

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT MISSIONS?

What is “missions”?

The word “missions” derives from a Latin word *missio* which means “sending.” In Greek (what the New Testament was mostly first written in) it is close to the word *apostelló*, from which we get the word apostles or “sent ones.” The role of a missionary is closest to that of an ambassador, someone who is actively representing their own citizenship/nation/government/king in a foreign land.

Ephesians 6:19–20 “[pray] also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.” (ESV)

Philippians 3:20–21 “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”

Here is a short definition of missions:

MISSIONS is the obedient Gospel **work** of bearing witness of Jesus and teaching His disciples through the **Word**.

- **WORK** - What efforts are you making to share Jesus?
- **WORD** - How are getting yourself & others into the Word?

Luke 10:2 “And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Who is a “missionary”? In one sense, every Christian is a missionary because they are sent by God to tell and teach others about His greatness and goodness! In another sense there are a variety of missionary callings that are set apart for different durations, distances, difficulties, and types of work.

Here is a short definition of missionary:

A **MISSIONARY** is SENT by Jesus to **go** out to share the Gospel and **grow** disciples.

- **GO** - Where are you going to share the Gospel?
- **GROW** - Who are you teaching about Jesus?

1 Peter 2:11–12 “Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. [12] Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.”

How is every member of the Body of Christ called to be a missionary?

1. We Are Commanded to Go & Grow Disciples

Matthew 28:19–20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

2. We Are Empowered to Go & Witness to the Lost

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

3. We Encounter God & Go for God

Isaiah 6:8 “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here I am! Send me.’”

“There is a sense that every single follower of Christ is sent.” David Platt

Although, in a sense, every Christian is a missionary, the word “missionary” seems to have been first applied (~1500s A.D.) towards individuals who went out of their home culture to take resident in foreign cultures where the Gospel had not been heard or taught. Their work was primarily to preach the Gospel and plant churches to the “ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

“There are some Christians sent out with a particular purpose.” David Platt

What are the different sorts of missions work and missionaries?

Missionaries come in all types, here are some helpful categories to distinguish and describe them:

1. Duration - How long are they in their missions context?

They may be described subjectively as short-term, medium-term, or long-term missionaries. Their work might be considered part-time or full-time. They could be fully residential in their setting or more apostolic/pioneer/temporary until a healthy church is established.

A helpful analogy might be found in the modern day nation of Israel where every citizen is expected to serve in the military and be trained and ready for war. Every Christian is considered a soldier of Christ in the midst of an ongoing spiritual war. Every Christian serves Jesus in different ways that vary similarly to how a National Guard or Reservist soldier serves differently than an Active Duty soldier who serves differently than a mobilized/deployed soldier. All are soldiers but serve differently with their time.

- 2 Timothy 2:3 “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

2. Distance - What boundaries do they cross to communicate the Gospel?

Missionary work involves crossing boundaries to share the Good News of Jesus. This might mean traveling across geographical boundaries or could mean reaching a population in your area with a different language (linguistic boundaries). It might mean serving among a different culture (cross-cultural) or even connecting with people online (digital missions) to share God’s truth and love.

- “What about digital missions?” www.spiritualwarfare.blog/digital-missions

We live in an era of human history often referred to as “globalized” where there has been a physical, global spread of nationalities/cultures as well as a digitized inter-connectedness that makes trans-cultural relationships and communication possible without significant physical distance of travel.

Feel free to copy and share.

TRUSTWORTHYWORD.COM

Despite globalization there is a need, similar to military special forces units, to have specific training, focus, and efforts towards particular people groups to ensure effective communication of the Gospel.

- 2 Timothy 2:15 “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”
- 1 Chronicles 12:32 “Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”

3. Difficulty - *How dangerous or difficult is the work?*

Communication of Biblical truth and demonstration of Christian love can be particularly challenging, difficult, and dangerous in particular cultures. Some “soils” of humanity are particularly hardened requiring more extensive missions labor and increased risk. This means that some missions lifestyles and assignments involve greater sacrifice with increased challenges. Similarly all soldiers are in real military service, serving to accomplish their mission, some military assignments involve greater challenges, sacrifices, and dangers.

- Matthew 5:10-11 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [11] ‘Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.’”
- “What Does the Bible Say About Risk?” www.trustworthyword.com/risk

4. Different Work - *What varying means are used to accomplish the missions work?*

While missions is nothing less than declaring the Gospel, there are many roles and functions needed in a team effort to accomplish the Christian missionary goals. God’s Spirit gifts the body of Christ with a variety of skills, passions, and abilities to pursue the purpose of declaring the Gospel truth and training up the local church body.

- 1 Corinthians 12:4–6 “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5] and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; [6] and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

Although many think of missionaries as only being those who move far away to share the Gospel, Scripture clearly shows every Christian to be called to and sent out as a proclaimer of the love and truth, teaching them to hear, love, and obey God through His Word. Every Christian may pursue their missions task in a variety of ways (duration, distance, difficulty, different work), but no Christian should ignore the commands of Christ to go out and grow disciples. May we each be sensitive and obedient to God’s particular, specific calling on our lives and faithful to the ministry/mission to which we are equipped and gifted.

“In my estimation, no man has a right to call himself a New Testament Christian who is not interested in the Great Commission.” Adrian P. Rogers

“Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.” Charles H. Spurgeon

Helpful Scriptures on Missions

- Isaiah 6:8 “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here I am! Send me.’”
- 1 Chronicles 12:32 “Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”
- Matthew 5:10-11 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. [11] ‘Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.’”
- Matthew 28:19–20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- Mark 1:17–18 “And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’ [18] And immediately they left their nets and followed him.”
- Luke 10:2 “And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”
- John 21:15–17 “When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ [16] He said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ [17] He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’”
- Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- Acts 5:42 “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.”
- Acts 18:4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.”
- Acts 26:27–29 “‘King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.’ [28] And Agrippa said to Paul, ‘In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?’ [29] And Paul said, ‘Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains.’”
- Romans 10:14–15 “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? [15] And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” (ESV)
- Romans 12:4–8 “For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ...[6] Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them ...”
- Romans 15:18–21 “For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, [19] by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; [20] and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, [21] but as it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.”
- Philippians 3:20–21 “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, [21] who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”
- 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. [20] To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under

Feel free to copy and share.

TRUSTWORTHYWORD.COM

the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. [21] To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. [22] To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. [23] I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

- 1 Corinthians 12:4–6 “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; [5] and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; [6] and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”
- 2 Corinthians 5:11 “Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.”
- Ephesians 6:19–20 “[pray] also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”
- 1 Thessalonians 2:17–18 “But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, [18] because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us.”
- 2 Timothy 2:3 “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”
- 2 Timothy 2:15 “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”
- 1 Peter 2:11–12 “Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. [12] Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.”

“Sent”

- Jeremiah 35:15 “I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, ‘Turn now every one of you from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to you and your fathers.’ But you did not incline your ear or listen to me.”
- Matthew 10:16–18 “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. [17] Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, [18] and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles.”
- Luke 10:2 “And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”
- Luke 24:48–49 “You are witnesses of these things. [49] And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”
- John 6:28–29 “Then they said to him, ‘What must we do, to be doing the works of God?’ [29] Jesus answered them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.’”
- John 20:21–22 “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’ [22] And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”
- Acts 26:17 - “delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you”

“Set apart”

- Psalm 4:3 “But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD hears when I call to him.”
- Acts 6:3–6 “Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. [4] But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” [5] And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. [6] These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.”
- Acts 13:2–3 “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ [3] Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”
- Acts 26:16–18 “But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, [17] delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you [18] to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”
- Romans 1:1 “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God”
- 2 Timothy 2:21 “Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.”

“Ministry/Work”

- John 9:4 “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.”
- Acts 20:22–24 “And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, [23] except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. [24] But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”
- Acts 21:19–20 “After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. [20] And when they heard it, they glorified God. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed.”
- 1 Corinthians 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”
- 2 Corinthians 1:24 “Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.”
- 2 Corinthians 3:18–4:1 “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. [4:1] Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.”
- 2 Corinthians 5:17–21 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. [18] All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; [19] that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. [20] Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. [21] For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

- 2 Corinthians 9:1, 12 “Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints ... For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.”
- 2 Corinthians 10:15–18 “We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, [16] so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another’s area of influence. [17] ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’ [18] For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.”
- Galatians 2:6–9 “And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed influential added nothing to me. [7] On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised [8] (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), [9] and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.”
- Ephesians 4:11–16 “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”
- Colossians 3:23–24 “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, [24] knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”
- Colossians 4:17 “say to Archippus, ‘See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.’”
- 2 Thessalonians 1:11–12 “To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, [12] so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
- 1 Thessalonians 1:2–8 “We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, [3] remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. [4] For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, [5] because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. [6] And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, [7] so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. [8] For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything.”
- 1 Timothy 5:9–10 “Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, [10] and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.”
- 2 Timothy 3:16–17 “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Feel free to copy and share.

TRUSTWORTHYWORD.COM

- 2 Timothy 4:5 “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”
- Hebrews 8:6 "But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.”

Missions is INSEPARABLE from the churches.
 Missions is THROUGH the churches.
 Missions is the WORK of the churches.
 Missions are the PEOPLE of the churches.

“What Does the Bible Say About Church Membership?” www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-church-membership

“What Does the Bible Say About Online Church?” www.trustworthyword.com/online-church

“Missions Statistics” - www.spiritualwarfare.blog/missions-statistics

5 Ways to Pray for a Missions Team or Missionaries

1. Spiritual Health and Protection Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:10-12 ESV)

2. Unity and Focus praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, (Eph 6:18)

3. Spiritual Boldness & Clarity and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. (Eph 6:19-20)

4. Overcome Fear & Worry

- Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Lk 12:7)
- And he said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. (Luke 12:22)

5. Physical Health & Protection

- And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? (Lk 12:25)
- Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. (3 John 1:2)
- Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. (James 5:14)

Missions Reflections.

As I write this I have just returned from a mission trip to Ghana, West Africa. Have you ever had the joy of a missions trip? Or been able to travel to serve in an impoverished area? Every time I get the joy of serving the Lord on mission God teaches me and reminds me of so many life-transforming truths. Here are a few of the ways Jesus grew me in Ghana!

Jesus is amazing. One of the neatest blessings of a mission trip is to get away from the everyday distractions and to have the pure pleasure of walking closer with Jesus everyday. More time in the Word. More fellowship with believers. More time to serve Him. More opportunities to share Him. More enjoyment of Jesus. May we be more intentional to prioritize our proximity to Jesus!

Psalm 145:6 “They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness.”

Satan is real. Sometimes when we travel to unfamiliar places we experience things that can be quite different or even disturbing. We experienced things in Ghana we have read about in the Bible, but many of us had never seen such demonic attacks first hand. We witnessed several people who were extremely afflicted and oppressed by demons in scary ways. Although it was new to many of us, God had already prepared us in His Word on how to respond and see His powerful presence and to experience His overwhelming peace as we shared the Good News to those who were overcome by darkness.

1 John 4:4 “he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world”

The Gospel is powerful. Too often we forget what Jesus did on Calvary. We need regular reminders of the power of the Gospel to change lives forever. What great joy God gave us in the midst of His harvest to see souls saved and to witness souls encouraged and strengthened in their faith.

Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

America is rich. Travel to a third world country is a humbling reminder of our own riches and blessings. Food. Clothing. Shelter. Health. Even the poorest of poor in America has more of the needs of life than the middle class of most nations. We need to be more grateful to God. He has provided for us so abundantly for our daily needs. Every American should witness extreme third-world country poverty if they can. May we be more grateful, content, and generous with what God has entrusted to us.

Philippians 4:19 “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

Giving is a joy. Giving of yourself towards the needs of others is such a blessing. Whether it is time, prayer, skills, meeting needs, or speaking about Jesus we have so much to share. Whether in LaRue County, eastern Kentucky, the western U.S., or on another continent may we be faithful to give ourselves and our gospel love away to everyone around us.

Acts 20:35 “remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Missions are essential. Many respond to God's mission command by saying "I'm not called." Jesus' Great Commission is not an option to be considered, but a joyful task to be obeyed. Many have missed out on an incredible experience with God working in them and through them on mission.

Have you missed out? If so, it's not too late. Find a way to serve and share the amazing love of Jesus here, there, and everywhere! The challenges, costs, and commitment of missions are real, but the joy of going is so worth it! As long as there is breath in our lungs may we be faithful to declare the glory of our Lord!!

Matthew 28:19–20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

On Mission

On occasion I've met people who question the need to go out on mission trips when there is plenty of "need" here at home. How would you respond to such a statement? Why should we be on mission, crossing geographical, linguistic, and cultural boundaries to talk about and show the love of Jesus?

Here are five reasons to be on mission for Jesus:

1. To enjoy Christ. I was recently reflecting with my wife about mission trips and she insightfully remarked that mission trips have a more exclusive focus of spending time with Jesus. On mission, many of the busyness, obligations, and distractions of life fade away as our focus turns towards prioritizing Jesus throughout the day, looking for opportunities to enjoy Him and be part of His work. Think of Jesus' disciples: three years of following, listening, witnessing, and enjoying Jesus. *On mission, we enjoy Christ.*

Acts 4:13 "And they recognized that they had been with Jesus."

2. To share Christ. The world has heard of KFC, Coca-Cola, as well as much about American politics, sports, and entertainment. But have they heard of our Jesus? "67% of all humans from AD 30 to the present day have never even heard the name of Jesus Christ...and around 30 million people this year will perish without hearing the message of salvation" (Baxter 2007, 12). Can you believe those numbers? Many all over the world have never heard the name of Jesus or have ever clearly understood the message of salvation. *On mission, we share Christ.*

Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

3. To obey Christ. Christians are empowered and in-dwelt by the Holy Spirit with the assigned task of bearing witness to the greatness of God. Hudson Taylor helpfully reminds us that "the Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed." *On mission, we obey Christ.*

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

4. To bring hope. The world can be a dark and dreary place, devoid of joy and expectation. Christians have a hope that transcends earthly sorrow and suffering. May we be faithful to prepare, share, and dare to go out with the message of eternal hope! *On mission, we bring hope.*

1 Peter 3:15 “always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect”

5. To speak truth and to show love. Satan has deceived the world through lies and ignorance. Many have been misled and are spiritually blind. Billions seek pleasure in the things of this life rather than experiencing the overwhelming love of Jesus. Paul Little explains that “Witnessing is that deep-seated conviction that the greatest favor I can do for others is to introduce them to Jesus Christ.” *On mission, we speak truth and show love.*

Ephesians 4:25, 5:2 “let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor...and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us”

If we fail to reach out with the love, truth, and hope of Jesus we miss out on so much. May we be faithful to be on mission here, there, and everywhere with the days, gifts, and resources that the Lord has given us!

MISSION STATISTICS

www.spiritualwarfare.blog/missions-statistics

- There are 7.05 billion people in the world. (Joshua Project)
- 2.3 billion are Christian (748 million are Evangelical Christian)
- 1.5 billion are Muslim. (Joshua Project)
- 971 million are Hindu. (Joshua Project)
- 703 million are Non-Religious. (Joshua Project)
- 626 million are Buddhist. (Joshua Project)
- 553 million are of Ethnic Religions including Chinese Religion. (Joshua Project)
- 33 million other/unknown. (Joshua Project)
- Of the 7.05 billion people in the world, 2.9 billion live among unreached people groups of the world and
- 1.6 billion are completely unevangelized. (Joshua Project; Barrett and Johnson 2001, 427)
- There are 6,510 languages in the world. (Joshua Project)
- 86% of all unreached people groups lie within the region called the 10/40 window, which is between
- 10 and 40 degrees north and from the west coast of Africa to the east coast of Asia. (Joshua Project)
- In AD 100 there were 360 people for every believer. Now there are 7.3 people for every believer. (Winter et al., 1)
- 90% of foreign missionaries work among already reached people groups. 10% work among unreached people groups. (Winter and Koch, 543)
- Despite Christ's command to evangelize, 67% of all humans from AD 30 to the present day have never even heard the name of Jesus Christ. (Baxter 2007, 12)
- 91% of all Christian outreach/evangelism does not target non-Christians, but targets other Christians. (Baxter 2007, 12)
- In the last 40 years, over 1 billion people have died who have never heard of Jesus, and around 30 million people this year will perish without hearing the message of salvation. (Baxter 2007, 12)

- 70,000+ people die everyday in the unreached world without Jesus. (Baxter 2007, 12)
- Of foreign mission funding: 87% goes for work among those already Christian. 12% for work among already evangelized, but Non-Christian. 1% for work among the unevangelized and unreached people. (Baxter 2007, 12)
- Christians make up 33% of the world's population, but receive 53% of the world's annual income and spend 98% of it on themselves. (Barrett and Johnson 2001, 656)
- Only .1% of all Christian giving is directed toward mission efforts in the 38 most unevangelized countries in the world. (Barrett and Johnson 2001, 656)
- 22 million internationals visit the US each year. Of these, some 630,000 are university students from 220 countries, 25% of which prohibit Christian missionaries. 80% of those students will return to their countries having never been invited to an American home. (The Traveling Team)
- American Christians spend 95% of offerings on home-based ministry, 4.5% on cross-cultural efforts in already reached people groups, and .5% to reach the unreached. (The Traveling Team)
- There are 430,000 missionaries from all branches of Christendom. Only between 2 and 3% of these missionaries work among unreached peoples. (The Traveling Team)
- There are 140,000 recorded protestant missionaries serving in the world, with 64,000 from the US. (The Traveling Team)
- Of the 140,000 Protestant missionaries, 74% work among nominal Christians, 8% among tribal peoples, 6% Muslims, 4% Non-religious/atheists, 3% among Buddhists, 2% Hindus, 1% Jews. (The Traveling Team)
- Christians' annual income is \$12.3 trillion. \$213 billion is given to Christian causes. \$11.4 billion is given to foreign missions, 87% of which goes to work being done among the already Christian, 12% goes to work among the evangelized non-Christians, 1% among the unevangelized. (The Traveling Team)
- Over 160,000 believers will be martyred this year. (The Traveling Team)
- The total cost of Christian outreach averages \$330,000 for each and every newly baptized person. (World Evangelization Research Center)
- 54% of evangelical Christians are non-whites. (World Evangelization Research Center)
- The country with the fastest Christian expansion ever is China, now at 10,000 new converts every day. (World Evangelization Research Center)
- It costs Christians 700 times more money to baptize converts in rich Christian countries, such as Switzerland, than in poor unevangelized countries, such as Nepal. (World Evangelization Research Center)
- US ministries send out over 144,000 short-term missionaries each year. (Weber and Welliver 2007, 13)
- US mission agencies have an annual budget of over \$5.2 billion. (Weber and Welliver 2007, 13)
- The average American Christian gives only 1 penny a day to global missions. (Yohannan, Revolution in World Missions, 142)
- 86 countries prohibit or restrict Western missionaries. (Yohannan, Come Let's Reach the World, 31)
- Christian organizations spend \$8 billion a year on conferences. (Yohannan, Come Let's Reach the World, 126)
- Indigenous missionaries do 90% of pioneer mission work, but only receive 10% of mission funding. Meanwhile foreign missionaries do 10% of pioneer mission work, but receive 90% of mission funding. (Finley 2004, 178 & 244)
- Two of the largest Gospel radio broadcasters, Far East Broadcasting Company and Gospel for Asia, both receive around 1,000,000 listener responses each year. (Far East Broadcasting Company, 15; Gospel for Asia)
- There have been 4.1 billion viewings of the Jesus Film, representing about 3 billion individuals. More than 99% of the world's population could view the film in a language they know. (Johnstone and Mandryk 2005, 7)

REFERENCES

- Barrett, David B., and Todd M. Johnson. 2001. World Christian Trends AD 30 - AD 2200: Interpreting the annual Christian Megacensus. Associate ed. Christopher R. Guidry and Peter F. Crossing. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Baxter, Mark R. 2007. The Coming Revolution: Because Status Quo Missions Won't Finish the Job. Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing.
- Chacko, Jossy. 2008. Madness. Croydon, Australia: Empart.
- Far East Broadcasting Company. FEBC 2010-2011 Gift Catalog.
- Finley, Bob. 2005. Reformation in Foreign Missions. USA: Xulon Press.
- Global Media Outreach. About Us. http://www.globalmediaoutreach.com/about_us.html.
- Gospel for Asia. Reach Millions with your Radio Ministry. <http://www.gfa.org/radio/radio-impact/>.
- Johnstone, Patrick, and Jason Mandryk. 2005. Operation World. Tyrone, GA: Authentic Media.
- Joshua Project. <http://www.joshuaproject.net/>
- Libby, Lauren. 2010. President's Column. 2010 Annual Ministry Progress Report 31, no. 2, http://www.twr.org/resources/progress_report.html.
- The Traveling Team. State of the World. <http://www.thetravelingteam.org/stateworld>.
- Weber, Linda J., and Dotsey Welliver, ed. 2007. Mission Handbook 2007-2009: U.S. and Canadian Protestant Ministries Overseas. Wheaton, IL: Evangelism and Missions Information Service.
- Winter, Ralph D., and Bruce A. Koch. 2009. Finishing the Task: The Unreached Peoples Challenge. In Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 531-46. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.
- Winter, Ralph D., Phil Bogosian, Larry Boggan, Frank Markow, and Wendell Hyde. The Amazing Countdown Facts. Pasadena, CA: US Center for World Mission. <http://www.uscwm.org/uploads/pdf/adoptapeople/amazingcountdown.pdf>.
- World Evangelization Research Center. An AD 2001 Reality Check. <http://gem-werc.org/gd/findings.htm>.
- Yohannan, K.P. 2004. Come Let's Reach the World. Carrollton, TX: GFA Books.
- Yohannan, K.P. 2004. Revolution in World Missions. Carrollton, TX: GFA Books.

“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21)