)

2. Expect Healthy Risk-Taking

a. See Failure as Growth and Experimentation

b. Encourage Creativity and Innovation

(insert story of UNT South Asian students only seeing 1 conversion in 2 years, so we asked them to become MAD SCIENTISTS of ministry... 7 proxe stations in 1 semester, 67 commitments to follow JC... crazy...)

3. Assume High Commitment Environment is Normal

(commitment breeds commitment... insert story of speaking at UT-Austin for 10 year reunion... that kind of lasting change only happens because of commitment... if you are committed to everything, you are committed to nothing...)

4. Empower Others everyone, everywhere

a. Utilize High Accountability with Low Control

(insert story of 630AM prayer meetings... Haha, I thought that it would be a MAJOR FAIL... but I was wrong...)

5. Pray Like a Crazy Person

(insert story of my South Asian church praying for the Frisco, TX church plant... I didn't care to give resources or time, until I heard people passionately pray for it... my vision grew as we prayed... God deposited something in my spirit when we prayed)

E. CLOSING CHALLENGE

Start this culture change TONIGHT. Be bold. Be courageous. Believe in God.

Be leaders of a campus-wide APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT.

Let me make it crystal clear,

I challenge you to lead movements that leave missional communities in its wake.

Like my friend Arul from University of Central Florida says, “Let's do some damage for the Kingdom, bro.”

Let us impact the population of heaven by being radically present and leading this kind of apostolic movement on our campus. Let us leave a legacy of lasting eternal significance.

St. Thomas changed the course of South Asians with the Gospel... It is the same God, the same mission, and the same Spirit that bids us to go and do likewise. Let's do it. Amen.