
Lesson 17 – The Mission of the Church: Foreign Missions (OUTLINE)**I. Missions.**

- A. The word “missions,” comes from the Latin *mitto* meaning “I send.”
- B. Each church, by the direct command of Jesus Christ, is responsible for the proclamation of the Gospel to the lost everywhere. Each church is to send out missionaries.

II. The missionary idea in the Old Testament.

- A. God said to Adam “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Indicating a worldwide design for Adam’s race. Read Genesis 1:28.
- B. God gave Abraham a worldwide purpose in the promise ...in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed.”
- C. Joseph was a God sent missionary to Egypt.
- D. The story of Jonah is a fine illustration of missionary work.

III. The missionary idea in the New Testament.

- A. John the Baptist was “a man sent by God” – a missionary.
- B. Jesus Himself was the great missionary. He spoke of Himself as the messenger sent from God sent by the Father to a lost world.
- C. The disciples were all missionaries – sent forth by Christ.
- D. Christ established the church and commanded it to be missionary. Read Matthew 28:19-20.
- E. The apostles and the churches of the New Testament were all missionary.

IV. Missionary methods. God. Read Acts 13:1-5

- A. This passage of scripture sets down the method for sending forth missionaries.
- B. It is the pattern God has given and should be followed.
1. The Holy Spirit called the missionaries for the work of God planned for them. "...the work whereunto I have called them." (Acts 13:2)
 2. The Holy Spirit lead the individual church to send these missionaries forth "Separate me Barabas and Saul for the work." (Acts 13:2 again)
 - a. There is no Mission Board or denominational organization even mentioned in the Bible.
 - b. All missionary work was to be accomplished by the local church and was not to be handed off to any man-made organization.
 3. The local church sent the missionaries forth "...they sent them away." (Acts 13:3)
 4. On the field, these missionaries were under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 13:4)
 5. The missionaries always reported back to their individual churches.

Questions:

1. Give a definition of "missions."
2. Discuss the missionary idea in the Old Testament.
3. Who were some of the missionaries in the New Testament?
4. How were the missionaries sent out in the New Testament?

Discussions: Name some wrong missionary methods and discuss their dangers.

Assignment:

- Memory work study: Matthew 28:20
- Scripture reading: Ephesians 3:1-21

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I. Missions.

- A. The word “missions,” comes from the Latin *mitto* meaning “I send.”
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II. The missionary idea in the Old Testament.

- A. God said to Adam “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Indicating a worldwide design for Adam’s race. Read Genesis 1:28 ²⁸*And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

Also Genesis 22:18 ¹⁵*And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, ¹⁶and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: ¹⁷that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; ¹⁸and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.*

Also read Genesis 9:1-3 ¹*And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. ²And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. ³Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.*

[Some info about blood] Genesis 9:4-7 *⁴But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. ⁵And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. ⁶Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. ⁷And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.*

- B. God gave Abraham a worldwide purpose in the promise ...in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed.” Acts 3:25 *²⁵Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, **And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.** ²⁶Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.*
- C. Joseph was a God sent missionary to Egypt. Joseph speaking to his brothers after revealing himself: Genesis 45:8 *⁸So now it was not you that sent me hither, **but God:** and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.*
- D. The story of Jonah is a fine illustration of missionary work. (Jonah—Worst Missionary Ever?)

III. The missionary idea in the New Testament.

- A. John the Baptist was “a man sent by God” – a missionary. Read John 1:6 *⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. ⁸He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.*
- B. Jesus Himself was the great missionary. Jesus spoke of Himself as the messenger sent from God - sent by the Father to a lost world.

Read John 20:21 *¹⁹Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, **Peace be unto you.** ²⁰And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the*

Lord. ²¹Then said Jesus to them again, **Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.**

- C. The disciples were all missionaries – sent forth by Christ. (John 20:21above)
- D. Christ established the church and commanded it to be missionary. Read Matthew 28:19-20. **¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**
- E. The apostles and the churches of the New Testament were all missionary.

IV. Missionary methods. God.

Read Acts 13:1-5 ¹Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ²As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, **Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.** ³And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

[First Missionary Journey]

⁴So they, **being sent forth by the Holy Ghost**, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

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⁴*So they, **being sent forth by the Holy Ghost**, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.*)
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Questions:

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<https://leegrady.com/10-biggest-mistakes-christians-make-on-the-mission-field/>

1. Acting like a spoiled American.

If you are traveling to a developing country, here is Rule No. 1: Prepare for delays, cold showers, big bugs and scorpions, power outages, unusual toilets, crazy traffic and strange food. Make a decision before you leave that you won't let one complaint come out of your mouth. Be flexible and gracious. Focus on the positive, soak in the beauty of the country and come home with a renewed gratitude for your blessings at home.

2. Talking down to people.

You are not going overseas to teach poor, ignorant foreigners what you know. If that's your attitude, do everyone a favor and stay home! You are going to serve. Most of what I know

about ministry I learned from humble people I met in other countries. Whether you are teaching, preaching, building orphanages or feeding the poor, get under the people and wash their feet. And expect to learn powerful lessons from the people you are visiting.

3. **Building relationships based on money.**

People in poor countries tend to think all Americans are rich, and they will be tempted to look to us instead of God to provide. Don't wave money around, don't flaunt expensive watches or jewelry, and don't hand out cash to everyone you meet. Let your new friends know you want a real friendship with them that does not hinge on finances.

4. **Making demands.**

I know prosperity preachers who expect royal treatment when they go to foreign countries. One man told his host he needed a hotel that costs \$1,000 a night—in a nation where most people live in cramped, Soviet-style apartments. The apostle Paul modeled a different approach, and he was willing to live among people at their level (see 1 Thess. 2:9-10). If Jesus was willing to enter this world in a filthy manger, we should be willing to set aside our expensive tastes.

5. **Breaking promises.**

When you connect deeply with a local pastor or congregation overseas, you will fall in love with them and you will want to do everything possible to help them. But don't promise things you can't deliver. Always remind them, and yourself, that we must pray for His provision and wait on Him to answer. And if you do enter into a partnership, always honor the promises you made.

6. **Taking team members who are not committed to Jesus.**

I know of a zealous young woman who went on a mission trip to Africa with her church and ended up sleeping with a guy from that country. How does that happen? Anyone who goes with you on a trip needs a background check and a pastor's recommendation. Mission trips should never be viewed as opportunities for "religious tourism" by immature people who crave a globetrotting adventure. The behavior of your team members should honor Christ.

7. Working with people overseas without thoroughly investigating them.

I get requests almost weekly from foreign pastors who want me to visit their church, support their programs or do evangelistic crusades in their villages. In Pakistan, some unscrupulous Christians troll the Internet looking for churches that will send them money. Some people posing as pastors talk naïve Americans into wiring funds for a trip—and then they vanish. If you are going to do mission work, you will need the gift of discernment. Don't get bamboozled by a con artist posing as "beloved brother Najib."

8. Using a "hit and run" approach to missions.

When I visit a country I almost always end up going back because I build relationships with ministries. This week I'm on my fourth visit to Barranquilla, Colombia, where I am helping to develop a women's shelter. Mission work should be a long-term partnership. If your church is planning to start a mission program, don't just scatter your seed here and there. Prayerfully invest in a few places and let the Holy Spirit connect you with those people for a lifetime.

9. Misrepresenting your work.

We laugh about the preacher who was "evangelastically speaking" about the crowds he attracted in Uganda. But exaggeration is lying. There is nothing more obnoxious than a Christian who inflates statistics to draw attention or raise funds. If you build your ministry on half-truths you will have cracks in your foundation. Be honest, be accountable and tell the truth.

10. Focusing on numbers.

There is huge pressure in missionary work to prove our effectiveness by counting heads. But God's kingdom is not about crowds—it is about making disciples (see Matt. 28:19-20). Some of my most powerful moments on the mission field were in small meetings where God changed a few lives forever—and then those people changed more lives. I'm not impressed when someone says 5,000 people prayed to receive Jesus. I want to know if those converts were followed-up and plugged into churches for discipleship.

Assignment:

- Memory work study: Matthew 28:20 *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
- Scripture reading: Ephesians 3:1-21

¹For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, ²if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: ³how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, ⁴whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) ⁵which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; ⁶that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: ⁷whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. ⁸Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; ⁹and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. ¹⁰to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, ¹¹according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. ¹³Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. ¹⁴For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; ¹⁷that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. ²⁰Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, ²¹unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.