

Introduction

Trying to make a decision on a city of residence for our first overseas posting, I was asked to reconnoiter several world class cities in South East Asia. Among them all, one city stood out as the crowning jewel of the constellation. The clear choice was Singapore. So would begin my journey into the Restricted Zone.

This tiny toadstool of land poking its head out from among the teeming tons of other islands in the Malay Archipelago is nothing less than a miracle. It is a high-tech morsel of modernization boasting the best of everything from transportation to communications. The epitome of structure and planning, everything is done with purpose and design leaving nothing to chance. There is a calculated method that keeps out all the madness of problems like overcrowding, slums, smog and traffic jams that plague many of the region's other cities.

Part of the calculated method that makes it such a success is an area called the CBD. CBD stands for the Central Business District. As the name might suggest it contains the heart and pulse of the city. It's where the big boys play. Over every street access to the CBD there are gantries, overhead road signs, which announce your entry into the Restricted Zone.

Why is the CBD a restricted zone? In an effort to curb traffic and congestion, the government has levied tolls on those that want to enter the Restricted Zone. There are two prices to pay. The top peak hours get the higher toll and the regular business hours receive a lesser toll. But make no mistake. Everyone pays to do business in the Restricted Zone.

While some pay to enter, many opt to stay out.

Why? Because they aren't willing to pay the price.

Yet, after the scarlet red neon lights on each Restricted Zone gantry stating *In Operation* go out, announcing the end of the toll, thousands flock into the CBD. Once there they shop till they drop in the opulence of every designer's domain. Downtown restaurants pamper pallets in the halls of gastronomic heaven with every menu imaginable.

Oh, they missed the toll all right, but they also missed the billion-dollar merger. Not only have the Restricted Zone lights gone out but so have the lights in every corporate boardroom. Closed for the day are all the banks in the high-tech financial district. Died off are the shouts from the Singapore stock exchange. Silenced is the gavel in the stately hall of Parliament.

With their cheap arrival they've missed the toll, *but they've also missed all that really matters.*

You see, it is in the Restricted Zone where deals are born which keep Singapore in the hub of progress. It is in the Restricted Zone where laws are passed that touch the lives of every citizen and visitor of the Lion City. It is in the Restricted Zone that the architects of prosperity weave their magic. It is from the Restricted Zone that the notes of opera and symphony float on the evening air. And it is in the Restricted Zone that conventions and conferences take place that equip and empower people to go to the next level.

The real matters that matter all take place in the Restricted Zone.

The point is that if you want to be a mover and shaker in Singapore, then you've got to get into the Restricted Zone. But remember, it is going to cost you!

There is a price to pay—daily. It is open to whosoever will, but it's not free.

Flashing on the gantry across the entrance to the greatest revival the world has ever known are bright neon lights proclaiming the Restricted Zone is *In Operation*. There is an open invitation to the throne room of God's glory, but to get in you've got to pay.

There has never been a better time to be a child of God than now. Being Christ's disciple in these last days affords the greatest excitement and satisfaction factor ever made available in the history of humanity. The power, the presence, the privilege is available, but it's not free.

Many want the might without the molding and making. Someone said grace is free but it ain't cheap. There's nothing cheap about the Restricted Zone either.

The Restricted Zone requires a daily price. To the stout of heart, Jesus says this: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross *daily*, and follow me" (Luke 9:23, emphasis added).

Every day you enter the zone there is a price to pay. Every day there is a dedication to be made. After getting in, you're going to hear a lot of scary phrases like cross to bear and price to pay and words like sacrifice and commitment. But don't let them frighten you out. This toll weeds out the casual and recreational believer.

It is going to take time and will cost you something. But for those who understand the power and opportunity of doing business in God's Restricted Zone there will be no hesitation. For the serious spiritual businessman no price is too great to get into the throne room where it all happens. The discerning ones know the best lessons don't come free and that there are just some kinds of business that cannot be conducted except with a cost. I've learned many lessons in the Restricted Zone. In the chapters that follow, I will show you a few that He has taught me.

So if you aren't afraid of the cost, then come and follow. Join me in the Restricted Zone. I promise you it's worth it. You are going to love the Restricted Zone. It's where the action is.

