

Missions Emphasis 2016
“Missions Matters”
Lesson 1
Why does missions matter?
1 Samuel 17

Today marks the beginning of our build up to our mission conference. The theme this year is going to be “Missions Matters” and the question I want you to be asking yourself throughout these next four weeks is, “Does it matter to me?” This is the time that we have set aside to re-examine our biblical responsibility to world evangelization. But why do we do this? Because the church that does not regularly and consistently involve itself in world evangelization is not a scriptural New Testament church. The Great Commission that Jesus gave to His church makes this very clear in **Matthew 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.”** Amen.

This morning I want us to look at an Old Testament story that will help illustrate why missions should matter to us. Let’s read 1 Samuel 17:1-51.

At this time, the nation of Israel is in disarray. Their king, Saul, has disobeyed the Lord and has been rejected as king by God. David, unbeknownst to Saul at the time, has been anointed in his place. Seeing the inward turmoil of the people of God, Satan inspires their enemies, the Philistines, to engage in war against them. It is a great story that we are all familiar with and one that is a great picture in typology of our task of world evangelization.

1. There was a great valley between the Israelites and the Philistines, vs. 3. A valley is the distance between two mountains or hills. In order to get from one peak to another you must cross through the valley.

A. The valley is a type of the world filled with oppression, depression and death, with little hope. There are government systems and religions systems that are oppressing people and keeping them from the truth.

1. Today the world contains a population of approximately 7.4 billion people. People that will spend eternity in either heaven or hell. Out of these 7.4 billion people, 4.1% claim to be Evangelical Christians or born again Christians – that equals to 303,400,000 Christians in this world. Less than the total population of the United States.
2. This valley of unbelievers is becoming greater and greater every year. For example, just consider the United States
 - a. 457 births an hour; 10959 a day
 - b. 274 deaths an hour; 6575 a day
 - c. That is a 183 person increase every hour and 4384 person increase a day
 - d. With immigration the United States is growing by 3.3 million people a year.
3. The world is also growing by the hour.
 - a. 15,300 births an hour; 367,200 a day
 - b. 6420 deaths an hour; 154,080 a day
 - c. Our world is increasing in populations at a present rate of 78 million people per year.
4. Look at some of the major countries in the world today that are mainly without the Gospel. The stats of those that claim to be Christians include all denominations of Christianity – Catholic/Orthodox, Protestant and Evangelical.
 - a. China – 1.362 billion – 5% claim to be Christian
 - b. India – 1.252 billion – 2.3% claim to be Christian
 - c. Indonesia -- 256 million – 8.8 % claim to be Christian
 - d. Brazil -- 204 million – 90% claim to be Christian
 - e. Pakistan – 199 million – 1.6 % claim to be Christian

- f. Nigeria – 182 million – 50% claim to be Christian
- g. Bangladesh – 169 million -- 0.7% claim to be Christian
- h. Russia – 146 million – 77% claim to be Christian
- i. Japan – 127 million – less than ½ of 1% claim to be Christian of any kind

B. We need a vision of how we are going to reach our world (the valley) for Christ. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint...” Meaning that when there is no one preaching the Gospel, the world moves further and further away from God.

Question: Is it possible to get the Gospel into all the world?

- 1. When President John F. Kennedy was shot in 1963, the news of this event reached all of the known world in two weeks.
- 2. When the space shuttle Challenger exploded in January, 1986, the news of the event went around the world in 45 minutes.
- 3. When something significant happens today, with Facebook and news organizations, the news is spread around the world in a matter of minutes and sometimes even seconds.
- 4. Jesus Christ died on the cross for man’s sin nearly 2000 years ago and still some do not know – but they can if we will do our part.

C. This valley (world) is full of death – every second almost 2 people die and 95.9% of them are headed to an eternity without Christ in hell.

D. This valley of the world we are facing is full of fear.

- 1. The Israelites in our test were paralyzed by fear of Goliath.
- 2. The fear of the enemy was greater than their faith.
- 3. Satan tries to use fear to stop us from trying to get the Gospel into all the world. We need to remember that between us and every victory there is a valley, but God will protect us and provide for us to reach the other side. **Psalm 23:4** says, **“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort**

me.”

2. There is a great Giant, vs. 4-11.

A. Instead of Israel focusing in on their God, they focused in on their enemy and this always means defeat. Yes, we need to know who our enemy is, but our focus should always be on God. We need to ask ourselves, “How big is our faith”? If our enemy is bigger than our faith then defeat is the only option. But **1 John 4:4** says, **“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.**

B. Satan is our great giant that opposes us in our task of getting the Gospel into all the world. **1 Peter 5:8** says, **“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”**

3. There was one who had great faith, vs. 12-47.

A. What were the Philistines doing? They sent out their champion, their very own giant to do their fighting.

1. Feeling confident in their giant, the Philistines were not afraid. The stakes were high – bondage and slaves for life – but they did have a giant!
2. Every man that is without Christ is in bondage to sin and needs to be delivered or freed. **Romans 6:16**, **“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether off sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?”**

B. What were the Israelites doing? If you read verse 19, you would think that they were engaged in battle against the Philistines. But if you read down to verse 24, you will find out that they were hiding from Goliath.

1. They were talking about engaging in the battle, but no one had. From their words you would think there was fighting going on, but that was not true.
2. Just talking about getting the Gospel into all the world, we must engage the world with the Gospel.
3. The army of Israel was organized and equipped for battle, but they were not doing anything.

C. What was David doing?

1. He was taking care of his present responsibilities, vs. 14-15.
2. He was obedient to his father in small matters, vs. 17. Therefore, God chose to use him in a greater matter. **Matthew 25:23** is a good example of this. **“His lord said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”**
3. David was moved by the present crisis, vs. 29. **“Is there not a cause?”**

D. What did David do?

1. He considered the cause more important than his own personal well-being, vs. 32-39.
2. He volunteered to go and fight, vs. 32.
3. David’s confidence for victory was not in himself but in the Lord, vs 37, 45-47.
4. David slew the giant because of his faith and courage in the Lord, vs. 48-51.

The only way we are going to get the Gospel into all the world is if we have a faith in our great God. We can either look at the great obstacles this world throws at us, like the nation of Israel focused in on Goliath. Or, we can focus in on our great God who has overcome this world. Which one we focus in on, will determine what we do to reach our

world. It will determine what we give this next year to faith promise missions. It will determine whether or not our missions conference will be a success. **Missions matters to God, the question we need to ask ourselves today is does it matter to us?**

Missions Emphasis 2016
“Missions Matters”
Lesson 2
Does missions matter to you?
Matthew 28:18-20

In last week's lesson, we talked about “Why mission's matters”. We learned that missions matters because our world needs to be evangelized. The population of our world is growing bigger and bigger and a good percentage of them have never heard a clear presentation of the Gospel. This week we want to talk about, “Does mission's matter to you?” And, why should it matter to you if you are a Christian?

When Hudson Taylor was director of the China Inland Mission, he often interviewed candidates for the mission field. On one occasion, he met with a group of applicants to determine their motivations for service. "And why do you wish to go as a foreign missionary?" he asked one. "I want to go because Christ has commanded us to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," was the reply. Another said, "I want to go because millions are perishing without Christ." Others gave different answers. Then Hudson Taylor said, "All of these motives, however good, will fail you in times of testing, trials, tribulations, and possible death. There is but one motive that will sustain you in trial and testing; namely, the love of Christ".

Why should missions matter to us?

1. Because it matters to God.

God created a big world and He wants the whole world to know about Him.

A. Our earth is 197 million square miles divided into 196 countries with over 6500 languages spoken – 2000 of them by 1000 people or less.

B. Even though our world is so big and so diverse, it is still shrinking because of several reasons.

1. Globalization, which began with the European colonization of the Western Hemisphere and Africa. This accelerated following World War 2, when a great number of American soldiers were exposed to foreign countries. This had a great impact on them and it led to international business and international missions. Satellites and the internet have made communication with the whole world instantaneous and an everyday experience. Jets have made travel to foreign countries only take hours whereas it used to take a month or two by boat. With the way communication and travel works today, almost no country or culture can remain isolated. The stock markets in China, Australia, London and around the world are affected by what happens on Wall Street and visa—versa. At one time, seeing a foreigner was something unique, but today they are our neighbors.
2. Urbanization has also brought enormous population shifts from rural areas to the city. Today there are many mega-cities around the world that have populations of over 10 million with Tokyo, Japan being the largest with 33.2 million people.

C. We need to understand that God, in His great plan, has organized the world this way so that His Gospel can be easier spread.

1. Remember that there are 7.4 billion people in this world that are either going to spend eternity in heaven or hell. Statistics say that 108 billion people have lived on this earth since time began. (<http://waitbutwhy.com/2015/03/7-3-billion-people-one-building.html>) If we keep the same rate of Christians today, 4.1%, throughout all of history then out of the 108 billion people throughout history, only approximately 4.4 billion have received Christ. Those are not good statistics!
2. The world is growing by 78 million per year. At our present rate of evangelism, only about 10 in every hundred are going to hear the

Gospel. And less than 1 in every hundred are going to repent and come to Christ. Are you beginning to see the enormity of the task that we have been called to do?

3. While there is no way to determine how many true believers there are in this world – only God knows the heart – but Jesus did describe society as a whole to us. In Matthew 7:13-14, He said all people, all of society has a choice, they can take the narrow road that leads to heaven and eternal life, or they can take the broad road that leads to hell. Sadly to say, most people are choosing the broad road? Even sadder is the fact that many of those people have never heard about the narrow road.
4. There are an estimated 350,000 churches in the US alone – this is all “Christian” denominations with a membership of about 56 million people.

http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast_facts.html#numcong

The population of the US is over 320 million and over half the churches have an attendance of 75 people or less. As you can see, we have a lot of work to do in our own country. Our country has become a mission field!

Why should missions matter to us?

2. Because God still values the soul of man.

Mark 8:36-37, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

A. Jesus is saying that all of the world plus its wealth is not equal to the value of one soul.

B. There is no way for man to escape the condemnation and wrath of sin, except through the way of salvation that God has provided.

Hebrews 2:3 says, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*?”

C. The problem is that all of mankind does not know about the salvation that God has provided for them. **2 Timothy 2:3-4**, “For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Romans 10:14-15, “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?¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

D. The problem is what awaits every man and woman who never repent and turn to Christ. **Revelation 20:11-15**, “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Why should missions matter to us?

3. Because God commanded it to matter.

Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15

A. Many of us have been in the military and understand what a command is. It is an order we must obey without question or suffer disciplinary action if we do not comply.

B. The ones who suffer when Christians do not obey the command to go into all the world to preach the Gospel is that millions of people never hear the Gospel and die without ever hearing a clear presentation of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Missions matters to God, the question that we need to ask ourselves is does it matter to us?

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Lesson 3
Is missions worth the cost?
Luke 14:28-33

In our last two lessons we have talked about, “Why does missions matter” and “Does missions matter to you”? In our text today, we are instructed to count the cost. That is what we are asking each of you to do during our mission’s conference. To count the cost and see if missions is worth it for you to get involved. You see, salvation is free, but it costs to get the message of salvation into all the world. So what does world evangelization cost?

1. The cost of personnel.

A. The first prerequisite is people. **Isaiah 6:8, “Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying; “Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?”** The most frequent reason that I hear for people not entering the ministry is **not being called**. But I do not believe this. I cannot believe that a God who gave His only Son to die on the cross for the sin of the whole world, would not in turn, call men and women to take the message to the world. I do not believe the problem is that God is not calling, but the problem is we are not hearing and obeying.

James Gilmore, when asked about his call to missionary work said; I believe the world is the harvest field, thus I go at God’s command and am not waiting for a call. My going forth is a matter of obedience. I have failed to discover any reason why I should stay at home.

C.T. Studd, missionary to Central Africa, became a missionary largely because of the statement of an Atheist, who he had witnessed to. The Atheist said: “If you really believed what you are telling me, you would use every penny at your disposal and your entire life to get the message around the world.” C.T. Studd gave away his fortune and became a missionary at age 25.

B. The four different calls:

1. The call from heaven: Galatians 1:15-16 – God spoke to Paul in this way but He never said that He would speak to everyone the same way. Paul did not have the same kind of call as did John the Baptist, but they were still both called.
2. The call from Hell: Luke 16:23-24; 27-28 – The people in hell do not care whether you have a college degree or not, they just want you to give the gospel to their loved ones.
3. The call of the Heathen: Acts 16:9 – Many are searching for the truth and need someone to come and tell them.
4. The call of the Heart: Isaiah 6:8 – When Isaiah heard that God was looking for someone to send to the nation of Israel, it broke his heart and he volunteered to go. I have never met anyone, whose heart was right, that God turned down to serve Him.

C. Who will God use?

1. The uneducated – Acts 4:13
2. The unlikely
 - a. Moses was a plain, simple man who stuttered, but God used him.
 - b. Peter was a cursing, foul mouth sinner, but God changed him and used him.
 - c. George Whitfield was cross-eyed, but God used him.
 - d. This list could go on and on.
3. The unimportant – 1 Corinthians 1:26-29
4. As Hannah dedicated Samuel to the Lord, we should dedicate our children to be used as God sees fit – 1 Samuel 1:24-28

Question: How many of you would be happy if your children surrendered to be missionaries in a foreign country?

D. How will God provide?

1. God promises us the provision of His presence – Matthew 28:20
2. God promises us the provision of our physical needs – Philippians 4:19. Notice that Paul mentions this after he was thanking the church in Philippi for supporting him in his church planting

activities. Also see Luke 10:3-12.

a. Notice in Luke 10:7 (“as they give”), that we are to be the means of the missionaries provisions.

3. God promises peace in the midst of our storms – John 14:27. If we are serving God by going or giving, He will give us His peace.

2. The cost of Persistence: Luke 9:62

A. The missionary must be persistent if he is to do the work God has called him to do.

1. Out of every 100 who surrenders to be a missionary, only 10 will ever graduate from Bible College and only 1 will make it to the mission field.

2. Ten Future Missionaries:

Ten future missionaries heard God’s call divine.

One was so afraid, that left only nine.

Nine future missionaries, they could hardly wait.

One was needed by mother, that left only eight.

Eight future missionaries to point the way to heaven.

One started making money, that left only seven.

Seven future missionaries, if only each one sticks.

One was married wrongly, that left only six.

Six future missionaries, for the Lord alive.

One preferred the homeland, that left only five.

Five future missionaries, wait an open door.

One grew tired of waiting, that left only four.

Four future missionaries, bound for eternity.

One no longer willing, that left only three.

Three future missionaries, for the need so few.

One the devil devoured, that left only two.

Two future missionaries, a daughter and a son.

One developed ulcers, that left only one.

One future missionary, that the Lord for him.

He refused to ever let the vision dim.

Body, soul and spirit, he to God did yield.

Now for years he's labored on the foreign field.
God in heaven rejoices, "Blessed child of mine!
You have done my will, but what about the other nine?"

3. We need to make a commitment to pray for those training at Bible college and seminary. Pray that they will follow through with their commitment they made to God to be missionaries.

B. We must be persistent.

1. Persistent in our giving. The missionary is dependent upon our giving to support him or her on the foreign field. The missionary cannot stop his work because you need your mission's money for something else.
 - a. Did you know that a missionaries support normally fluctuates by \$1500 each month because people are not faithful in their mission's giving?
 - b. How would you be affected if your pay fluctuated that much each month?
 2. We must be persistent in our praying. Luke 18:1; Mark 11:24; Luke 10:2
 3. Just as Jesus prayed for His disciples/apostles, so should we pray for our missionaries. Luke 22:31-32; John 17:9, 15-20
- A really good web site for mission's stats to help with the lesson:
<http://www.thetravelingteam.org/stats/>

Years ago, statistics said that for every \$50 given to missions, one soul, on the average, is saved.

Jesus said that the cost of one soul is worth more than the good off the whole world in Mark 8:36. The question we need to ask ourselves is: How much do we value the souls of men? What cost are we willing to pay to get the Gospel to them? And how many souls will be in heaven because we gave to Faith Promise Missions?

Missions Emphasis 2016

“Missions Matters”

Lesson 4

Is there joy in missions?

Psalms 126:5-6

In our previous lessons, we have talked about, Why does missions matter? Does missions matter to you? And Is missions worth the cost? Today we are going to look at, Is there joy in missions. With the enormity of our task; with the huge cost involved; with the sacrifice that it takes, is there joy?

When studying missions throughout the Bible, you will find many things: triumphs, trials, testing, persecution, faith, giving, receiving and many, many more. But, through all of these things, whether good or bad, one thing can always be found and that is joy. No matter what happens or what situation you are in, as we will see today, there is always joy when one is doing the Lord's work in evangelizing the world. The cost that we endure to get the Gospel out is always worth it, because of the joy involved.

1. There is joy in giving – “Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy”.

A. Hannah had joy in giving her son back to the Lord – 1 Samuel 1:9-28.

1. She made a vow to the Lord that if He would give her a son that she would give him back to Him.
2. She kept that vow and after the child was weaned she gave him back to the Lord and experienced joy.
3. She expressed this joy in a song – 1 Samuel 2:1-10
4. There is always joy in doing the will of the Lord

B. The Macedonians had joy in giving – 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

1. They were in a great trial of affliction, yet they still had an abundance of joy.

2. They were in deep poverty, yet they still gave liberally.
3. Warren Wiersbe said, **“Let a computer figure this equation out, Great affliction + deep poverty + God’s grace = abundant joy and abounding liberality!”**
4. When you have experienced the joy of giving in your life, you will not use difficult circumstances as an excuse for not giving.

C. We can have joy in giving:

1. Our money so that others can go and spread the gospel.
2. Our time in telling others around us about the One who died for them
3. Our time by praying for our missionaries.
 - a. Pray for their health
 - b. Pray for their protection
 - c. Pray for their financial needs to be met
 - d. Pray that they won’t get discouraged
 - e. Pray for fruit for their labor
 - f. Pray for nationals to be trained to do the work of the ministry
 - g. Read their prayer letters so that you can pray for specific personal and ministry needs
 - h. Pray that they would love the people God has called them to
 - i. Pray that they won’t get discouraged when the people they have invested their lives into let them down
 - j. Pray that they will stay focused on God and that they will find their joy in Him

During the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya in 1960, missionaries Matt and Lora Higgins were returning one night to Nairobi through the heart of Mau Mau territory, where Kenyans and missionaries alike had been killed and dismembered. Seventeen miles outside of Nairobi their Land Rover stopped. Higgins tried to repair the car in the dark, but could not restart it. They spent the night in the car, but claimed Psalm 4:8: "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." In the morning they were able to repair the car.

A few weeks later the Higgenses returned to America on furlough. They reported that the night before they left Nairobi, a local pastor had visited them. He told how a member of the Mau Mau had confessed that he and three others had crept up to the car to kill the Higgenses, but when they saw the sixteen men surrounding the car, the Mau Mau left in fear.

"Sixteen men?" Higgens responded. "I don't know what you mean!"

While they were on furlough a friend, Clay Brent, asked the Higgenses if they have been in any danger recently. Higgens asked, "Why?" Then Clay said that on March 23, God had placed a heavy prayer burden on his heart. He called the men of the church, and sixteen of them met together and prayed until the burden lifted. Did God send sixteen angels to represent those men and enforce their prayers?

4. We can have joy in giving ourselves by surrendering our lives to be missionaries.

2. There is joy in going

A. Jesus never regretted coming down to this earth and giving His life for the sins of the world because of the joy that awaited Him – Hebrews 12:2

1. He counted the value of a soul more valuable than the suffering that He would have to endure on the cross – Isaiah 53:4-5

B. Paul had joy in being a missionary

1. He had joy in winning souls – Philippians 4:1
2. He had joy in starting churches – Philippians 1:1-2; Ephesians 1:1-2; Colossians 1:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2
3. He even had joy in suffering for the cause of Christ – 2 Corinthians 11:23-30; Acts 16:25

C. Think about the missionaries who have come to our church that have served on the mission field for many years. They are always longing to go back, even with all the struggles they face. They have joy in serving God in a foreign country.

1. There is a joy in going to another country, to another people, with another language and telling them about the God who loves them and sent His Son to die for them so that they might have everlasting life.
2. This joy only comes from God.

3. There is joy in getting

- A. After we give or after we go, there is always going to be the joy of getting our rewards.
 1. Our reward is going to be the souls that have been saved as the result of our giving and going. **“Bringing his sheaves with him.” Psalm 126:6b**
 2. Our reward is going to be the crown of rejoicing that we will receive for the souls won to Christ by our giving and going – 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20
 3. Our reward is going to be the satisfaction of knowing that we followed our Lord’s command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ – Mark 16:15
- B. There will be no joy in heaven for those who did not do anything – 1 Corinthians 3:15

Missions truly matters. Why? Because our joy is dependent on whether or not we get involved in getting the Gospel into all the world. Are you experiencing joy because of your involvement in missions?