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FOREWORD

(1984)

Deep in the hearts of the early founders of the United Pentecostal Church was an understanding of the central purpose of the church. While they rejoiced in this beautiful apostolic message, they were also aware of the necessity of preaching this gospel in order for it to be effective in transforming lives. “How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” Thus, for our church the goal was established: “The Whole Gospel to the Whole World.” [“By the Whole Church” has since been added to the motto.]

Much of the world is yet untouched with the only message that saves from sin. Before us are great open doors of opportunity in world evangelism. Heathen religions have failed to satisfy that deep inner vacuum in the heart of man. Traditional Christianity has offered a form of godliness but is void of power. This is our day! It is high time for true born-again believers to rise as an army of the Lord and march forward, claiming new territory in Jesus’ name.

Satan has held in his grasp the lives of millions long enough. Let us preach a message of deliverance, for Jesus came to set the captive free.

This text on missions will enable the reader to look on the field with greater understanding. Then as we gain a more comprehensive view of the task before us and how to fulfill that task, may we fully commit our lives to world evangelism. Only then will the purpose of this book lie fulfilled.

Harry E. Scism
Director of Foreign Missions

PREFACE

The work of missions is the work of God. The spirit of missions, revealed in the Incarnation and the sacrifice of Calvary, is the Spirit of God. The purpose of missions is demonstrated whenever a missionary prays, preaches, and leads a sinner to God. What could possibly capture the essence of missions better than John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Missions is loving enough to give the saving gospel to the perishing.

This book is about missions. It is not an exhaustive study, but a primer. As such, it is designed to introduce the student to the purpose and need of missionary activity in our day and to provide the teacher with a basic outline. In writing this book I have drawn from personal experience while serving in Jamaica and Germany and from insights shared by other missionaries and missionary leaders. The Recommended Reading list at the end of the book contains numerous biographical books by missionaries that will also give insights to missions.

May God bless you as you begin to explore the exciting and compelling world of missions.

Dorsey L. Burk



Crowd at conference in Madagascar

Photo by Chris Richardson

Chapter 1

THE WHY OF MISSIONS

One of the most frequently asked questions regarding missions is “Why?” “Why should I be concerned about those living around the world whom I have never met? Why should we spend all that money on the pagan? Why should I leave the luxury and comfort of home?”

The answer is found in John 20:21-23, John’s record of the Great Commission:

Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Why missions? There are four basic reasons:

1. Missions is a must because we are recipients of the gift of God.

We have freely received the grace and peace of God. We did nothing to deserve this divine favor; we only accepted it through faith by the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, as Paul stated in Romans 1:14-17:

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Why missions? Because acceptance of the peace of God makes us debtors to the world. How dare we withhold the only life-giving message of salvation from the lost and dying?

2. Missions is necessary because we are divinely commissioned.

Jesus said, "As my father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). Mark's record is even more emphatic: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

Why missions? Because missions is ordained of God.

3. Missions is incumbent on the church because we have been endued with power to fulfill the task.

The Holy Ghost was not given simply to make us feel good or to give us a spiritual thrill. It was given to empower us. As Jesus stated in Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be

witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Why missions? Because we have been infused with power to witness unto the uttermost part.

4. Missions is imperative because we are responsible for a lost world.

Jesus told His disciples, “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained” (John 20:23). The eternal destiny of the world rests in our hands. The salvation of the lost, the remission of their sins, depends upon our preaching of the Cross. Is it any wonder that Paul wrote to the Romans that saving faith comes through the preaching of the gospel?

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Romans 10:13-15).

Why missions? Because we have the responsibility of the lost.

Missions is not an option. Fulfilling the Great Commission must be the thrust behind every activity of the church. Reaching the lost must be the motivation of every program. The total structure of the church must be based on missions.

If God wills the evangelization of the world, and you refuse to support missions, then you are opposed to the will of God.

— Oswald J. Smith

<http://harvestministry.org/100-mission-mottos>

Study Questions

1. What are the four basic reasons for missions?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

2. Why did Paul consider himself a debtor to the Greeks and Barbarians?

3. Quote Acts 1:8. _____

4. The text states, "Reaching the lost must be the motivation of every program." Define *the lost*. _____

5. What is your personal responsibility to missions? _____

6. Are you willing to accept your responsibility to missions? Why? _____
