



LESSONS I HAVE LEARNED • John R. Mott

Lessons I have learned in over fifty years of helping to establish national and worldwide movements

1. Jesus Christ constitutes the only enduring foundation for a movement with objectives like ours.
2. The vital processes should have right of way. What are the most vital processes?
 - A. Exposing men to Christ Himself. He will then make His own impression, and if He makes the impression, it will be profound, transforming, and enduring.
 - B. The intensive and appropriate study of the original writings of the Christian faith—Bible study.
 - C. The practice and discipline of prayer and intercessory action.
 - D. Augmenting the leadership of the Christian forces. “He who does the work is not so profitably employed as he who multiplies the doers.” Count the day lost that you do not do something, either directly or indirectly, to multiply the number of unselfish workers.
3. It is easier to attempt, and carry to success, large and exacting undertakings, than small ones.
 - A. It is the impossible situations which bring out our own latent powers.
 - B. If we do not have tasks that we honestly know are too difficult for our own wisdom and strength, we are by no means likely to avail ourselves of our superhuman resources.
4. The heroic appeal makes possible the heroic response. The strongest men can be inspired to accomplishment by putting before them something that is really baffling and truly significant.
5. Make the gospel difficult and you make it triumphant. “Christ never hid His scars to win a disciple.” The application of the principle of sacrifice invariably ensures the largest fruitage.
6. It is highly important that we study and employ strategy. This constitutes the means of doing with smaller forces, that which we cannot do with large forces without strategy. One of the most strategic times to work is in time of war. Man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.
7. Give right of way to work in behalf of youth of the adolescent age, say, twelve to seventeen. Other strategic classes, for example, are students, men of the armed forces, rulers of nations, places, methods, and times.
8. Nothing takes the place of hard work. It was said of the great statesman and Christian, Gladstone, that he “toiled terribly.”



9. No great work can be satisfactorily administered from an office chair. We must appear on the battlefield.
10. In any work abounding in pressing needs and great opportunities, we must make a study of priorities. We must plan the use of our time. No man can do:
 - A. all the good that needs to be done;
 - B. all that others want him to do;
 - C. all that he himself wants to do.

Therefore, he must acquire the habit of putting first things first. Every ambitious worker should form the habit of planning each year, month, week, and day. Each day we should be asking, "What does Christ want me to do today?"
11. It is not necessary that we do so many things, or that we have our own way, but it is necessary that we should be Christlike.
12. We should never be content with second best.
13. Group thinking, planning, and action constitute the most highly multiplying method. Christ sent workers out two by two and in groups. We cannot know the full mind of our Lord, or achieve the finest and largest results, if we play a lone hand.
14. Loyalty is the cardinal virtue in Christian work. After wide observation and prolonged study of biography, I place it first. Loyalty ensures unity, confidence, liberty, and power in all Christian movements which, year in and year out, achieve the greatest spiritual results.
15. We must be constantly weaving into our organization the new generation. My work the world over, and across the many years, has shown me that young men can be trusted with great loads and great responsibilities. Youths have never disappointed me when I have put heavy burdens upon them.
16. We must preserve the power of growth and continue to grow. Remember the word of the Psalmist, "He shall be full of sap; he shall bring forth fruit in old age."
17. We should live under the spell of immediacy. "I must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day, for the night cometh, when no man can work."

John R. Mott was a sophomore at Cornell University in 1885. Upon entering a lecture room, he heard the famous missionary, J.K. Studd, speaking. He heard Studd say, as if to him, "Young man, seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not! Seek first the kingdom of God." This started him down the path to becoming one of the great leaders in the Student Volunteer Movement. The Student Volunteer Movement, in the late 18th and early 19th century, was perhaps the greatest missionary movement since the first century, sending thousands of highly educated college students with the gospel to foreign regions all over the world.

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The Compass is the discipleship curriculum for Campus Crusade for Christ's Campus Ministry. It was created by Centerfield Productions, the field based division of CruPress. We'd love to hear your feedback on this lesson. Please write us at centerfield@uscm.org