

***Go and Make Disciples: An Introduction to Christian Missions*** by Roger S. Greenway (Phillipsburg, New Jersey, P&R Publishing, 1999) (78 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols)

Part 1: The World to Which Christ Sends Us

## **Chapter 1 Worldwide Challenges**

### **1. The Harvest Field Is Larger than Ever**

The population of the world was probably not more than 300 million when Jesus spoke the Great Commission. Now the World population is around six billion—and growing. Most of the population growth is in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and countries whose principal religion is not Christianity. More than half the world worships some other god than the God revealed in the Bible and in Jesus Christ.

What does this mean for Christian missions? Clearly, it means that the harvest field is larger than ever before. More people need to be reached with the gospel. More workers need to respond to the Lord's call, prepare themselves, and begin gathering the harvest. Churches everywhere must become involved in missions by praying for, supporting, and sending missionaries.

This is not a time to reduce missionary efforts, but to increase them by enlisting churches everywhere in the work of making disciples of Christ. [Pages 3-4]

### **2. More Open to Gospel in New Environment**

...migration to the cities means that masses of people now live close together and can be reached more easily through evangelism. Studies show that many people are more open to listening to the gospel when in a new environment. [Page 4]

### **3. Go through the Open Doors**

One thing we have learned in missions is that doors that were tightly closed for many years may suddenly open. God gives us a new opportunity to spread his Word when this happens, and we must be ready to respond. At the sight of every open door, we hear Jesus say again, "Go and make disciples!" [Page 5]

### **4. Cultural Barriers Increasing**

Some of the greatest challenges we face in missions are due to cultural barriers: differences in language, custom, religion, values, and attitudes. Cultural barriers separate people and make it difficult for the message of Christ to move from one group to another.

For this reason, missionary training includes the study of cultures and how to communicate the gospel from one culture to another. It is a mistake to think that

cultural barriers will disappear soon. Some cultural barriers, on the contrary, appear to be increasing. [Page 5]

### **5. The Body of Christ the Largest Multicultural Community**

All nations” is *panta ta ethne* in the ancient Greek language of the New Testament, and it means *all peoples, tribes, and races*. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Body of Christ is the largest multicultural community on earth, and it continues to grow. [Page 6]

### **6. Religions Attracting New Followers**

There are now more Muslims than evangelical Christians in France. There are now large mosques in countries where traditionally there were almost no Muslims. Courses in Buddhism and Hinduism are popular at universities in North America. Spiritism and superstitions that some people thought had disappeared are attracting new followers. [Page 6]

### **7. Churches Becoming Missionary Communities**

Churches everywhere must become missionary communities. Leaders must be able to explain the message of Christ to many kinds of people. [Page 6]

### **8. Missionaries Coming from Everywhere**

The number of missionaries coming from Asia, Africa, and Latin America has risen greatly in recent years. Christian missions no longer come mainly from the West. The total number of missionaries from non-Western countries now exceeds the number coming from Europe and America.

Many non-Western missionaries are going to places where it is difficult to live and where resistance to the gospel is strong. They are finding ways to enter countries where Western missionaries cannot go. They are showing that Christianity is neither a “religion of white men” nor a religion that only Western people want. When someone from the Philippines or Korea or Brazil stands up and preaches the message of Christ, it is a powerful witness to the fact that Jesus is indeed the “Savior of the world” (John 4:42) [Page 7]

### **9. Western Countries Are Mission Fields**

Most missionaries came from Western countries during the past two centuries, but Western countries have become mission fields. They need to be evangelized again. Meanwhile, the centers of missionary power are moving to other parts of the world. [Page 7]

### **10. Asia, Africa, and Latin America Have Largest Number of Christians**

The face of the church has changed because the majority of Christians now live in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It is predicted that by the year 2025, only 25 percent of

Christians will live in Western countries. The centers of Christian education as well as missions increasingly are moving from the West to the South and the East. Christian leaders of the twenty-first century will be mainly from these new centers.

Asia already has the majority of the world's people. Asia also has the largest numbers of non-Christians. What does this mean for missions? Asian Christians must join with their brothers and sisters from other parts of the world to complete the task of missions. [Page 8]

### **11. Number of Poor Increasing**

The sad fact is that the number of poor people is increasing. The challenge to missions is to show Christian compassion in ways that will help the poor escape from poverty, while at the same time telling them about Jesus Christ.

Two facts impress us when we examine this challenge.

- 1. Generally speaking, the poor and the lost (spiritually) are the same people.***

A look at a world map shows that those countries that are furthest from Christ and the gospel are also the poorest countries. Likewise, they are countries in which there is a great deal of oppression and injustice. Therefore, we see a connection between spiritual bondage and physical suffering and injustice.

- 2. The poor are the largest single group among all the people in the world that are outside the Christian faith.***

Some of them live in villages and some of them in large cities. Wherever they are, the poor and the lost call to us to bring them the gospel and Christian mercy. We must not ignore their cry. [Pages 8-9]

### **12. Workers Are Needed to Reach Youth**

There have never been so many children and young people before in all of human history. This represents a great challenge to Christian missions. Young people are the ones who make most of the decisions to follow Christ. Bringing the Word of God to young people requires special literature, teachers who are trained to work with youth, and programs designed for children and youth. More Christian workers are needed who will direct most of their efforts to reaching youth for Christ. [Page 9]

## Chapter 2 Missionaries: Co-workers with God

### 13. God Is a Sender

Mission(s) means *sending* and proceeds from the plan and purpose of God. The Baptist missiologist Francis M. DuBose says in his book *GOD WHO SENDS* that the biblical picture of the one true God is the picture of a great and continual “Sender.” God sends to the earth rain and sunshine, storms and judgments in his providence. God sends his Word, his Son, his Spirit, and his servants in all times and places with his salvation.

The language of sending describes the whole range of God’s concern and activity in the world. He sent Samuel to deliver his people (1 Samuel 12:11) and to anoint Saul and David as kings (16:1). He sent the prophet Nathan to condemn King David for his sin (2 Samuel 12:1). He sent the prophets: Isaiah (6:8); Jeremiah (1:7); Elijah (2 Kings 2); Haggai (1:12); Zechariah (2:8). He repeatedly sent his prophets on missions to his people (Jeremiah 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; 35:15). He sent John the Baptist as the forerunner of Jesus (John 1:6–8). He sent his angels (messengers) to testify to the churches (Revelation 22:16). He sent his Holy Spirit into the world (John 14:26; 1 Peter 1:12). (*God Who Sends*, 60). [Page 11]

### 14. God, First, Then Christ, then Disciples

Jesus brought together his own mission from the Father with the mission that he gave the disciples, when he said, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). It is important to observe the order of the “sendings” in this passage. First, the Son of God was sent by the Father, and that makes Jesus the primary, divine Missionary. Jesus, in turn, sent his disciples, which made them missionaries of the gospel. We learn in other parts of the gospel of John that the Holy Spirit was sent by God to bear witness to Christ and convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 14:25-6; 15:26-7; 16:7-8).

This is very significant for our understanding of missions. *Christ calls his followers, ALL of them, to be co-missioners and co-workers with him.* God calls us to participate with him in the work of evangelizing the world. Hearing this, every follower of Christ should respond from the heart like the Virgin Mary when she heard the announcement of the angel: “I am the Lord’s servant. Let God’s will for me be done” (Luke 1:38, my translation)

This is the glory of the missionary calling. We are followers of Christ and co-missioners with him. As he was sent and commissioned to bear witness to the truth, so we are sent and commissioned. In the power of the Holy Spirit we become co-participants in the plan and purpose of God to reconcile the world to himself. Missions is not only work for God, but work with God. The work is to be done in a way that resembles the sacrificial obedience of Jesus Christ. [Page 12]

## **15. All Believers Involved in Missions**

Missions is a divine enterprise, and it embraces the plan of God for every one of his children. All believers have roles to play in missions. God has appointed a time and a place for everyone, and our highest duty in life is to find God's will for us within his plan and carry it out. [Page 14]

## **16. The Gospel Needs a Voice**

*The gospel needs a voice*; God planned it that way. The good news about Jesus Christ cannot announce itself. It must have a human announcer. John the Baptist said, "I am the voice" (John 1:23). Not merely a sound or noise, but a clear, intelligent human voice was required to point people to Jesus. This has been true in every generation. God uses messengers. As Paul said, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20). [Page 14]

## **17. The Word of God through Messengers**

... ambassadors of Christ speak the truth of God and carry out his instructions. God speaks in and through them when they speak faithfully the Word of God. The power and authority of God stand behind them. People who receive them and believe their message receive Christ and his Father, and all he promises. Those who refuse to believe their message reject Christ and his Word. As Jesus said, "Whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me" (John 13:20) [Page 15]

## **18. The Spirit Bears Witness**

In John 14-16, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come and be his continuing witness. The Spirit would empower the disciples to know and understand the truth and declare it to the world. The special office of the Spirit is to bear witness to Christ through the lives and from the lips of believers.

Early disciples expressed co-witnessing with the Spirit as they stood up against persecution before the leaders of the Jews. They testified, "We are witnesses of these things [about Jesus and the resurrection], and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him" (Acts 5:32).

This co-witnessing of human witnesses with the divine witness of the Holy Spirit is of highest importance. Believers proclaim by words and actions the facts and meaning of the gospel. The Spirit empowers their witness and does with it what they themselves cannot do. The Spirit witnesses *internally* while the people of God witness *externally*. Their witness is important, but it can never go beyond physical eyes and ears. Only the witness of the Spirit can speak with a voice that reaches the soul and changes the heart.

The same pattern has continued throughout the history of Christian missions, since the time of the early apostles. The Spirit has used, empowered, and worked through the

witness of Christ's servants to communicate the gospel to lost people. The Spirit employs human co-witnesses in the divine activity of applying the saving work of Christ to human hearts and lives. [Pages 16-17]

## **Chapter 3 Motives for Missions**

### **19. Wrong Missionary Motives**

Some wrong motives for being a missionary are

- a desire to be admired and praised by others;
- a search for "self-fulfillment," without regard for self-emptying (Philippians 2:5-7);
- the pursuit of adventure and excitement;
- ambition to expand the glory and influence of a particular church, denomination, or country;
- escape from unpleasant situations at home
- hope for professional advancement after a short period of mission service;
- guilt, and a desire for peace with God through missionary service.

There may be elements of wrong motives hidden in the minds of even the most sincere missionaries. We should be aware that wrong motives might be present, and repent from them when they are discovered. We must ask God to replace them with right motives so that our service may be pure and acceptable to him.

Right motives for missions are taught in the Word of God and made alive in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit. Such motives do not change over the years, and they apply to missionaries and their supporters from every country in the world. [Pages 20-21]

### **20. Right Missionary Motives**

Right motives are the following:

- 1. The desire that God be worshipped and his glory known among all the peoples of the earth.**

The glory of God means everything revealed about God: his name, his holiness, his mighty power, his saving love in Jesus Christ; his mercy, grace, and righteousness. The chief end of all human existence, says the first question and answer of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, is to bring glory to God and enjoy him forever.

More than three billion people in the world do not worship the one true God. They also do not enjoy fellowship with him. They worship other gods instead, or

no god at all. The purpose of their lives is not to praise God but to satisfy themselves.

The thought that so many people do not worship God stirs missionaries and their supporters to action. They cannot rest until idolatry is replaced by true worship. They sense a divine compulsion to preach the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:16). They want the Word of God proclaimed and his name honored by people everywhere whatever the cost.

**2. The desire to obey God out of love and gratitude by carrying out Christ's commission to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).**

... "If you love me," said Jesus, "you will obey what I command" (John 14:15) Genuine love for God produces obedience to his Word, and nothing is clearer than Christ's command to go and make disciples of all nations and peoples.

Christian obedience takes many forms, and the people of God are anointed by the Holy Spirit to serve God in a variety of ministries (1 Corinthians 12:4-5). Does not the kingdom of God on earth consist of the multitude of believers in Christ who, out of gratitude to God, seek to bring glory to God by obeying his commands in the power of the Holy Spirit?

...the call to missions is not entirely an individual matter. Christ assigns to his church the task of bringing the gospel to the world (Ephesians 3:10). This implies that a personal call to missions needs to be recognized and supported by a congregation of believers. This is also the biblical pattern (Acts 13:2-3; 14:26). By sending and supporting missionaries, the entire church participates in Christ's missionary command.

**3. A burning desire to use every legitimate means to save the lost and win unbelievers to faith in Christ.**

Paul was not so foolish as to think that he could save people by his own strength. He knew that saving faith is a sovereign gift of God (Ephesians 2:8). Paul also knew that missionaries were necessary in the carrying out of God's purpose.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul said, All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

**4. *Concern that churches grow and multiply, and that the kingdom of Christ be extended by words and deeds that proclaim the compassion and righteousness of Christ to a world of suffering and injustice.***

Through the church, the world gets a look at the fellowship of redeemed and reconciled people, who practice love, faithfulness, truth, and righteousness, though imperfectly. The church also works to promote these same virtues in society.

Because they are aware of the biblical emphasis on churches, missionaries plant and nourish congregations of believers wherever they can. They proclaim the gospel with words and demonstrate the gospel with deeds of mercy. They point to Jesus Christ, the Savior, Healer, Leader, Deliverer, and Friend, the Head of the church (Colossians 1:18), by both their words and their deeds. [Pages 21-24]

## **21. Missionaries Are a Restless People**

Missionaries seem to be restless people. They are always coming or going, studying maps, or planning to explore some new place. Missionaries always seem to be talking about evangelism, unreached people, and new strategies for spreading the gospel. They tell stories about people whose lives were changed and about the misery in which some people live.

Missionaries also seem to be restless about the church. They refuse to allow churches to be lazy. Missionaries are always challenging Christians to more prayer, wider outreach, more giving, and more workers. There is a sense of urgency with missionaries, as though precious time is slipping away.

I think this sense of urgency comes from their awareness of the needs of lost and suffering people, the greatness of the gospel, and the urging of the Holy Spirit, who will not rest until God's missionary purpose for the world is finished. [Page 24]

Part 2: The Biblical Foundation of Missions

## **Chapter 4 The Old Testament Basis of Missions**

### **22. Choice of Two Worldviews**

In missions, Christians proclaim their distinctive Christian worldview—as found in the Bible—to people who hold non-Christian worldviews. By urging non-Christians to follow Christ, Christians challenge non-Christians to choose between the two worldviews. Below are a number of worldview questions:

- Does God exist? If so, what is the nature of God?



- How did the world begin, and for what purpose?
- What are human beings? Are we merely smart animals, or something more?
- What causes evil and suffering?
- Is there an invisible world of spirits, some of them good and others bad?
- Is there life after death?
- How can people be saved? [Pages 30-31]

### **23. Modern Pantheism**

Genesis denies *pantheism*, the idea that God is in everything and there is no real distinction between God and the material world. Genesis teaches that in creating the universe God brought into being something *other than God*. Only God is eternal, and the creation is temporal. A modern version of pantheism can be found today among radical environmentalists who identify the created world with God. [Page 32]

### **24. First Missionary Call**

The good news is that Genesis 3 contains the first missionary call in Scripture and the first revelation of the redemptive purpose of God. Genesis 3:8-9 says that God came looking for our first fallen parents. God called, “Adam, where are you?” God has been calling in a similar way for centuries through prophets and missionaries, and most of all through his Son, Jesus Christ. We see for the first time that God is a *missionary* God in Genesis!

Genesis 3:15 is rightly called the “mother of all gospel promises.”

And I will put enmity between you [the Serpent] and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

It is directed to all humanity. Terrible hatred will persist, the verse says, between the two “offsprings,” that of the Serpent and that of the woman. Someday, though, the offspring of the woman will come, and he will crush the head of the Serpent (call this the first “birth announcement” of Jesus). Sin, suffering, and judgment are overcome in the worldview of the Bible through Christ, the Savior of the world. [Page 34]

### **25. Israel Called to be Missionary Nation**

Israel was called to be a “missionary nation.” The people were to be servants of God, his witnesses, priests, and mediators before the nations (Isaiah 42:5-7; 43:10-13). Israel was to be a living example or “showcase” of the righteous kingdom of God. [Page 35]

### **26. A Blessing to the Nations**

God made sure that Israel became a blessing to the nations despite these failures. Jews received and preserved the Old Testament Scriptures and translated them into Greek,

the most widely used language in the days of the apostles. Inspired Jewish writers kept the idea alive that one day all nations and peoples would hear the Word of God and would respond. Christ came out of Israel, and he is the Savior of the world (John 4:42).

The missionary calling was not entirely lost among the Jews. A Jewish mission to the Gentiles had begun in the period before Christ (Matthew 23:15; John 7:35). Jesus' "Great Commission," therefore, did not come as a complete surprise. It had its basis in the history and Scriptures of Israel, going back all the way to Abraham. It is impossible, in fact, to understand missions properly in the New Testament without seeing the roots of missions in the Old Testament. [Page 35]

## **Chapter 5 Missions in the Four Gospels**

### **27. New Testament, a Book of Mission**

The European mission scholar, Johannes Verkuyl, says the following about the New Testament:

From beginning to end, the New Testament is a book of mission. It owes its very existence to the missionary work of the early Christian churches, both Jewish and Hellenistic. The Gospels are, as it were, "live recordings" of missionary preaching, and the Epistles are not so much some form of missionary apologetic as they are authentic and actual instruments of mission work. (*Contemporary Missiology*, 101-2) [Page 37]

### **28. A Person Sent**

A missionary is a person who is "sent." John 20:21 is a key text for understanding the missionary character of Jesus. Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." Jesus knew that his heavenly Father had sent him into the world on a mission. The mission was "to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10). This same Jesus sends believers to go to the ends of the earth making disciples until the end of time (Matthew 28:19-20). [Pages 38-39]

### **29. The Story of Jesus to a Specific Audience**

All four Gospels were written when the church was actively engaged in missions. They were intended to be read by people who needed to know about Jesus, believe in him, and draw others to him as well. Each Gospel tells the story of Jesus to a specific audience.

- Matthew was written for Jews, to teach them about Jesus and make them support missions to Gentiles.
- Mark was a missionary "tract" for Gentiles who needed a brief account of the life and teachings of Jesus.

- Luke, a gentile convert to faith in Jesus, wrote for Gentiles like himself who needed to know that Jesus wanted Gentiles as well as Jews in his kingdom.
- John openly declared his missionary purpose: “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31). John addressed the world. The book of John presents a series of evangelistic conversations between Jesus and others, conversations that have led many people around the world to faith in Christ. [Page 39]

### **30. God Produces Results**

One of the odd features of Jesus’ parable is that the sower is apparently a wasteful farmer. Without a great deal of concern, the sower throws seeds along the road, on rocks, among thorns, as well as on good soil. The common practice at that time of plowing after sowing may partially explain the sower’s actions. Also, some loss is simply the typical condition of farming. Yet the abundant harvest is clearly the result of God’s blessing and not the sower’s skill. The size of the harvest is out of proportion to the ability of the sower. Jesus tells a similar parable about a sower who scatters seeds and then goes to sleep, only to find later that the seeds sprout and grow all on their own without his help (Mark 4:24–30). An underlying principle that helps us to make sense of both parables is that ultimately the harvest is the work of God.

This is God’s mission. He sends, he empowers, and he produces the results. The ultimate purpose for the mission is to bring glory to God, so that a multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language might declare the praise and honor and glory and power of God for all eternity. Believers participate in God’s mission not because God needs their contribution but because they have convictions concerning the importance of God and his will and because God in his grace stooped to include human agents in the accomplishment of his work. God stands at the center of mission as it is described in the New Testament. (William J. Larkin, Jr., and Joel F. Williams, *Mission in the New Testament*, 239-40). [Pages 41-42]

## **Chapter 6 Missions in Acts and the Epistles**

### **31. The Work of a Triune God**

We always keep in mind that *divine* activities lie behind the *human* activities required in missions. Mission activity is first and foremost the work of the triune God. William J. Larkin, Jr., reminds us,

It is common to recognize that Luke’s presentation of mission in Acts is less about the “Acts of the Apostles” than about the “Acts of the Holy Spirit,” less about the mission of the church than about the mission of God. Detailed study reveals how true these characterizations are. For Luke’s narrative portrays each person of the Godhead as a “sending one,” both in

commissioning and promoting mission. Each person of the Trinity is also a “sent one,” a direct agent of mission, as well as a participant working through human agents. Finally, Luke does not hesitate to emphasize that the results of mission are divine results. (*Mission in the New Testament*, 174-75) [Page 45]

### **32. Apostles Never Changed Truth of the Gospel**

The apostles used a variety of approaches, but they never changed the basic truths of the gospel. The sermons recorded in Acts and the teachings contained in the Epistles illustrate this fact. They proclaimed faith in one God, who sent the one Savior, Jesus, to die for sinners. They told of the resurrection from the dead and the hope of the return of Christ. They attacked immorality, which was considered closely connected to idolatry. They expected no improvement in human conduct without repentance and conversion to faith in Jesus Christ. [Page 48]

### **33. Missions Aimed at Conversion**

The early missionaries insisted that all those who wished to become disciples of Christ be *converted*. This meant believing in Christ alone as their Savior and Lord, abandoning all other gods and religious practices, and changing their manner of living in order to conform to the teachings of Christ.

This kind of religious conversion was foreign to the world of the first century. People did not feel that it was necessary to give up one set of religious ideas in order to adopt another. They did not see the connection between religious beliefs and moral practices. They did not like it that Christians insisted that they should hold right beliefs about Christ in order to be saved.

The early missionaries insisted that conversion was necessary even though the Christian idea of conversion to Christ was not popular. They would not compromise. Missions aimed at conversion. They would not settle for some form of dialogue that ended with everyone retaining his or her own religion. The message they preached was all about Jesus Christ. [Page 49]

### **34. No Conversion, You Lose Life**

Once you sever the fundamental root of conversion to Christ from the Christian message, it becomes a broken and a lifeless plant, however beautiful the flowers of concern and social involvement it displays. (*Evangelism in the Early Church*, 148) [Page 50]

### **35. A Moral Emphasis**

Moral living was a major emphasis of the apostles, along with doctrine. They made no division between right faith and right conduct. Both came under the authority of Christ and his Word. [Page 51]

### **36. Scriptures Were the Source of Truth**

Along with prayer, the Scriptures were the apostles' second instrument. They used the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, as their source of truth and authority in preaching. The early missionaries set out to evangelize the world, moved and accompanied by love for people and to bring glory to God by drawing people to Worship him. The quality of their living, speaking, and dying witnessed to their exalted Lord. [Page 51]

## **Chapter 7 The Holy Spirit and Missions**

### **37. Be a Witness**

The words, "You shall BE my witnesses" do not merely state what the Church would DO, but what the Church would BE. The Great Commission, as the divine mandate to the Church to be a witnessing Church, is not only a law similar to that which was set forth at the beginning of human history ("be fruitful and multiply"), but it is its spiritual counterpart in the new creation. It is a statement of the task of the renewed humanity as the earlier statement expresses the task of the old humanity. The urge to witness is inborn in the Church. It is given with her very being. She cannot not witness. She has this being because of the Spirit who indwells her. *Pentecost made the Church a witnessing Church because at Pentecost the witnessing Spirit identified Himself with the Church and made the Great Commission the law of her life. (Pentecost and Missions, 122-23, my italics)* [Pages 53-54]

### **38. The Work of the Missionary Spirit in Believers**

1. The Holy Spirit, first of all, *awakens an interest in missions in the hearts of believers*. Missionary zeal, at its deepest level, is a holy jealousy for the honor and glory of Jesus Christ. It may be called the "patriotism of the kingdom of Christ." The thought that millions of people worship false gods and care nothing for Jesus Christ is deeply disturbing to Spirit-filled Christians. We want all people everywhere to worship the one true God, and missions is the means by which we seek to bring it about.
2. Second, the Holy Spirit *plants in the minds of believers a compassion for people who are perishing*. You find Christians looking at the world with burning hearts whenever the Spirit is freely at work. God's concern for lost sinners becomes more and more the burden of Spirit-filled believers. They look for new and better ways to communicate the gospel to people everywhere. That is why whenever the church experiences revival, renewed interest is shown in evangelism and missions.
3. Third, the Holy Spirit *builds faith in God's promise that the proclamation of the gospel will not be in vain*. Without that faith, evangelizing the world is an

impossible dream. The promise that the Word of God will not return to him empty (Isaiah 5:11) takes hold of us with Spirit-given faith, and we look for ways to act on God's promise.

4. Fourth, the Holy Spirit *creates in the believer the willingness to obey Christ's missionary command*. Spirit-generated obedience can take you to the ends of the earth and cause you to endure the most awful conditions.

Men and women risk death for the honor and freedom of their country in times of war. Why is it that so few Christians will risk their health and lives for the honor and kingdom of Christ? Pray that the Holy Spirit will plant within us and many others a *willingness* to do the will of God in missions at whatever cost.

5. Fifth, the Holy Spirit *breaks down our social and racial prejudices and makes us love people who are different and welcome them into the kingdom of Jesus Christ*. The book of Acts tells us a great deal about the social and racial prejudices among the first believers. All the missionary witness of the church up to Acts 10 was limited to people who belonged to the broader Jewish community. The city of Samaria where Philip evangelized, for example, was not gentile territory, and the Ethiopian whom Phillip met was religiously related to the Jews as a "God-fearer." [Pages 54-55]

### **39. Social and Racial Barriers Are Removed**

In Acts 10, however, we see that the Holy Spirit taught Peter and the church that they had to overcome their prejudices, put an end to separations, and welcome Gentiles into the community of believers. The "gentile Pentecost" described in Acts 10:44-46 changed the character of the church. Church doors were thrown open to everybody from that point on.

The church most needs another "Pentecost" of the kind that happened at Cornelius's home, when social and racial barriers were removed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Racism, tribalism, nationalism, and differences of social class not only keep Christians apart, to our disgrace, but they prevent the spread of the gospel. Emotional appeals and arguments cannot take away prejudices that are rooted deep in the heart and have been there for years. Only the Holy Spirit can! [Pages 55-56]

### **40. God Sustains Us**

The Spirit sustained the Lord Jesus all the way to Calvary, and he will sustain us in every situation. [Page 60]

## Chapter 8 The Missionary Methods of the Apostle Paul

### 41. The Spoken Word the Primary Means

The primary method that the apostle Paul used to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ was by word of mouth. Paul believed that the spoken word is the primary way that the Holy Spirit inspires faith in the hearts of those who hear. Romans 10:17 sums up what the apostle believed about this: “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard though the word of Christ.” [Page 61]

### 42. Paul Equipped Believers for Ministry

Paul knew that the Holy Spirit gave spiritual gifts to believers for the welfare and ministry of the church (1 Corinthians 12-14). Therefore, Paul prepared local people to teach, preach, minister to the poor, deal with problems, and govern the affairs of the church according to the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit distributed among believers. They were not dependent on Christians from outside for finances, vital church ministries, or leaders. This method of equipping local leaders and trusting the Holy Spirit to instruct, empower, and guide them, continues to be a vital key to successful mission. [Page 65]

### 43. Conversion Was Followed by Service, and Missions Involved Everybody

Paul enlisted a wide circle of co-workers, “lay” men and women, in the planting of churches where believers could gather for worship, fellowship, instruction, and service to persons in need. Missionaries today can learn a great deal about *how* the early apostles passed on their own zeal for missions to others by examining Romans 16. Paul mentions a great number of his “fellow workers” by name, both men and women. We find a key to the early spread of the gospel in this list of workers: *conversion was followed by service, and missions involved everybody*. [Page 66]

44.  
J. H. Bavinck was a Dutch mission scholar and a former missionary to Indonesia. Bavinck was impressed by the repeated references in the book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul to the role played by lay preachers. Bavinck wrote,

“We gain the impression that an intense role was played in the missionary activity of the early church by many men and women who held no other office than that of a believer. To the extent that these lay preachers were on their own, they were in danger of becoming involved in all sorts of confusion, and as a matter of fact this is just what happened. It is however, the great strength of Paul that he did not suppress this spontaneous spreading of the gospel, but utilized and organized it instead.” (*An Introduction to the Science of Missions*, 40) [Page 66]

## **45. Churches Who Are Agents of Transformation**

The world needs churches whose members are agents of transformation in every area of life. Multitudes need to hear that *Christ is Savior and He is Lord!* Churches must teach the whole Word of God and a kingdom perspective on life. Christians should learn in the churches about the kingdom of truth and righteousness in which Christ reigns and about their responsibility to bear witness to truth and righteousness in the community, the markets, and the centers of power. *Such churches are the only hope of the world!* [Pages 67-68]

## **Chapter 9 The Gospel and Other Religions**

### **46. Chapter One of Romans**

There is no place in the Bible where the subject of the gospel and other religions is more clearly treated than in the first chapter of Romans. Paul begins by describing the gospel as a message from God. It is a message revealed in the Holy Scriptures, centered in Jesus Christ the Son of God, and intended to be proclaimed to people everywhere, calling them to obey God by believing in Jesus Christ. This gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written [in the Old Testament]: “The righteous will live by faith.” (Romans 1:16-17) Messengers of the gospel must preach it everywhere, to people of all nations, races, tribes, and social classes. All who believe it become the children of God. God loves them and declares them “holy” in Christ.

### **47. The Full Gospel of Christ**

...missions remain necessary. Followers of other religions must not be left with only small pieces of truth. Christians must go and tell them the full gospel of Jesus Christ and invite them to leave their old gods and worship the one true God alone. [Page 76]

## **Chapter 10. The Uniqueness and Finality of Jesus Christ**

### **48. We Are Not Righteous, We Need Christ**

There is a close link in Christ between truth and righteousness. *Truth* means knowing something as it really is. *Righteousness* refers to right moral behavior. The problem for human beings is that by nature we are not righteous. We are sinners.

That is where Jesus provides the solution. We are *made righteous* through Christ’s atonement. Christ bore the punishment for our sin. It was God’s divine plan of redemption that Jesus’ perfect righteousness be credited to all who believe in him. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” [Page 83]



### **49. Christ Alone Is the Way, Truth, and Life**

Thomas asks Jesus, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” (John 14:5-6). Jesus answers, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” The three key words (“way,” “truth,” “life”) have a small word in front of them in the Greek language in which the New Testament was written. This small word indicates that Christ *alone* can be called by these key words. [Page 83]

### **50. Secularism Has No Place for God**

A secular worldview has no place for God or the life to come. It offers no purpose for living beyond personal pleasure and satisfaction. Secularism teaches people to live for themselves and for the moment. Secularists assume that this is the only world there is and that death is the end of everything.

The gospel, on the other hand, provides a completely different worldview. God is at the center of life. The chief goal of human existence is to know God, enjoy his fellowship, and worship him forever. Jesus Christ gives hope of life beyond the grave and a place in heaven with him. [Page 85]

## **Chapter 11 Prayer and Missions**

### **51. Prayer and Missions United**

Samuel M. Zwemer was known in his time as the “apostle to Islam.” He said that prayer and missions are so united that it is impossible to think of one without the other. [Page 87]

### **52. The Lord’s Prayer Is a Missionary Prayer**

Consider the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-10).

Hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven

No prayer is more missionary than this prayer. These petitions *require* missions and evangelism. The person who sincerely prays the Lord’s Prayer hungers to see God praised and worshipped everywhere on earth. Jesus made prayer our most powerful weapon against the kingdom of Satan. By giving us this prayer, Jesus assures us that the gospel will triumph in the end. [Page 89]

### **53. If We Pray, He Will Send**

Jesus said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew

9:37-38). Jesus made it clear that the calling and sending of missionaries is primarily the work of God, for he is the “Lord of the harvest.” Our primary task is to *pray* that he will call and send people of his choosing. We are assured that if we pray, he *will* send people. [Page 89]

#### **54. The Message Spread Rapidly**

Second Thessalonians 3:1-2 is a summary of the request Paul made repeatedly regarding prayer for missions.

Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. [Page 90]

#### **55. 10/40 Window Core Kingdom of Satan**

...we speak of the “10/40 Window,” the areas of the globe between the latitudes of 10 degrees and 40 degrees north of the equator from West Africa to Japan. These are the regions that are the least evangelized and have relatively few churches. A high percentage are poor. These regions are also the centers of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. They represent the core of the kingdom of Satan. [Page 93]

Part 3: Issues in Missions

### **Chapter 12 Ministries of Prayer, Healing, and Exorcism**

#### **56. Preach the Gospel Emphasis**

Paul described his apostolic mission in Romans 15:18-20 by saying that signs and miracles *accompanied* his ministry and were a powerful *witness* to the truth of what he preached. His emphasis, however, was not on the signs and miracles but on the preaching of the gospel. [Page 97]

#### **57. God’s Instrument to Defeat Satan**

From heaven Jesus said to Paul, “I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from *the power of Satan to God*, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (Acts 26:17-18).

Satan has great power, and he does not give up one centimeter of territory without a fight. Paul knew that as a missionary he could be God’s instrument in defeating Satan and setting people free by preaching repentance from idolatry and sin, conversion to Christ as Savior and Lord, and the prospect of radically changed lives through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 26:20). [Page 101]

## **58. Take Seriously Spiritual Warfare**

We need to take seriously everything the Bible teaches about Satan, demons, and spiritual warfare. However, we ought not to probe beyond what the Holy Spirit has revealed in the Bible. Interviewing demons is foolish and dangerous. Nothing they say can be trusted. [Page 103]

## **Chapter 13 Leadership Development for Church Growth**

### **59. Early Missionaries Trained Church Leaders**

The apostles faced the challenge of raising up leaders for young churches in the early days of Christianity. They did not make churches depend on seminaries to give them leaders. Instead, the early missionaries trained local church leaders. Once trained, these leaders did not look to anyone from outside the congregation to provide weekly instruction, the spiritual care of a pastor, and direction in evangelism. They took care of their local congregations and saw them grow. The key to their success lay in training local leaders to carry on the ministry of the gospel in dependence on the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, and the grace of God. [Page 106]

### **60. Need Strong People to Lead Churches**

Christians need to see the broader vision of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Members of the church need to identify with their communities and transform them in terms of biblical values. Costas [Orlando Costas, a Latin American mission scholar] insisted that the growth of churches should lead to the growth of the lordship of Christ over all of life, over all human relationships, and over the natural environment and should inspire church members to continual growth. A key issue in missions is how to develop a sufficient number of effective leaders for the churches that are started. Churches seldom become stronger than the people who lead them. [Page 107]

### **61. People of Prayer**

Spiritual leaders are people of prayer exercising the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their special qualities are these:

*Vision:* Leaders have spiritual “eyes” that let them see what God can do through the church and its ministry.

*Tenacity:* Leaders can be counted on to keep on doing the work of the Lord despite difficulty and opposition.

*Integrity:* Leaders can be trusted morally with money and with the care of people’s souls.

*Excellence:* Leaders want the church to function well in order to please God and serve people’s needs.

*Servanthood:* Leaders do not work for honor and power, but for the welfare of others and the glory of God. [Page 109]

## **62. Church Planters Give Special Training in Leadership**

Church planters must give special training to those who show that they have the spiritual gifts to become leaders. Church planters must pray with them often, work alongside them, patiently explain the goals of ministry, and show them how to serve. They must delegate more and more responsibility without delay to the people whom they have trained. If disappointments come and people fall away, church planters repeat the process until reliable leaders are in place.

The goal is a group of local leaders who (1) are *models* of the faith and virtues of Christ in their lives, families, and daily activities; (2) *manage* the affairs of the church according to the teachings of the Word of God and for the welfare of the members; and (3) *multiply* in others the qualities that make leaders. [Page 110]

## Chapter 14 The Challenge of the Cities

### **63. Migration of Masses to Cities**

I believe that God is behind the migration of masses of people to the cities because he is creating new opportunities for spreading the gospel among unreached people coming from remote towns and villages. It is our task to take hold of the opportunity and carry out Christ's missionary command. [Page 117]

### **64. Key to World Evangelization**

...the massive migration to the cities around the world may be, in the providence of God, a key to world evangelization. God is drawing people of every race, tribe, and language to places where they can be reached with the gospel through the growth of cities. [Page 117]

### **65. Shortage of Workers in Cities**

Most mission work was traditionally done in rural areas. That made sense in the past because most people lived in rural communities. Now the biggest challenge is in the cities, but there we find a shortage of workers. Many missionaries are so disturbed by the noise and traffic in cities, the pollution, social problems, crime, and crowded housing, that they prefer working in rural areas. Unreached villages certainly need to hear the gospel. Yet, more attention must be given to the masses of unsaved and unchurched people in cities. [Pages 118-119]

### **66. Go to the Growing Cities**

I plead with all Christians who are concerned about doing the will of God and reaching lost people for Christ to consider the challenge of the growing cities of the world. A movement so large must have a divine purpose behind it and demands our response. [Page 119]

## **Chapter 15 Missions by Word and Deed**

### **67. Missions by Word and Deed**

Missions by word and deed makes a powerful witness to Jesus Christ. It has opened up homes, towns, and nations to the gospel. It follows the example of Jesus himself, who “went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness” (Matthew 9:35).

[Page 124]

### **68. Biblical Gospel, the Only Solution**

Liberation Theology tried to solve the problem of oppression and injustice, but the biblical gospel of the kingdom of God offers the only genuine solution. [Page 125]

### **69. Oppressors Don’t Want the Gospel**

Missions from the perspective of the kingdom regards any person or political or economic system that oppresses human beings as an enemy of Christ and his kingdom. To oppress a human being is to sin against God in whose image people are made.

It is no surprise that oppressors do not want the gospel to spread. Oppressors are the enemies of Christian missions because they know that the Word of God exposes their evil ways and threatens the kingdom of Satan that they represent. People whom Christ has freed from the bondage of sin and death do not submit easily to oppression imposed by men. [Page 126]

### **70. Life of the Kingdom**

The life of the kingdom is a life of truth, righteousness, mercy, and love. This life is proclaimed with words and demonstrated by deeds. The gospel of the kingdom embraces everything. It calls for the transformation of the heart and all of life. It governs how we live as individuals, families, and communities. It teaches us to show mercy to the poor, defend the oppressed, and seek reconciliation between hostile sides.

We realize how great and glorious the task of Christian missions is when we see the big picture of the gospel of the kingdom. The kingdom comes by missions into lives and places it had not come before. The righteousness of the kingdom is the hope of the world. [Page 127]

## **Chapter 16. Pastors, Evangelism, and Missions**

### **71. Leadership Needed to Press Forward**

Years ago, the missionary leader John R. Mott spoke about the key role that local pastors play in world missions.

The secret of enabling the church to press forward in the non-Christian world is one of leadership. The people do not go beyond their leaders in knowledge and zeal, nor surpass them in consecration and sacrifice. The Christian pastor... holds the divinely appointed office for inspiring and guiding the thought and activities of the church. By virtue of his position he can be a mighty force in the world's evangelization. (*The Pastor and Modern Missions*, 3) [Page 131]

## **72. Be Evangelistic in Character**

Paul said to the young pastor Timothy that he should do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:5), and by so doing carry out all the duties of his ministry. What did Paul mean by this? Did he mean that Timothy had two jobs, first to be a pastor and second to be an evangelist? Not at all!

The Bible scholar William Hendriksen pointed out in his *New Testament Commentary on I-II Timothy and Titus*, that in the Greek text there is no definite article before the word *evangelist*. This means, says Hendriksen, that Paul did not intend to give Timothy a "second job." Paul intended to emphasize for Timothy *the evangelistic character of all pastoral duties*.

When Paul said, "Do the work of an evangelist," he was saying, Timothy, your pastoral work should be *evangelistic in character wherever you go and whatever you do. You are a pastor-evangelist, which means you are never a pastor without being an evangelist at the same time*. All pastors are called like Timothy to care for their congregations (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-4), seek the lost (Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:3-7), and protect believers from false teachers (Acts 20:29-31). [Page 136]

## **Chapter 17 Financial Support for Missions**

### **73. Must Be People of Faith**

People in missions engage in an enterprise so great and difficult that it can be accomplished only by the power and will of God. Missionaries and those who support them, therefore, must be people of faith. Their faith will grow as they obey Christ's command, "Go and make disciples!"

Remember that the final goal of missions is that Christ will be known and worshipped everywhere. Those who do the work of missions in ways that honor Christ can be sure that he will supply their needs. [Page 145]

## **Chapter 18 The Ethics of Evangelism and Missions**

### **74. Honor the Lord and Obey His Will**

At a meeting of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism in Dallas, Texas, in 1985, [Moishe] Rosen proposed the following ethical guidelines for evangelists:

- The gospel should be proclaimed in ways that please God by conforming to his Word and not in ways designed to please the hearers.
- Gospel proclamation should not involve any kind of deception.
- Any suggestion that greed motivates the evangelist is entirely unacceptable.
- All the glory should be to God in evangelism, and no glory should be given to the proclaimers.
- Godly evangelists do not demand their rights, but their principal concern is the welfare of their hearers.
- Godly evangelism is gentle and does not use force of any kind.
- Evangelism of the kind that pleases God comes from sincere love toward those it seeks to win to Christ.
- The basis of true evangelism is love for our neighbors, that is, seeking after their highest good.

Rosen says that in Christian evangelism the end never justifies the means. We must be gentle in the way we proclaim 'spiritual information so powerful that it can make eternal changes in the hearts and lives of our hearers. Our faith is in a sovereign God whose message of salvation we proclaim. Therefore, we avoid methods of persuasion that show disrespect for 'men and women. We regard our hearers as people created in the image of God, and ultimately we are responsible to him for their decisions and actions.

The basic motive for ethical conduct in evangelism is not to avoid criticism but to honor the Lord and obey his will. Opposition is not going to disappear even though missionaries and congregations speak and act with delicate care. The Spirit of God alone can bring conviction and repentance. All success depends on the Spirit. [Pages 151-152]

## **Chapter 19 Missions and Unity Among Christians**

### **75. End Divisions Among Christians**

A vital part of the work of missionaries, in view of what Christ taught and prayed for, ought to be bringing an end to conflicts and divisions between Christians. The apostle Paul made it part of his work (1 Corinthians 3:1-9), and the need is equally great now.

Missionaries must be peacemakers in every sense of the word. They must make it clear when they preach the gospel that all people, races, tribes, and castes have one Creator. God the Creator made everyone in his image (Genesis 1:26-27). The great tragedy of the human race is that all have sinned and earned for themselves the judgment of God (Genesis 3:16-19; Romans 3:23; 6:23). That is how hostilities, conflicts, and divisions began. First there was separation from God, and then followed divisions between people.

God is reconciling sinners to himself, however, through the saving work of Jesus Christ and by the preaching of the gospel (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). All we who by faith are joined to Christ form one body of redeemed and reconciled people. This gospel of reconciliation through Christ is our message to the world. We must proclaim it by our actions as well as our words. [Page 157]

## **76. Building and Maintaining Unity**

... we must accept the fact that missionaries and other church leaders have to live with high levels of tension among the people they serve. Conflicts are unavoidable. Along with the call to leadership, we accept the responsibility of dealing with differences and misunderstandings, and in some cases with very difficult people.

Second, we must work hard in every situation in which we minister to build and maintain a network of people with whom we are in regular contact. New missionaries especially should make serious efforts to become acquainted with a large number of local people and earn their confidence.

Communication between leaders, workers, and regular members is essential. Conflicts that develop can be resolved more easily if a strong network of trust and communication is already established.

Third, as leaders we should use every opportunity to emphasize the beliefs, values, and spiritual unity that bind us together with other Christians. We can promote peace and reconciliation by our writing, teaching, and casual conversation, and stop the spread of misunderstanding and conflict. We can remind Christians of what the Bible teaches on subjects where there are differences of opinion. We encourage them in this way to examine the differences by the light of eternal truth instead of merely by their traditions and prejudices.

Fourth, as peacemakers we must not run away from serious conflicts when they occur. We should do our best to resolve them and bring reconciliation. The process of reconciliation involves looking closely at (1) the reasons behind the conflicts; (2) what the parties in the conflict are really seeking; (3) who may have been injured and what were the causes of the offense; and (4) what influences from outside may have con-



tributed to the conflict. People are required to repent, ask for forgiveness, and seek reconciliation when they have spoken or acted wrongly.

Fifth, if one side or the other says that the conflict is doctrinal and theological, be very careful. If indeed it is a matter of theology, it must be examined carefully in the light of the Bible. False doctrines may not be permitted. Be aware that people who are involved in a conflict may try to make it appear to be a conflict over doctrine in order to strengthen their own side. The real cause may not be theological at all, but a struggle for power or a difference of opinion over some practical matter.

Keep in mind that conflicts are usually very complicated. Do not try to find a single, simple solution, because that will only lead to more difficulties later on. Remember that there is seldom a “perfect” solution that satisfies everybody. Perfect solutions are found only in heaven. Strive for unity with patience and love in matters that do not affect sound doctrine.

Building and maintaining unity among believers is not an easy task. It is especially difficult in intercultural missions where misunderstandings so easily arise over cultural differences. Remember that Satan is a deceiver and a divider, and he continually tries to reduce the power of Christian testimony. We must pray that unity among believers be established and maintained for the welfare of the church and the advancement of missions. [Pages 161-163]

## **Chapter 20 Preparing to Become a Missionary**

### **77. Becoming Involved With All Kinds of People**

Unfortunately, some Christians like books and privacy more than they love people. They want to serve the Lord, but they do not want to get close to people. Mission work, however, requires becoming involved with all kinds of people and loving them for the sake of Christ. [Page 167]

### **78. Missions Receives Its Directions from Scripture**

We will not fulfill the calling of God in missions unless we have a basic understanding of God’s saving purpose for the world as revealed in the Bible. Missions receives its inspiration and direction from the Scriptures. Missionaries must continually study the Bible, or they may be carried away by ideas that come in the name of “missions” but are for the most part false. [Page 168]