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The Need for Missions

"For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 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?" (Romans 10:11-15).

There is so much more involved in missions than just the missionary. Missions are not the result of the ideas of some pious, well-meaning people who want to do something for the good of everyone. The truth in missions is much deeper than that. Man is lost and in trouble; he needs to know about the Lord Jesus Christ that he might be saved. God is alive; He is compassionate: God cares. God in love sent His Son to redeem men. God sends believers out to tell the world the good news of salvation in the name of Jesus Christ. This is really what is back of missions.

Man is in distress everywhere. Man cannot help himself. To be sure, some have tried to help themselves by getting things. But you and I know right well that the rich are not happy just because they are rich. Some have sought help through education. But it doesn't follow that educated people are the happy ones. Some people feel they would be happy if they could get ahead of others. They enter into competition with others and try to get ahead of everyone they know. But you and I know that famous people are not necessarily the happy ones. And others seem to think if they just entertain themselves constantly, that is the best way to get something out of life. But you and I know that frivolous people are not necessarily the happy people. Man, in himself, has tried many things and he has always failed. Man is lost without hope, without God in the world.

The marvelous truth set forth in the Bible, which we give out in missions to the whole world, is that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This is the wonderful message the Christian tells the world. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," and believers tell the whole world Christ Jesus can and will save "whosoever cometh" to Him.

The matter of Christians going forth as missionaries is a bit like being in an area where there is an epidemic, when many people are sick and have no medicine. If such a situation should arise and I had medicine, would I need anyone to tell me what I should do? Why I am sure I have the medicine and they are in need I will take it to them as quickly as I can.

Suppose that you were to see in your community a burning house and a little four year old girl trapped on the second floor, and you had a ladder, would you need anyone to tell you what to do? It would follow naturally you would do what you could. Or let us think of a child who has fallen into a canal and can't swim; he may drown and you have a boat. Does anyone need to draw a picture of what you would

do? You would want to get out to him with the boat, because that is what he would need.

Everyone born into the world is a child of flesh, and whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh. Now flesh and blood will never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. The truth, that the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus, and that we tell the whole wide world is: "You must be born again." In Christ Jesus this can happen to anyone. All that any person needs to do is to accept the Lord.

A person certainly cannot accept the Lord unless he knows about Him. He certainly cannot believe in the Lord unless he hears about Him. We know the truth: Christ Jesus has died for them. We know that He is available for them and we know that those folks need Him, and that He could help them. This in a nutshell is the need of missions: we've got to go. Not only do we need to go to tell this to the ends of the earth, but we need to tell this in this country, in our community, in our home. We need it with our little children. The child needs it, you need it: you must be born again. Christ Jesus came for all men and we must share this Good News. Mankind as such is lost, and Christ Jesus is the Savior.

The Preparation for Missions

Have you ever had the idea that anybody could be a missionary? Or do you think there needs to be some special preparation for it? Let us look now at a word of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. In Luke 24:46 it is recorded that He said:

"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high " (Luke 24:46-49).

This last sentence has always seemed rather strange. He had been with these people for several years: the disciples had seen Him, had heard Him, had fellowship with Him; and now He is telling them, "I want you to go out into the whole world and tell the people what I have prepared for them. But you are not ready to go yet. Tarry ye here in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." Why would they need to wait?

How would this power come? In the opening chapters of the Book of Acts is recorded what happened to these people to prepare them. Here it is written that the Lord Jesus did certain things during forty days to make certain that these people would have a certain conviction. They were to be convinced that Jesus was alive. The record shows how He acted to accomplish this: "To whom He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs." This is a vital point. If you were going to do anything at all in the way of missions: such as becoming a missionary on some foreign field, or teaching a Sunday School class of twelve year old young people, you must have a certain *Conviction*. You need the conviction in your own soul that Jesus of Nazareth is truly and really alive now! If you did not believe that Jesus Christ is alive, you could not speak convincingly about it.

The next thing that the Lord did with these people to whom He showed Himself alive was to give them a certain Commission. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in all Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." What does this mean? It means that you will have a job to do. You are to tell people what Christ has done for you. You will receive power, in an inward feeling of assurance and urgency . . . "I've just got to tell them." The parent feels: my children must know about Christ. In the community you may see other children, and you may wish they were in Sunday School: learning about what Christ Jesus has done for them. They need to know. When you have that feeling in your heart, that yearning that you really want to help them; you will have that sense of commission which

is part of the preparation.

After this the record goes on to show that there was *Correction*. When the disciples were together in the upper room, Peter pointed out that things were not right, and they had to be straightened out. There were originally twelve disciples, and one of these Judas Iscariot, had left them, and went to his own place. That left eleven. Well, eleven wasn't right. Twelve would be right. Peter got up and said to the company of disciples, "Things aren't right. We ought to have twelve apostles." Then he led them in correcting what was wrong.

If a man were to think of his responsibility in his own home and say, "The way I am doing is not right," the thing for him to do would be to change it. A woman may have the feeling, "The way I am living is not the way a Sunday School teacher ought to live." She should change her ways. There needs to be correction of whatever is known to be wrong.

These disciples, convinced that Jesus was alive, now had in their hearts a sense of responsibility to tell the whole world. They were obediently waiting before God in prayer, when the Holy Spirit was given to them. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and this resulted in their *Consecration*. The Holy Spirit must be received by the believer. The Spirit will then lead him into fellowship and communion with the living Lord. Consecration means that I will be aware of the fact that God is with me now, wherever I am. He is around me and in me all the time. That is not because I'm good, but because God is gracious. It will not be because I'm better than anyone else, but because God is merciful and kind. Looking into the face of Christ Jesus, my mind and heart can yield to receive His Holy Spirit, and I can witness to His loving Grace.

There is one other aspect of preparation, described in Acts 2:41-47. Here we read that the apostles and disciples were together in fellowship and had *communion* with each other, as they continued daily with one accord in the Temple.

When we put all this together we can see that in preparing the disciples (or ourselves) for their task of telling the whole wide world, Christ Jesus brings them to certain *convictions*. They need to be really convinced that Christ Jesus is actually alive. He has them *commissioned*, and told to go at home and abroad, to the ends of the earth. He arranged for their *correction*, what was wrong in them was made right. They were moved into *consecration*, waiting in the presence of God to receive and be filled by the Holy Ghost. In joy and *communion*, they fellowship with each other, as in gladness of heart they did eat their bread and bare their witness together in joy.

The missionary has no power in himself. He only can be used of God. Such preparation as we have noted, needs to take place in every heart that is going to be effective in daily walk, in service and witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Men in Missions

In considering missionary work one cannot avoid thinking about the missionaries. What kind of people actually can carry on such work? Some idea about this can be seen in the words spoken about Stephen, "And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Stephen evidently was a man whose witness and testimony was impressive to other people.

It would be so easy to make a grave error about what is done in the way of telling the Gospel and carrying on the ministry of the Lord. Naturally we are inclined to give man the credit. If a certain church is getting along well, we give the pastor the credit. If a great number of people turn to the Lord we give the evangelist the credit. If children grow up to have faith in God we give the parents the credit.

From the same mistaken approach it follows that if it should turn out that a church is not growing, we blame the pastor. If it should turn out when we hold special services that no one is brought to the Lord,

we blame the evangelist. If it should turn out that a boy or girl grows up and becomes wayward, we are inclined to blame the parents. We praise or we blame the person of the worker.

Such ideas are very deeply rooted in our thinking, and are to be noted even as we read the Bible. We read about Moses and then talk to one another about how great Moses was. Sometimes even we make a study of his character and his personality that we might point up the human traits that we think made Moses a great man. And yet we are all wrong! That is not why he was great. Or perhaps when we study David, we are inclined to think that David had such great courage. When we read how he went out to meet Goliath, we praise David.

All such thinking is faulty. Let me illustrate. Think of an extension cord. It looks like a thin rope: what can be done with it. A person could tie up bundles with it or one could plug one end of it into a socket in the wall where it would be linked up with power, then plug the other end into a vacuum sweeper and see how it works! The missionary is like that extension cord. He is to have one hand upon God: his personal faith in God; and he is to have the other hand upon the people.

Any time a person will with one hand take hold of human beings in love, affection, care and concern, and with the other hand take hold of God with faith in His promises and faith in what He has done, lives will be changed for Christ Jesus. Souls are affected by the power of God, and not by the missionary. It is vital to remember that the person does not do it; God does it through the person.

Paul says we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. This discussion is not aiming to take anything away from the missionary, not at all. But it is to realize that the Lord uses you. You may not think you are of much account. Do you really believe in God? Very well. Do you really care about people? If you really believe in God and you really care about people then you can go and talk to them and you can expect results. The Scriptures say "not by might nor by power but by my Spirit saith the Lord." The one thing that counts anyone can do: it is to be faithful to God. We have noted before how very natural it is for us to look at men, and to feel if the man is strong and effective, then results will follow, but if the man is not strong and impressive, then there will be no results. This is not quite true. It is when the man believes in God, and cares about other people, that the Grace of God will come into his heart, and into hearts of the people to whom he is witnessing.

In all that is being done in missions, we will be wise if we look at the Lord and not at the missionary. God can and does use anyone, whosoever will. It may be a mother here or a father there, a teacher or a pastor. Some person will come to some human soul with the story of Jesus of Nazareth; and the blessing of God upon his testimony and his witness will actually affect that soul.

We should keep in mind with reference to missions, that what is needed is faithfulness. Persons that will faithfully share what they know and believe about Jesus Christ with other people, and trust, praying to God that God will work through them. I should remember the copper wires as I witness. I should make sure I am connected by faith in Jesus Christ and attached to other human beings by love and concern. God will work through me to will and to do of His good pleasure.

The Meaning of Missions

Missionaries in their work go out to tell the Gospel to the whole wide world. Because of this almost everyone thinks that a preacher or missionary is going to help people to live better. And it does seem that many preachers think up ways and means of telling people how to do, and what to do, so that they will live better than they were living before. In fact, this seems to be the trend in the current emphasis in missionary work.

The idea seems to be common that missionaries are to go to any country in the world and to help people. They are to help people to live, help people to do. It is true that for the sake of getting close to the

natives and gaining the confidence of the people in other countries, missionaries have long employed such methods as medical missions and agricultural missions, but in these recent years that I'm talking about, this has been carried on as if it were the principal purpose for which missionaries are sent.

Thus we talk about people being sent out to help others. Because people are sick we sent out doctors and nurses. Because they are ignorant we send out teachers. Because they don't know to do, and use poor methods in farming, we send out agricultural helpers and experts that will help them; and so on.

Somehow, the fact that missionaries are also going to tell them the things of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ seems quite incidental. The pagans are supposed to catch that from being with the missionaries. And so we are in a day when the good is being substituted for the best. We need once again to look to Scripture for the true purpose of missions.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2). Does that sound strange? When you go to the church to listen to the sermon, is this what you hear? Is it not more usual that the preacher will talk about how people ought to do better than they are doing? He may emphasize that they should be kinder to other people, be more thoughtful of other people, and help others. As you listen to such preaching you will begin to think that the whole business of the Christian is to carry out some program outlined by man. How different was Paul's preaching! He could say "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

It is very important that we should recognize in everything that we do in the field of missions that the principle part in all teaching and preaching should be the truth about Jesus Christ. We must stress what He did and promised. What happened to Him? Where is He now? What is He doing now? What's He going to do? This is plenty to preach about and this is what the people need to be told.

The Lord Jesus said on one occasion talking to His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" And they told Him, "Some say that you are Elijah, some say that you are Jeremiah, some say that you are one of the prophets." And He said, "Whom do you say that I am?" And you will remember Peter spoke up and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"
(Matthew 16:17-18).

I know it isn't always clear to everybody what that means, but I can tell you what I think that word "rock" means. When He said, "Upon this rock," He meant "Upon this foundation." What foundation? The foundation of personal heartfelt conviction that Jesus of Nazareth really is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. He is the One of whom the prophets wrote, and He is the One whom God has sent, the Chosen One of God. Conviction about this is the foundation of the Church. The New Testament record in the book of the Acts is clear that the preaching of the apostles was centered in the Person of Jesus Christ, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

As a parent, in your own family, with your own children, you will have to teach. You will teach your child how to wear clothes, how to eat at the table, how earn a living. And some parents will teach them about God.

Parents will teach their children about God and about the law of God – the Ten Commandments, and about the inward functioning of their conscience by which they will know whether they are doing right or whether they are doing wrong. Parents will make clear to them that if they do right God will bless them, and if they do wrong God will punish them, but all of this is not yet the Christian Gospel.

There is so much more! God sent His Son into the world to seek and to save the lost. The Son of

God gave His life as a ransom for many. The fact of the matter is simply that Jesus Christ died on Calvary's Cross for me, and He was raised from the dead for me. And He ascended up into heaven for me. He is now in the presence of God praying for me. He is waiting God's time and He's going to come back again into this world and He's going to establish in this world the openly seen Kingdom of God. Every eye shall see Him, and every knee shall bow to Him.

Christ Jesus is going to do these things and if I believe in Him, put my trust in Him, Almighty God will save my soul. This is the great truth of the Gospel and this is the message of missions. We talk about Jesus Christ. Remember Philip in Acts 8: 35, "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." This is the meaning of all that missionaries are sent to preach and teach.

The Holy Spirit and Missions

It is such a common thing in thinking about missions to think about the missionaries. This is natural because we feel they are the ones that do it. Yet often the actual work of missions is not done according to the way in which the missionary would plan it. The overruling providence of God brings things to pass that the individual missionary might never see. In looking into the New Testament it becomes very clear that it is the Holy Spirit of God Who actually directs the missionary work.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 13: 2-4).

This is a simple account and it shows plainly that their going as missionaries was not the idea of Barnabas nor of Saul. The Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

The commission to tell the Gospel is given to all believers it is true, but the record shows that much of the actual performance and the decisions in this ministry is led by the living Holy Spirit of God. When we speak about the Holy Spirit, we mean God. We mean God in fellowship among the Christians. God dwelling in the midst, and in the heart of each believer. The early church didn't have a committee that decided it would be a good thing to send Barnabas and Saul. The Holy Spirit moved them and selected the missionaries by name. He didn't say that the church should pick and send two men. No, the language is clear: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul to the work whereunto I have called them." It was the Holy Spirit who led the church to join in sending them forth with prayer and fasting. Certainly the believers shared in this, and certainly the two named committed themselves in faith to this whole project, but it was the Holy Spirit of God that led them.

Remember the incident of Philip and the Ethiopian? "Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." The Holy Spirit moved Philip to take this action. When this man, this Ethiopian, came into view riding in his chariot, the Holy Spirit moved Philip to go near and join himself to "this chariot." Philip did and got into conversation with him, during which he preached to him Jesus. And when this was done, the Spirit of the Lord "caught away Philip": He led him away again.

The Holy Spirit guides the activity of the missionary. The Holy Spirit is within the believer. As the believer is responding in service to Christ he feels led: "This is the way, walk ye in it." And this is what he does in obedience. Later in Scripture we read about Saul the Pharisee on the Road to Damascus. As he was travelling a light shining from the heavens struck him blind and a voice from heaven told him that he

had been chosen to preach this Gospel to the Gentiles. After that Ananias was led by the Holy Spirit to go to Saul. Ananias did not want to go because he was afraid. He said, "That man has caused the death of a great many believers just as soon as he gets his hands on them;" but he was told not to fear but that it was his business to go over there and talk to this man.

We see the same truth when we read the story of Peter. When Peter was on the housetop, just about the time of the noon meal. the Spirit told him that there were two men at the gate who wanted to talk to him. The Spirit told him he was to go with them, asking no questions. Peter came down and met these two men from the household of Cornelius. He heard what they wanted and said he would go with them, which he did. He went along to the home of Cornelius. There he opened his mouth and taught them the things that were true about the Lord Jesus Christ. This resulted in Cornelius and his household becoming believers.

There is another graphic event in which this same truth was demonstrated. Paul and his party were on a missionary tour and came to a certain spot where they could go no further. The record is "They were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach in Asia." This is surprising! The Holy Spirit actually would not let them go down into Asia to go on with this ministry .Then "They assayed to go into Bithynia (another province) but the Spirit suffered them not." This need not mean that some person stood in front of them and forbade them to go. It is likely that in their hearts they had no liberty to do this. They felt within themselves this was not the thing to do. Thus the Holy Spirit guided the activity of the missionaries even to the point of selecting where they were to go, and who was to go.

When the Gospel was being declared and people became Christians, the Holy Spirit led in the baptizing of the new Christians. It was the Holy Spirit that led the church in Jerusalem to arrange to baptize the believers in Samaria. In the house of Cornelius it was the Holy Spirit that led Peter to baptize the people there, who had suddenly been brought to faith. In Ephesus, Paul found certain disciples and asked them about whether they had received the Holy Spirit. When he found they did not understand about His work, Paul taught them. He preached to them about the Lord Jesus and again the Holy Spirit blessed them with faith. Then Paul baptized these people. Thus we see that in missions in the New Testament times the actual performance of the activity that carries out the Great Commission of the Lord was conducted under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The people who actually did the work of missions were selected by the Holy Spirit of God. This was not by any Board, not by any church, not by any man, but by the Holy Spirit of God. They were guided in their activity of witnessing: where they should go, to whom they should speak, and what they should do. The Holy Spirit gave them strength to witness. When they were filled with the Holy Spirit they were able to declare with power the truth about the Lord. The missionaries were not left alone in this. What they did was not according to their own judgment. They did not follow their own ideas. They actually were led by the Spirit of God Himself. God Himself was working with these persons, leading them and guiding them along the way. You and I can have in mind today this is the way He will help us. The Holy Spirit Himself will guide us in what we should say and to whom we should say it, that the work may be done in the Name of the Lord.

The Authority for Missions

In all the work that is done in witnessing both at home and in the foreign field, I would use the term "missionary." This would include pastors, teachers, and in fact work done by anyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ and who tells someone else who does not believe in Him. The Christian tells about the way in which he and any other person can be changed, drawn nearer to God. This change will be "In Christ," and it will be real. The new life is as different as being alive is different from being dead.

All men are dead in trespasses and sins. The Christian calls them to God that they might live, that they might be raised from the dead. The authority for such witnessing in missions is clearly indicated in the Scriptural record.

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven " (Matthew 16: 15-19).

That is the way the Lord Jesus puts it. The Scriptures make it plain that Christ Jesus actually sends His disciples out to declare the truth in all the world, with the intent that people should be changed! When missionaries, at home or abroad, do this work of missions – telling other people about Jesus Christ they go to other people and talk to them about the salvation that is in Jesus Christ. Men have not heard this before and Christians are glad to tell them. They understand that all men are lost and need to be saved, whether they realize it or not. The Christian knows Christ can and will save sinners. Thus he is confident that the Gospel can bring that soul to Christ that he may be saved.

The missionary is often unwelcome. He goes, but oftentimes without an invitation. Not only does our missionary go to China without being invited, but even in our own homes the mother will tell the boy things he did not ask about and doesn't want to hear. Sometimes there is real ill will, real contention in the home, because the parents are telling the children these things they don't want to hear. You may have heard the irritated response, "Leave me alone, it's my life and I'm going to live it as I see fit." Actually in a sense, the parent is interfering with them. Does the parent have any reason for that? The missionary, the Christian, seeks converts. He knows this will change the people. Such intrusion into personal experience is often an-oying, but the Christian knows what he is about, and he feels in his heart and soul that he should do this. He is coming to tell them that the way they have of doing things isn't good enough. Their way could be better, and it would be better in the Lord. It follows that the missionary is often misunderstood.

Oftentimes the missionary is accused of being against things. This is not really true. Certainly he's against anything that isn't of the Lord, anything that misleads or deceives people. It is surprising how many people feel that if the missionary comes to a person who is already committed to a religion of his own, and does not believe in Christ, the missionary should leave him alone. But the Christian can't do that because he knows that if that person is not in Christ Jesus he is lost.

There are some who do not want the missionary around: they do not want him to say anything. But the missionary is motivated from within his own heart. He is not there because some group of smart scholars in some university concluded it would be a good thing if he would take the Gospel to that country. The missionary is being led in his own heart. He's inwardly led by the living Lord, Himself.

At least three things are true about a missionary, or a pastor, even as they are true about godly parents. In the first place the missionary is personally convinced that Jesus is the Christ! He could tell you clearly, "Once I was blind and now I can see." "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him and delivered him out of all his troubles." He knows from personal experience that God has dealt with him. Secondly, he has been sent. "As my Father sent me, so send I you." He's got the feeling in his bones that Christ Jesus wants him to go. And so he is going to obey for Christ's sake, even though there are people who would not want him to go, or to come. The reason he is going is because Christ Jesus sent him. "As my Father sent me, so send I you." And finally, the missionary has compassion. He is sorry for that lost soul. He knows

the epidemic of sin is fatal, but he knows he has the remedy. He has the serum and he cannot help but take it to them because they need it. This is the authority which prevails in the heart of a Christian.

The Support of Missions

One thing that is true about missionary work is that some who believe and care at home have to give the money to send the missionary to witness in the Name of Christ Jesus. Missions are done by those who believe, on behalf of those who do not believe. What then is the source and nature of the support of missions. Let us give our attention to the words of Christ Jesus:

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:36-38).

Let us keep in mind that by missions we mean the whole project of telling other people about Jesus Christ. Such activity encounters ignorance and prejudice among the people to whom the message is taken. Often such people are opposed to change because it upsets tradition or disturbs their usual way of life. This opposition is felt not only by the foreign missionary, but by the local pastor. Wherever you find one teaching, witnessing, telling those who do not know the things of our Lord and Savior, there will be objection and opposition.

Parents know their children are born without a knowledge of Jesus Christ. Children have to be told in church school or at home. They have to be taught in the ways of the Lord. Anyone who shares the glory of the Gospel with another is doing missionary work, and this takes more than human wisdom and human strength and human grace. For this is needed the Holy Spirit of God through Christ Jesus.

It is no wonder then that the Lord Jesus put His emphasis at this point: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." This is the heart of missionary support. All mission work is basically the same. The believer is constrained by the love of Christ to tell other people the things about Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. First he testifies that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God, and then affirms that blessings from God comes to mankind only through Christ Jesus. In the second place the missionary will witness to what Christ Jesus has done for him. Thus if I were to tell other people about Jesus of Nazareth, one thing I would tell them is that He died for me and God has received me as His child. Thus the missionary or the Sunday School teacher or the parent or the friend, one way or another, says, "Once I was blind and now I see." One thing the witness knows from experience is that he can be helped. And in the third place the missionary has compassion on the lost. It is the compassion of Christ when He saw the multitude "scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

All missionary work has problems. The natural heart is enmity against God. Thus it happens sometimes parents have the feeling, "Well, I'd be glad to have my children go to Sunday School or church, but they don't want to go." Or, "I'd be glad to have them read the Bible and I'd be glad to read the Bible to them, but they don't want to listen." Or again, "We can't have family prayer, they don't want to take time to pray." All parents should realize their children are not extraordinary. They are normal. The Lord Jesus said, "Marvel not if the world hate you." This can be felt in one's own home. We read that "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." Opposition to the things of the Gospel is not new nor strange.

All mission work needs support! One obvious need in foreign mission work is money. The obvious need of any church and Sunday School is money, buildings, and people to serve. The practical need always is workers, to have someone to go, and in this connection indifference isn't new!

Thus it becomes obvious the real need is prayer. Prayer that by His Spirit God will move people to give themselves fully, totally, in complete yieldedness to Christ Jesus. Then and only then will the money for support be provided. The true believer prays to be used of the Lord. We may note again that when the Lord Jesus looked out upon the people and saw them fainting, because they were like sheep that had no shepherd, He turned to His disciples and said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." He did not then say, "Go out and recruit as many laborers as you can so we can get a good staff of people to go out and do this." He did not say to them, "See what you can do about organizing activity so that people will get this thing done." What He did say was: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

God Himself must put it into the heart of the missionary to go. God must put it into the heart of the young man to be a preacher; He must move that woman to be a Sunday School teacher. God must put it into the heart of parents to teach their children faithfully. The truth is a Christian could begin each day asking in prayer that Christ Jesus would use him, fill him, that he might know the joy 'of service to His Lord wherever he might be one day at a time.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

The Great Commission

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20).

This points to the beginning of Missions. All that has ever been done, is being done, or will ever be done in missions, started when in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son to redeem sinners. It has often been said that God had just one Son and He sent Him to be a Missionary. sending Him into the world "to seek and to save that which was lost."

The whole matter of bringing to human beings the truth about the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is as basic as creation. This world that you and I are in, was made by God. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." When we say the Gospel is as clear and basic as creation we are thinking of the amazing truth that God arranged from the beginning that He would save those who would put their trust in Him through His Son, Christ Jesus.

Man was created in the image of God, made of the dust of the earth, and was called Adam. Man disobeyed God, his sin was no surprise to God. The Bible tells us Christ Jesus, the Son of God, was "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." That means before God ever made this world, or created man, He knew that the man He created of the dust of the earth would sin and would fall. He knew too that His Son would come in human form and, in perfect obedience to the law of God, give His life as a ransom for any human being that would believe in Him. This is the great truth that puts missions on their way. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." God sent Christ Jesus into the world "to seek and to save the lost."

The call of God comes to sinful men in three simple words. The first word that goes out over the whole world to mankind is "COME." "Come to the Savior and make no delay, here in our midst He is standing today tenderly saying Come, come." This is God's great word. The wonderful truth is that anyone can do it. He needs just to get up from where he is and come! That's God's first word. He doesn't tell the man to get ready and go and do something. He says "Come," just as you are . . . but come!

The second word that God says to the people who have come is "ABIDE." The Lord Jesus said, "If you abide in me and I abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you . . . This is God's great word to the people who have come: "Stay with me: abide."

Now for those who have come, and who have abided with Him and in Him, God has a third word. It is a very simple word. "GO!" Only those who have come, have been with Him, can learn to go; i.e. believers. This is our Great Commission: "Go ye into all the world, go ye therefore and teach all nations."

Notice in this Scripture how Jesus of Nazareth began by saying, "All power is given unto me." The Lord Jesus is saying to all His people: "Help is available, you can trust me. God is able! Your task is to go." So the Christian should get at it, talk to people: tell the children, the young people, the adults. Start out with the baby: teach him, "Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so." Everywhere you go, get the Word out! . . . Go!! "Teach them to observe." "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." These words, "I am with you always," do not mean necessarily that He is following after you. He could be with you if He was walking beside you; and He could be with you if He was in front of you. Rest assured, He is going to be there.

In missions we have reminded ourselves – we do not do this alone. God is with us. The Lord is with us. So we go to tell and to teach. We go trusting in Him. He will be with me as I go, and He will help to turn the hearers to Himself that their souls will be saved.