

MR. D'S NOTES ON MISSIONS



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Introduction to the book:

The thoughts contained in this book grow out of a God given desire to see God's people understand His program and their current involvement, or lack of involvement in it.

Christianity defined by even the most liberal of qualifications is a dying group of people. The population explosion is leaving Christianity in the ranks of "PASSING AWAY!" As a living organism we cannot be classed with the religions of the world, however the various organizations are outgrowing us by leaps and bounds.

I shared the Word in a semi-metropolitan church in California a few years ago. The church was running about 50-75 and feeling they were doing well, yet on the corner a block to the north a new church building was under construction and two blocks to the south was also a new building. Not small buildings, but very large buildings! Not belonging to main line denominations - not to evangelistic churches but to major cults. The question naturally is, "Why?" Why are the cults passing us by in large numbers when we have the truth!

It is plain to see - they believe what they believe! They aren't so tied up in themselves that they can't sacrifice a little for what they believe. They are actually willing to tell others of their belief!

It was demonstrated for us by the Communist Party, that the key is belief, and action upon that belief. It was reported many years ago that the Communist Party demanded total acceptance of beliefs, total dedication to those beliefs, total discipline and total service. About the same time it was reported that the average Communist Party member in America contributed about 38% of their income to Party work.

TOTAL ACCEPTANCE

TOTAL DEDICATION

TOTAL DISCIPLINE

TOTAL SERVICE

It would not take too long for the average Christian with a concordance to come up with a number of Scriptural references to show that these are Biblical principles that the Communists have been using for years.

The Communist Party started in the early 1900's with only a handful of adherents and today they control a third of the world's population.

It is interesting to see the communist view of the Christian community many years ago, and we might add it is doubtful that their view has changed over the years. "The Gospel is a much more powerful weapon for the renewal of society than is our Marxist philosophy. All the same, it is we who will finally beat you. we are only a handful and you Christians are numbered by the millions. But, if you remember the story of Gideon and his 300 companions you will understand why I am right. We communists do not play with words. We are realists...we know how to obtain our objectives. Of our salaries and wages we keep only what is strictly necessary and we give up the rest for propaganda purposes. We also consecrate all our free time and part of our holidays. You however give only a little time and hardly any money to spread the Gospel of Christ."

This article ran in a French Communist newspaper when the party was just trying it's wings, and time has born the paper's prophecy out to a large extent.

If believers across our land would really commit themselves to the Lord and His service then we could see the tide turn. There are multitudes in this country that have accepted the Christ of the cross, however those that have accepted the cross of Christ are much more limited in number!

There may be a shade of truth in what one preacher said years ago, "The term we use for seats in our churches is pew. This term is derived from the dead flesh sitting in them." Harsh? Yes! However, look around the congregation the next time you are in church. By the expression of faces and lack of excitement might not the Great Physician pronounce some dead?

God has given this author a wide variety of education and experience from a Christian Education teacher that laid some foundational blocks for these thoughts, to a Missions teacher that gave a valid and strong emphasis in missions while I was in college. God has also given me the opportunity of teaching in a Bible Institute and being stretched by the students.

There is no desire to put down the church, for there is much to rejoice about in Christianity today, yet in church after church I see little in the area of organized missionary effort. It is evident that few churches have committed themselves to emphasizing missions on a regular basis.

This is not viewed as an answer book for all the questions that may come to mind. It is to be viewed as an idea book to be used in conjunction with the very talented minds that the Lord has blessed churches with, and it is hoped that good missions programs will be the result!

May this volume lay groundwork for a total, practical and effective missions program in many churches.

INTRODUCTION

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MISSIONS, IMPERATIVE OR OPTION?

On a trip to the Midwest a number of years ago I Left Salem, Oregon at 5:00 AM Wednesday after a hard hard week and 4 hours of sleep. I drove 20 hours and then slept 5 hours in the car before meeting with a group of pastors. That evening I drove 9 hours to Wyoming and slept in the car for 3 hours before driving on to Colo. Springs, Colorado Friday morning. Needing to get back north I returned to Wyoming that afternoon. Now, I was what I call sleepy. SSSOOOO the order of the day as I was driving was coffee - Coke - cookies - chips - Neccos - bread - gum - lifesavers - hamburgers - fries - 7UP - Sprite - and last but not least I spell relief R-O-L-A-I-D-S--.

I had to stay awake! My imperative was STAY AWAKE! -- my option was keeping a settled stomach. As to going to sleep it was imperative that I didn't. As to stomach - it was optional it was uh, oh I'm getting drowsy - look out stomach here it comes. Like the Burger King commercial with the talking stomach years ago, only in my case when I would say I'm sleepy my stomach would say OOOOHHHHHH!!!! NOT AGAIN!

I want to consider missions today in this light. Some pastors when approached about a meeting say OOOOHHHHH!!! NOT AGAIN!

IS MISSIONS AN IMPERATIVE, OR AN OPTION?

Some today say yes the world is lost yet we have "X" many million foreigners in this country that we aren't reaching. Some are saying financially we can't support foreign missions - let's plant and build more churches in America so we have a strong financial base to send missionaries with. Is this not putting evangelism in a wrong light? EVANGELIZE WHEN WE CAN AFFORD IT. EVANGELIZE TO MAKE MORE MONEY.

IN GOD'S PLAN FOR THE AGES was missions optional or imperative? Some today, in practice are making it optional. Let's look at what HE said through His Word and find out if it is optional or imperative.

The Old Testament is a book written to reveal the Messiah. It is full of prophecy about Him, as well as the record of his decent. Does it also show that the grace of His Father was to extend to ALL mankind? YES! Never was it designed for a few to enjoy.

Let me suggest some passages and make a few comments as needed to show that God always had the world in mind when He provided salvation.

Gen. 1:28 "be fruitful and multiply" God wanted Adam and Eve to fill the earth with people that would serve Him. In this text we see all of mankind is involved - in surrounding verses it is clear that God disclosed His system of reconciliation to Adam, and Adam passed it on to Cain and Able. (Cain just didn't want to follow it.) Gen. 3:23-24 pictures God dwelling at the Garden gate to be a gate, or an access to the tree of life. "placed" is always translated dwell elsewhere. God dwelled there for all mankind to come to him.

Gen. 9:1 "be fruitful and multiply" Noah was given a similar task to fulfill. Again God is dealing with a person from whom ALL men were to come - God is not dealing with a certain group of people.

In Gen. 12:3 Abram is called and he receives a promise that he will bless all nations. This could only be fulfilled through a missionary attitude on the part of Abram and his family to come.

God narrows His view right? No He only changes people. He worked with Adams family -

Noah's family and now Abram's family. NO WHERE does God say He isn't working with all peoples.

I Chron. 16:23-24 is in David's time. "Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all peoples."

Ps. 18:49 "give thanks unto thee, o Lord, among the nations"

Ps. 96:3 "declare his glory among the nations,"

Ps 67:1,2 "thy saving health among all nations"

These passages show that the world was the goal in the Psalmists time. Indeed, it would seem that the world is always in view in God's mind. Note, this is under the time of the law.

Within the Old Testament there is another group of people that for the most part are completely ignored in today's preaching and teaching. These people are the strangers and sojourners that joined themselves to the Jews and became proselytes. These people were for the most part identical to the Jew except for a blood link. They were to be taken in as a Jew would be taken in. They were to offer sacrifices (Lev. 22:18); they were to follow the law (Lev. 24:22); they were to be circumcised (Ex 12:48); they were to be treated as a Jew by birth (Ex 12:48); they were capable of leaving God and following idols (Ezek. 14:7).

They were spiritually almost identical to the Jew. In Solomon's time they were numbered at over 150,000.

Israel's great sin was not going to the world with their God. The churches great sin is also, not going to the world with their God. Israel waited for people to come seeking their God and we do the same today! We wait for the townfolks to come to the church services so that the pastor can preach to them.

THIS IS NOT THE BIBLICAL EVANGELISM THAT I SEE!

I was being considered for a church some time ago. Arrangements had been made for us to fly out to candidate. I wrote to them with some information, among which I mentioned that I was coming to assist them in the ministry, not be the ministry of their church. I explained that I believed that the church people were to lead folks to the Lord and then bring them to the church for training (Eph. 4). We received a phone call not too long after canceling our candidating trip. HUMMMMMMM!

If God set up such a fine arrangement for those that were to come along to join themselves to Himself and to the Jews, then He must have had in mind that ALL the peoples of the earth were to be told of this God that the Jews served. Since God was dealing with ALL mankind in all

generations then the Gospel should be preached to ALL today as well!

The New Testament is fairly well spattered with texts which deal with the thought of missions. John 3:16 "For God so loved the USA --- NO! --- the WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON"

This has the very definite idea that Christ was interested in the WORLD. Not just a few - not just Jews - not just Americans - not just English speaking people. (something like 90% of church money in the world is spent on English speaking people.)

Matt. 12:8-21 is partially a quote from Isa. 42:1-4. Vs 21 mentions, "His name shall the GENTILES trust."

Matt 23:15 The Scribes and Pharisees compassed sea and land to make one proselyte -- going out to convert others was not unknown to the Jews! The Old Testament Jew just didn't practice it much.

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

A clearer command to go with the gospel to the world is not needed! Discipling people is the idea of it (II Tim. 2:2).

Luke 2:30 "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation," Simeon knew this yet the apostles missed it for a time.

Acts 1:8 is a clear statement of the world.

Acts 2:10 "Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes," Sojourners of Rome, both Jews and proselytes. Proselytes were Gentiles that had been brought into the Jewish fold in the concept of the sojourner of the Old Testament. Verse 41 - 3000 saved - some may have been gentile proselytes indeed, Acts 6:5 may show this to be true. (These proselytes were accepted within the local church for service in the local church.)

Acts 10:34 "God is no respecter of persons" "in every nation" Paul was himself a foreign missionary.

Acts 13:43 Jews and proselytes. Listened to Gospel and believed.

Romans 10:13-15 Verse 13 "whosoever" - the world! (vs. 15b is a quote from Isa 52:7 which

seems to me Messianic in nature.)

II Cor. 5:18-19 "And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." God committed the work of reconciliation to us! Note the WORLD is mentioned again.

The Gospel going out to the world is of prime importance to God, in that, if we aren't doing this then we are thwarting His plan of redemption! We are slowing the work that has need of being done.

Standard oil is known the world over. Their one function is to sell oil products. They have circled the globe with their product. The church is less than 1/2 done. I read many years ago of a missionary in Manchuria that had seen a sign on a Standard Oil plant in his adopted country. The sign read "Get the light to every dark corner of the world." Standard did it years ago, and we the church are still struggling to get believers to commit themselves to the cause.

If we really believe in the soon return of Christ then we should be doing more witnessing and more praying and more giving!

God has set the pattern in the scripture - It is our job to set the pattern in our church. A pattern that will lead to a fruitful missions program. As churches grow and develop they should set up a specific missions program. Women's meetings on mission subjects and prayer. Men's meetings on mission subjects and prayer. Special projects, missionary barrel and giving goals would be good for a start. Set objectives and goals for a future missions program.

Our personal commitment should be based on a proper understanding of the Lord's command to go, as well as our relationship to it. Have we really ever considered the possibility that God might want us on the field?

Now, in contrast to the Biblical Basis of Missions I would like to present to you a short Logical basis of Missions.

1. God wants to reconcile man to Himself. God is not doing this job in person. He has left it to his people. If the job is going to be done then WE HIS PEOPLE are going to have to do it. II Cor. 5:18-19

2. Statistics:

Half the world has never heard the gospel.

The average American Christian gives only about \$.33 per day to missions

There is one full time Christian worker / 230 people in America

There is one full time Christian worker / 256,000 abroad

World population increases are causing Christianity to become a dying organism.

If missionaries available today decided only to deal with the population increase they would have to witness to 1540 people per year, per missionary. that's 4.2 people per day 7 days a week.

Americans spend 50 times more for diet pop than Christians spend on foreign missions.

Americans spend 41 times more on Scope mouthwash than Christians do on foreign missions. THE WORLD IS GOING TO HELL BUT WE ARE SLIM AND WE SMELL MINTY NOT MEDICINEY!

I could list several pages of statistics to show the real lack of commitment to missions in America. Indeed, this will be done later in this work.

I recently read a comment that is all too true today. "Many pastors in the US today are keepers of aquariums and not fishers of men."

Is there not a logical need to reach the world? One more statistic that might move you to think: Half the world hasn't heard the gospel - that is over 2 billion. To put that into perspective for you, within the last hour over 3000 LOST souls have slipped into hell for eternity. Over 3000 lost people die every hour on this earth. That figure goes up every year as the population increases.

While you are thinking about this, think of the torment of hell. We don't talk about hell much anymore because we might offend someone. I think personally it is time that the Church stand up and offend some. Hell is a very real danger to the lost and we need to warn them of its place in their future. If they were about to be hit by a truck we would warn them, so why not about hell?

We in America place high priority on eyewitness accounts of things that happen. Let me read you an eye witness account of one that has been in hell, and felt its effects. Luke 16:24, "I AM TORMENTED IN THIS FLAME!"

Yes, there is a Bible Basis for Missions but even if the Bible said nothing of going to the world with the good news LOGIC WOULD DEMAND IT.

Just how logical are we in our spending today as believers. If we really believed that Christ could come at any time - If we really believed that hell were a reality for the lost - would we not live like it?

Do we give all we have to get the gospel out or do we buy motor homes and boats and cars? Do we give all we have to get the gospel out or do we go on vacations all over the world. Just a side light to this thought is the Holy Land tour Mania that is sweeping our country. The Holy Land tours are almost becoming a pilgrimage as the other religions of the world have. I would challenge you to look at some of the ads that are out, and see if this isn't the idea that is coming across in some of them. We even have cruises to the Caribbean booked as conference cruises.

If every Christian that went to the holy land stayed home and gave his or her 2 or 3 thousand dollars to missions we could send a large number of missionaries to the field fully supported. Yes, seeing the Holy Land helps us experience the footsteps of Jesus but it is OPTIONAL while the Gospel is IMPERATIVE!!

I've been told that most of the spots of interest in the Holy Land are covered with Catholic shrines. If this is true I'm not sure why we are spending so much money visiting the competitions holy places.

I picked on Holy Land tours but there are dozens of other things that are in the same class that we as Christians feel are so very important to us. There are also the CONCERTS - BOOKS - CONFERENCES - CONFLABS - CONVENTIONS - ETC.

Do we give all the time that we can spare to go out on door to door visitation to try to win our own communities to Christ. How many doors have you knocked on to share the gospel? Do you give as much time as you could to teaching?

Do we really believe that the gospel is all that important? If we as American Christians really believe it, then why don't we live like it?

Biblically and logically we have a MANDATE to give the gospel to the peoples of the world.

It is your responsibility as individuals to consider what has been said in this section. It is up to you to do something about what you have heard. Don't wait till someone else makes a move - you make a move. This has nothing to do with Stanley Derickson or his ministry. It has to do with YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO WORLD MISSIONS AS A WHOLE!

EACH ONE OF US IS RESPONSIBLE! MYSELF INCLUDED!

Biblically and logically missions is an imperative yet we tend to treat it as an option. Just how missions minded is your church?

Would you like to take a quick test?

1. How many missionaries speak in your church? A church in Vancouver, WA. has a missionary speaker once per month. The church is very mission minded. Even the little kids are excited

about missions.

2. What percent of your total budget is sent to foreign ministries? I looked through an annual report of a church of 100 members recently and \$107,000 went to missions out of a total income of \$150,000. Over two thirds of their budget to missions!

3. How many of you pray for one missionary regularly at least once a week? A man was at a missions conference recently and he mentioned that he would not put anyone on his prayer letter list unless they would promise to pray for him daily. One mission we know of requires each appointee to find 100 people that will promise to pray for them every day before they can go to the field.

4. Are missionaries prayed for regularly in your Wednesday night service? I have been in churches where they don't even pray for the missionaries that they support on Wednesday eve.

5. How many people have left your church to prepare for foreign service? I contacted a church in Washington recently that has twelve couples in various stages of preparation for the field. All came from that church originally.

6. How many missionary magazines or books are read annually in the church?

7. What do your Sunday school kids want to be when they grow up? Any missionaries or pastors?

8. How do your people react to filling a missionaries need of a new Bible or new tire etc.? We were in a church while in college and some folks came from Mexico. I noticed that the ladies Bible was very tattered and had no cover. I could have gone to the pastor, but why bother. I went home and picked up one of the several Bibles lying around and gave it to her.

9. Do your families invite missionaries into their homes so that they can be around their families? This is a great way to get to know a missionary! It is good exposure for your family.

10. Are missionary meetings well attended?

The Bible is totally committed to the thought of all people hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ but the question is are Christians totally committed to the thought of all people hearing the Gospel?

We have received the mandate of God in the area of missions today! What are you going to do about it as a church body? What are you going to do about it as a Christian family? Are you willing to give up some recreation funds to give more to missions? Financing missions isn't hard. You give the Gospel out and as souls are saved and disciplined the finances increase.

CHURCH FINANCE ISN'T A BUDGET -- IT'S EVANGELISM? Let me repeat that.

CHURCH FINANCE ISN'T A BUDGET -- IT'S EVANGELISM? As souls are added to the church the finances will care for themselves.

Are you willing to have one of your children go to the field?

What are YOU going to do about it as an individual? I saw a joke in one of the mission magazines some time back that was too real to be a joke. It showed a young man pushing a young girl forward and the caption read, "Here am I Lord send my sister."

I think that the Church in America had better wake up to the lack of work it is doing in the Lord's harvest fields. I think this of both the home and the foreign field. I have been in churches across the western half of the nation and have only run into three or four that are really evangelistic in their ministries. Very few have calling programs, very few have active missions committees, very few have active evangelism committees, very few are really interested in reaching their community.

I recently went to a town of 10,000 that has four or five gospel preaching churches. A man that had surveyed the town for a possible church was told by the pastors of the good churches that there was plenty of room for another church. The churches there are not doing the job that they ought in that town. Five churches reaching 2000 per church would evangelize the town. A church of 200 would only have to witness to 10 people per person. Split the town up - canvas and you could give every family in town opportunity to hear the Gospel in a month or two.

Thousands of cities and towns and villages have never heard the gospel and have no gospel church, yet we are starting churches all over this country for the sake of spreading a group's name.

We ought never start a church in any town just because there is no I.F.C.A. church, or no Berean church, or no Regular Baptist church, or no Conservative Baptist church, or no Independent Baptist church there. We should be starting churches because there is a need for the gospel.

God's Word teaches missions. Logic DEMANDS MISSIONS. WHAT ARE YOU AND I GOING TO DO ABOUT MISSIONS TODAY?

Is missions optional? NO! Missions is an IMPERATIVE WITH WHICH WE MUST DEAL.

Because we've been treating it as an option I believe God is going to deal with us! Indeed, the financial plight of fundamental churches may be due to our lack of interest in missions.

God felt it was so important that HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON! How important do YOU think it is?

Make missions an imperative! That may mean giving! That may mean praying! That may mean

going! All are vital to the effort!

May we consider before God if He would have us do more in one or more of these areas!

ACTS: ONE ATE

I. THE POWER

II. THE PURPOSE

III. THE PLAN

Have you ever considered what you want your last words to be? Have you considered what you want your family to remember as you die? What are your last words going to be? What can they put on your tombstone?

There are last words that are humorous: Here lies John Smith for he can do no more. The person that has a good sense of humor always desires that they will have something witty, or light to say as they die.

There are last words that are sad: It is said that the last words of the man that started one of the denominational movements in America were said to his son. The son was also a leader in the movement. The man's last words were in the form of a question to his son concerning the movement that they had perpetuated. "We were right, weren't we?"

There are last words that are comforting: My mother died very unexpectedly to the family, however she must have had a premonition because a week or so after her death we found a note she had written to the family assuring us of her love toward us and asking forgiveness for any ill feelings that might have been left unsettled. The words were a comfort to us.

Last words are very important. These usually are those things that are most important to the dying person. They are words that the person desires with all their being to impart to those around them.

These words that we are going to consider in this section are not Jesus' last and final words, however they are His last words to the disciples before ascending into heaven. These words must have been words of importance and we need to consider them as such!

Acts 1:8 is a verse that is often quoted in reference to the missionary effort, and rightly so. It is a verse that we need to consider as we move along in our thinking.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (KJV)

This term translated "power" is the term that we gain our word dynamite from. The believers were promised the Holy Spirit and the power which He could give to them. The text speaks of the apostle's future spreading out over the known world with the message of the Lord. As you read through the first few chapters of the book of Acts you will see that this is about what

happened. The apostles went out evangelizing and they did it with great power!

The power of the Holy Spirit was given to the church age believers on the day of Pentecost. It is our place to use that power and to manifest that power even today! HOW DOES THIS POWER MANIFEST ITSELF?

The Holy Spirit's power is manifested in a number of ways. Galatians 5:22 mentions that the fruit of the Spirit are love, long-suffering, faith, joy, gentleness, meekness, peace, goodness and self-control. This is a very definite manifestation of the Spirit's power. If we were to unleash only this power in the churches of the world we would see reformation in a real sense.

As we allow the Holy Spirit free reign in our lives, these fruits will be manifested to the world. This in turn will be a powerful message to those around us. Imagine the United States tomorrow morning if every Christian in the country came to work like that! Just imagine!

Another manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit in our own day is the boldness to speak the gospel when we know we should. There are those in every generation that can freely proclaim the Gospel in all sorts of different situations of life, yet most of us must with Paul ask one another to pray for us that we might have boldness in speech and witness. We have that boldness as we allow the Holy Spirit to demonstrate His power through us.

The boldness to witness is closely related to the power of the Holy Spirit within the life of the person that we are talking to.

My wife and I spoke with a young man years ago, for about two hours. He had a very warped sense of his eternity. As we began to understand what he was saying we started using the Word of God to show him where his thinking was in error. He would bring up something and we would show him that it was wrong from the Word. Finally he said, "Hold it now - you have me totally confused." What he meant, and didn't understand was that the Scriptures had been so powerful in exposing the error of his beliefs that he was confused. He never accepted the Lord that we know of, but he knew that his human philosophy could not stand before the Word of God, indeed, his own thinking could not stand the convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

The power of the Holy Spirit may well be seen in answered prayer, as we make our requests known concerning witnessing. A pastor of a fairly large church challenged his congregation of about 200 to list 3 names on a 3x5 card. These were to be people that the person wanted to witness to in the next 30 days. He promised to pray for each and every name for 30 days and the people were to do the same, asking that the Lord would give them opportunity to witness to these 3 people within the month. After the month was over there was a testimony time and everyone had witnessed to some on their list and the vast majority had had the privilege of witnessing to all 3 of the people on the list. POWER IN PRAYER! One of the people on my list was my father. We had approached him with the Gospel many times, but he would never listen to us. After the pastor challenged us and prayer had been offered, my father opened the opportunity for a witness.

The apostles produced great fruit in the early days of the church yet they didn't have the power themselves to do these things. The Holy Spirit was the key to their power. So be it with us. We have no power! The only effective power we have is the Holy Spirit. When we remember this fact and begin to look to Him for His power and His work in the lives of those we minister to, then we will begin to see the power of the Spirit.

Not only has God given us power, but He also has given us purpose. Christ stated that, "...ye shall be witnesses...." We all have the same ability to witness for Christ - not just the pastor - not just the evangelist - not just the missionary - not just the Sunday school teacher. Every one of us are to be witnesses for the Lord. Too many fundamental churches function on the pastor/layman system. The pastor does the work and the men let him. (Notice should be given that I refrained from the obvious play on words - lay man!)

We are all to be witnesses! I am reminded of a little fourth grader that was introduced to me in Ireland. She was very active in sharing her belief in Christ with everyone she met. She even witnessed to her schoolmates and was known to mention the Gospel to her teachers. She by the way, attended a Roman Catholic school. The girl was bold enough to confront nuns with the Gospel that she knew they needed to hear. The point of the story is this, if a fourth grader can witness to Roman Catholic nuns, then certainly the rest of us ought to be able to witness for the Lord in much less threatening situations!

The term translated "witness" is the term from which we gain our English word martyr. "One who bears witness by his own death" (An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words; W.E. Vine; Fleming H. Revell Co.; Old Tappan, New Jersey;) We fear a little rejection and mild persecution if we witness, yet many in ages past have placed their lives on the line to witness for their Lord. In some countries today if you are very outgoing with your witnessing you open yourself up for all sorts of governmental difficulties.

Not only are we to be witnesses, but we are to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. Some find that this is a very uncalled for comment and observation, however in light of the present affairs in this world, we need to be very careful to let people know who we are witnessing about. We have loads of latter day lunatics around and we don't want to be mistaken for them! We have a number of groups that are witnessing of the work of a number of people and gods. We have people witnessing of the works of all the eastern gurus and leaders. We have people witnessing of the works of Jehovah. We have people witnessing of a watered down Jesus. We have people witnessing of the works of a new Messiah that has come to complete the work that Jesus didn't do when He was here.

We have many that are Christians today that are witnessing of the works of Jessuuuuuuss as well. The term Jesus is a very meaningful term to the Christian and well it should be; however the overemphasis of the name is not really in keeping with the Scriptural usage of the name of our Lord.

Of the 354 occurrences of the name Jesus outside the gospels only a few ever appear alone. Generally the term Jesus is used in conjunction with the terms Lord and Christ. The term Jesus is a term that describes His earthly ministry up to and including the ascension. Out side of this context the name Jesus is linked to "Lord" and/or "Christ." Rarely is the name Jesus used alone.

In keeping with this may we consider Acts 2:36. "let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." The context of this statement is Peter's sermon and in this part he is speaking of Christ's glorification and position in the heavens.

There is nothing wrong with using the name Jesus, yet there seems to be something amiss if a Christian is dwelling on the earthly ministry of the Lord. There is so much more than the gospels that we need to be studying as well!

"GOD HATH MADE ... JESUS ... BOTH LORD AND CHRIST"! (Acts 2:26) WE ARE WITNESSES OF JESUS CHRIST THE LORD, THE SON OF GOD!

He has given us power, He has given us purpose, and now we need to notice that He has given us a plan. Christ in the final part of the verse mentions the "where" of this witnessing. "and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The indications of what Christ wanted seems to be fairly clear to the casual reader. The church is to be a witness to all parts of the world. There is a move among some in America to pervert the easy, plain meaning of this text. Some are beginning to teach that we need to deal with Jerusalem first and then Judea and then Samaria and then when these are done the uttermost parts of the earth. In other words begin in America - start churches in America then the uttermost.

First, they say, we must build a strong economic base, then train our people here by having them go out into America to start churches and then in a few years as they are experienced they can go on to the field. As we build all of these churches we will be building a strong economic base for the missionaries to go forth from.

They forget that the Gospel spread quickly from Jerusalem, where all of the Christians had spent their monies on one another. The Jerusalem church was very poor from all indications. Building an economic base from which to launch missionaries is not a Biblical imperative, nor is it a Biblical principle. The Biblical principle is to live by faith and allow God to provide the finances.

It is agreed that we need to train our workers. It is agreed that we need to build more churches here. The teaching that we must reject is the fact that we should emphasize "home" over "away!" Actually they are verbalizing what has been practiced in America for years! I think the facts show that this is what has gone on for years.

It seems quite evident that the American church has been very committed to self-improvement. The facts of how many dollars are spent here and abroad will quite adequately bear this out!

The problem in America is not the need for a strong economic base. The need is for a strong Spiritual base! If the spiritual lives of believers were of the quality that the Scripture calls for, there would be no need for dollars, no need for workers, no need for emphasis of anything over anything. The people would be going and the finances would be present. God has promised to supply the needs. The missionary need is met through God's people. God has not changed nor has the need for finances. That leaves us to conclude that God's people are not holding up their end of things.

The problem in America is not the need for a strong economic base. The problem is the schools and seminaries that have lost the strong "Go Ye" emphasis of years past. The schools are not teaching missions in the manner in which they should. Pastors coming out of our schools have not been exposed properly to missions. Pastors coming out of our schools have no burden for reaching the world. They have very little burden for reaching the people in this nation. Pastors are not preaching missions nor are many of them interested in missions. This makes for a weak, watered down concept of missions in America.

Let us consider the text and how it relates to our age. Properly viewed this text may be prophetic. The Apostles, in their own time, did this with God's help. If you take time to read the first few chapters in Acts you will see that this is the pattern that occurred in the early church. They reached Jerusalem and then because of the scattering, the gospel went out into the countryside. Those suggesting that there is a sequence fail to realize that the gospel went out into the world almost immediately, in that those that heard the sermon on the day of Pentecost were from all over the known world and many of them probably returned to their own country with the gospel within days of hearing it.

Even if it was sequential, we are in the uttermost phase. Even if you could verify that there was a sequence to follow in this verse we would have to admit that we are in the last phase of the sequence and have been for centuries. There is historical evidence that the apostles reached into India to the east and possibly into Ireland in the west. Paul himself spread the gospel into much of the known world.

The simplicity of the text - demands no sequence. The text states simply that "ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Of the Bibles I checked only the Living Bible even hinted that there was to be a sequential order to the witnessing. None of the translations nor the Living Bible suggests that this is a process of sequence that is to be followed literally by every believer of every generation.

There is no basis to on which to build a sequence in this text! I have checked with Greek scholars, commentaries, and translations and found no basis for a sequence.

The term "both" is defined in Funk and Wagnall as follows: "the two together:" or "equally; alike; as well:" The term "and " is defined as "also; added to; as well as:"

Oswald J. Smith observes (in *I Have Walked Alone With Jesus*; 1982)

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"When I was in Sumatra I heard of a town to which no one had gone, and I penetrated back through the jungles until I reached it. Never will I forget the thrill that was mine as I crossed the threshold of that town, realizing that I was in all probability the first messenger of the cross to have done so.

"If I were a young man today, I would ask, as Livingstone did, to be sent to new fields, for I would want to be the first to reduce the language to writing, translate portions of the Bible and give the people the gospel. I, too, would be a pioneer.

"Why waste your life here in America or Great Britain? You, too, can be a pioneer. Oh, I know what you are saying. I have heard it said again and again. You are quoting Acts 1:8, but you are not quoting it right. This is the way you quote it: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me first in Jerusalem, then in Judea; after that in Samaria, and last of all, to the uttermost part of the earth." But that is not what it says. Let me quote it for you now: "Ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It is not, "first" but "both." And what does the word both mean? It means at one and the same time, does it not? In other words, we are to evangelize Jerusalem, and at one and the same time, Judea and Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. We are to work both fields; the home and the foreign, together."

We should be, if following this principle, expending similar efforts and expense on the field and at home. How many churches today expend 50% of their budget and effort for the world? (50% outside immediate area) ONE AND THE SAME!

Some say, "But we are reaching the world!" How can they say that? If we have observed this concept properly then why are there 200 times as many Christian workers in America as there are in the world? As a sidelight did you know that Amway and Avon have 14 times more representatives in America than the entire church has outside the U.S.?

Why are 96% of church funds used for English speaking people and only 4% used for non-English speaking people?

Why do churches in this nation receive 75 to 100 resumes from prospective pastors when their pastor resigns? (One church received this many before they even announced that they were looking for a new man.)

Why are mission agencies crying for workers while churches are inundated with prospective pastors?

Why are churches turned down by prospective pastors because the church does not pay enough?

Why are veteran missionaries having so much difficulty raising support to return to their ministries on the field?

MAY I SUGGEST SOME POSSIBLE REASONS?

1. We have lost our basic commitments to our Lord Jesus Christ and His love for the WORLD. Christ died for the sins of the world not for the sins of the people living in the United States!
2. We, as the people of Israel, are following other gods. We are following our pet philosophies, we are following our pet authors, and we are following our own fleshly desires instead of getting into the Word to follow the Savior that we claim to serve.
3. Some that are called aren't going. While on deputation, I had quite a number of people tell me that when they were young, they had felt God wanted them to go into missions, but they never took that step for Him. Every one of them regretted deeply their decision.

The example of Christ and Paul - demand no sequence. Christ did not send the disciples out to plant churches so they would be financed. He sent them out and told them not to worry about their needs. Paul did not go planting churches so that he could be supported by the strong economic base. He went out preaching the gospel.

The great missionaries of the last generation went out with a very poor economic base. The Christians had to give sacrificially to get them to the field.

No, there is no sequence - we are to be working both fields at the same time.

Just recently I spoke to some Christians, two of them being pastors, about missionaries not being able to get to the field because of a lack of support. Their thinking was not, "oh, let's find new ways of raising support for them," but their thinking was, "Maybe it would be better for the missionaries to find some place here in the states to minister until the economy can pick up enough for them to raise their support."

Their thought was - they should get busy here - forget the field. In short - work in Jerusalem and forget the uttermost for now. NO! THE "GO YE" MEANT TO THE WORLD NOT THE UNITED STATES!

We are to be witnesses to all four!

HOW CAN WE WITNESS HERE IN OUR OWN CITY?

Witness at every opportunity - to friends - neighbors - coworkers - anyone that will listen! Leave tracts where you go. In restaurants, telephone booths, restrooms etc. I was in Albany, OR and was in three public areas, and there were tracts in all three (a restaurant, a restroom, and a phone booth). Invite people to Sunday school and Church. Place ads in newspapers concerning radio programs that you know are on the air and that are sound. Place ads for Christ in the newspaper. Help in the ministry of the local church. Help in calling programs, in teaching, in outreach, etc.

HOW DO WE WITNESS IN OUR OWN COUNTY?

The same way as in the previous section. Help start Bible studies in the surrounding towns. Win the people here and they may win others out and around.

HOW DO WE WITNESS TO OUR OWN STATE?

Help pioneer works as they struggle to get on their feet through prayer and financial support as you can afford it. Support ministries that cover the state and work in other areas. Get involved in projects where you can help in other towns. Maybe an afternoon of witnessing or of calling in another town for another church. Maybe help build if you are skilled in these areas.

HOW DO WE WITNESS TO THE WORLD?

Prayer support for missions. Pay support for missions. Write your missionaries. Keep them informed about the goings on of this country - sports - politics - science - etc. Encourage them as you can in that this may help keep them on the field. Send tracts to people that you know abroad. If you really want to do it in a neat way go to the field yourself and witness in person. This can be done on a short-term basis as well as a long-term basis.

We spoke in a small church that had really spread their missionary support to every area, as Acts 1:8 tells us to do. They had a hometown missionary that planted churches, they had a man that worked with a camp in their state, and they supported a campus ministry in another part of the U.S. There were some foreign missionaries as well. I told them that they had done a good job of spreading their outreach monies around. I was informed that it had occurred accidentally - they hadn't planned it that way.

If you consider this verse a **COMMAND TO YOU PERSONALLY**, and it is, then ---GO--- be it in your town, in your state, in the country or in the world.

Americans are very self-centered these days and I think we, as Christians tend to follow the world's lead in this area. We really need to get a proper perspective of our Lord. We really need to get our priorities straight. We really need to get our view of hell straight. We really need to view the lost as God views the lost. We really need to get on our knees and ask God to give us

the burden for the lost that He has.

WE REALLY NEED TO GO!

We really need to become evangelistic in our fundamental churches today. I recently read an article written by a fundamental evangelist concerning the decline in the evangelistic emphasis in our churches. He related information about the two or three week evangelistic campaigns that he had held in the past, and then he related that due to the pace of life in America that the campaigns were reduced to one week and then later they were reduced to four days and then three days. The purpose of his article was to relate that he was about to go to a church for his first ONE-DAY EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN! His final comment went something like this. I suppose the next church will want me to just phone it in.

ONE DAY EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN. We in America should be ashamed of ourselves! "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8

Over two and a half billion people today are without the good news and on their way to eternal hell. DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT TODAY? It is our generation's job to reach those people - no one else can do the job. DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT TODAY?

May we each one reconsider God's place in this program of "Man spreading the Gospel to man" through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives!

I'm not one that is much for invitations as a rule, however as the days go by I become more frustrated with the Body of Christ in America. We need to call for commitment - for service - for zeal. God has given us a job to do and we aren't doing it.

Yes, we can blame it on "the Church." Yes, we can blame it on other churches (they aren't doing the job). But that is foolishness. You has to do something! My church has to do something. Stanley Derickson has to do something! You have to do something.

We don't have to worry about what Faith Baptist is doing! We don't have to worry about what Community Baptist is doing!

God has given us Acts 1:8 today! What are we going to do with it? If you are saved, what are you going to do with Acts 1:8 today?

Let's not let Acts 1:8 pass in one ear and out the other without it making a dramatic change in our thinking! If you can't go, then help go, and pray for those that can go.

In closing I would like for you to consider the words of a poem. I am not a poetry lover and I

very seldom use poetry, but this poem has a very pointed message to it, and I feel it is a challenge to every man, woman, and child that claims Christ as their Savior.

It Isn't Fair

"It isn't fair! It can't be right!
I now protest with all my might!
I raise my voice both loud and strong,
It's wrong, my friend! It's wrong, it's wrong.

"It's wrong, I say, dead wrong, indeed!
That's why I weep and beg and plead.
It is a black and wicked sin
To keep the light from dying men!

"I plead the cause of men afar,
Unsaved, unloved, untold they are.
Why have we been so late and slow?
Why have there been so few to go?

"Unsaved, unsought and still untold,
Because we love and hoard our gold!
How dare we show such selfish greed?
And keep the truth from men in need?

"Let's follow Jesus' last command!
Let's take the light to every land!
This truth is plain: the need is great.
The time is short; the hour is late!

"Let's not linger, rest or sleep,
But rise and go and give and weep!
And quickly tell a dying race
Of Jesus' love and power and grace!

Fred D. Jarvis (June 1984 Pulpit Helps)

Let's consider Acts 1:8! According to current figures approximately 3,333 unsaved people died in the time it took you to read this section (3,333 per hour).

The poet states

"It is a black and wicked sin to keep the light from dying men!"

Every minute we delay our action as a church universal, 55 more unsaved people slip into eternal torment. What are you going to do with Acts 1:8?

Romans 10:14 "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?"

How are you going to handle Acts 1:8?

THE HARVEST IS GREAT - THE TIME IS NOW

I once read an article in a paper that described a very long line of people outside a church. The person telling the story mentioned his curiosity and decision to get into the line to see what was going on inside the church.

The person finally arrived inside the church and as he looked to the front of the building he could see Jesus chained to the pulpit of the church. In astonishment the man asks why Christ was being treated so.

Christ's reply was that His followers were not obeying the great commission and that they had chained Him to the pulpit. Only the people that were interested enough to stand in line could finally come into the church and hear the Good News.

Yes, it was a dream but how true it is in churches across our land today!

THE HARVEST IS GREAT - THE TIME IS NOW

We want to look at the MISCONCEPTION OF THE HARVEST, the CONCEPTION OF THE HARVEST, the PERCEPTION OF THE HARVEST, and the PARTICIPATION IN THE HARVEST.

Many today view evangelism as the pastor winning souls by his dynamic soul winning messages. Many today have false ideas about a lot of things in the church.

Others view the United States as the MOST IMPORTANT MISSION FIELD. With 90% of full time American Christian workers working in America among about 10% of the world's population I am forced to question this line of thinking!

Yes, America has needs - especially in the area of subcultures. Areas such as the American born Chinese, the Hispanic, the migrant workers, the Laotians, the Vietnamese, the Servicemen, the Foreign Students, as well as many other groups.

We need to reach these people - But we need to get some perspective - the United States needs to realize it isn't the world.

I. MISCONCEPTION OF THE HARVEST

I recently picked up a tract entitled "The Harvest is Past and We Are Not Saved." It is based on Jer. 8:20. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." The idea behind the tract is to bring the person to feel that there will be a day when this will be spoken by some of the lost millions going into hell. I personally believe the text is being misused, and that the concept is in error for there will be no one in hell that has not personally rejected his Maker directly, be it

by rejecting the revelation of God in Nature, the revelation of God in them, or the revelation of God in the Word.

Man is condemned not by his lack of hearing a message, but by his own rejection of the message, which he has received. This is seen in Romans. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness," Rom. 1:18 Man that knows the truth yet rejects its work will view the wrath of God.

God has revealed Himself to all of mankind, throughout all the ages. He had done this in several ways. God revealed Himself in nature: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse;" Rom. 1:20 God revealed Himself in themselves: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them." Rom. 1:19 He has also revealed Himself through the Word.

All mankind is, or was under a universal condemnation because of the fall of man in Adam. We all are sinners due for condemnation, however Jesus Christ made payment for the sin of all mankind -- BUT mankind must appropriate that payment. The Old Testament saint was to lay his hand on the sacrifice as it was being killed. So, we must lay our hand, so to speak on the head of Christ to accept His death in place of ours. Some respond to that message when they are told and some reject that message.

What about those that do not hear that message of reconciliation? They have no chance if we don't tell them RIGHT! WRONG! They have given up the right to hear that message, in that, they did not respond to the revelation within themselves or to the revelation within nature itself.

They have rejected God in His most basic forms of revelation! Romans one goes on to state, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." (Romans 1:21-25)

The Sword of the Lord recently quoted a news release from England which mentioned that the British Methodists had okayed the use of female images for God so that they could image God in ALL the details of creation. Sounds like Romans one to me.

Then the question must be asked, "Why has the United States been given such an overabundance of the Gospel?" We have the Gospel offered in every bookstore, and many department stores. We have churches in the majority of towns and our cities have multitudes of churches. Yes, we

might question the quality of the Gospel being given in our country today, but if someone wants to find God they can.

I believe it is because we are still, even though some might question my thinking, a nation that seeks to know God. Barely does this nation seek to know God, but on a whole I think that the nation does seek God.

People in this country are going downward into sin at an alarming rate yet the general sense of the country is still a people that are seeking after the fulfillment of life. We as Americans are seeking in the areas of sin, materialism, humanism, and every other ism yet most Americans are still seeking for fulfillment in the spiritual realm - they just haven't looked in the proper place as yet, and we as Christians have not been telling them where to look.

I witnessed to a man in Denver once and his reaction was, "Stan, my apartment is full of religious material, but nobody has ever in my life told me what you have just told me" - the simple Gospel.

A church member in a small town in Oregon recently told me that their church was having an outreach-training program in their church. She mentioned that the people are going out door to door and finding lost people that have been looking for God. The lost are excited that someone has come to tell them of Christ. The people from the church were also excited that the Gospel really works.

For this reason God has seen fit to leave this country as a lighthouse for Him. **THIS IS NOT TO SAY FOR HOW LONG HOWEVER!**

YES, THE HARVEST WILL BE PAST ONE DAY AND MILLIONS WILL NOT BE SAVED! BUT, it will be because the millions rejected the message of God not because they did not hear!

In closing this thought we need to mention that the text in Jeremiah is not speaking of men in hell. It is speaking of Israel's unwillingness to leave their idols and follow God. It is the lament of Jeremiah that the summer is passing and there is no physical or spiritual salvation for Israel, in that the Lord had finally shut the door on their sinfulness and called upon them judgment. **THEY HAD RECEIVED EVERY OPPORTUNITY!**

II. CONCEPTION OF THE HARVEST

Many today ask me how God called me to a specific ministry. I tell many that He didn't call me. I have never been "CALLED" to do anything to the best of my knowledge unless you include the jillion times my mother called me to take out the trash. God led me into the ministry many years ago and has been leading me from ministry to ministry every since.

In Scripture we see God calling men at times, however He has told the New Testament believer to go preaching and we need no call, for we have a command already.

A man by the name of Andrew P. Stirrett in the early 1900's realized this fact and acted on it. This man sold his business and left his apartments and his worldly possessions in the hands of a mission. He proceeded to England for training before he had been accepted by the mission. When he wrote to tell them that he was on his way to Nigeria they decided to accept him "on suspicion rather than on probation." They weren't sure of the man at all.

He spent 41 of his 46 years with the mission on the field. He headed up their medical outreach after he had become a doctor. He was highly recognized in the medical community. He preached 20,000 times and preached to over 1 1/2 million people. He died at 83 beside his bed praying. CAN YOU IMAGINE SUCH A MAN AND HE SAID OF HIMSELF " I NEVER HAD A CALL" **** CAN YOU IMAGINE SUCH A THING?

I would like to read Mr. Stirrett's personal testimony of his going into the ministry.

"WHY I WENT"

"One evening in church the message was on the Holy Spirit. Some people, the preacher said, were afraid lest the Spirit should command them to do something they did not wish to do.

"For example, said he, a young man might be commanded to leave home and go away to do Christ's glorious work in China or some other needy field. Afraid to receive God's best gift? That message went to my heart.

"Instead of obeying immediately, I got into business for myself. I speak of this purposely because I believe there are many young people who are waiting for some special demonstration before they go to the field.

"I confess that I never had any call, except the 'still, small voice' which told me, as I believe He is telling others, of the great need of those regions where they have not the light.

"What finally brought me to my senses was a sermon on the return of our Lord. There came up before me more vividly my great sin of omission, my failure to tell those who know not the gospel. The question was insistent: 'Will Jesus be pleased if He comes, to find me behind the counter?'

"There was only one answer. I sold my business, and started for the field."

We have a clear command to go out preaching and Discipling, yet we have the majority of the effort going on in the United States. Indeed, the Christians in America are not going. We are seeing third world countries sending missionaries to the States. It seems inconceivable that the Lord would give the command to go to the world and not desire Christians to go to the world.

Let's imagine for moment that the U.S.A. was under attack on both coasts and the gulf. The

president moves the White House to Omaha, NE; He deploys 90% of the nations active troops and forces in Nebraska and deploys 10% of the troops to guard the coasts. Now, would we impeach such a commander in chief? YES, OF COURSE!

Christ is the head of His army - we are in a spiritual battle. Do you really believe Christ would deploy 10% of His forces to reach the 90% of the world that is lost and 90% to guard the 10% of the population that is saved?

As Mr. McQuilikan mentions, "some that he calls aren't responding".

Let me quote the great commission: "Would you please at your convenience sometime consider a favor for me? Would you consider maybe witnessing to some one by the middle part of next year? If the person should happen to accept me you might if you can fit it in between vacations, breaks and time off, to teach the some of the things that I have told you? If they should happen to grow to the point of wanting to be identified with me you can, that is if it isn't to big and inconvenience to fill the baptistry and if you can get the water warm enough, baptize them for me." NO! NO! NO! This is not true Scripture; yet, many churches live as if this were how the great commission was written.

Let me quote the text as the Lord spoke it. "And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. God ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. Amen." Matt. 28:18-20

What does Amen mean? SO BE IT! SO BE IT! GO YE - TEACH. SO BE IT! Jesus Christ Himself has given us an imperative - not a request, not a desired favor, and not an option -- He has stated "GO YE" or to put it more literally "as you are going". He assumes that we are going and the imperative is to teach those that we are going to!

It has recently been said that if you are going to the mission field because you are burdened for the lost people of a certain country that you are going for the wrong reason. When trials come if you are serving a burden it is easy to quit, but if you are obeying the GO you are serving God and can continue on knowing He is able to complete the task.

You do not see the idea of going to a specific people in Matt. 28 do you? Indeed, if you are going to the mission field you should be going because the Lord has told you to go - teaching and baptizing.

Yes, we are all to be burdened for the lost people of the world. Yes, we need to be concerned about reaching these people but it is all to be based on the Lord's statement to "GO".

In Mark 16:15, again the text has the idea that you are going - we are told to preach. The

"preach" here is an imperative or a command. Notice that the "as you are going" is in the context of "ALL THE WORLD." AS WE ARE GOING TO ALL THE WORLD WE ARE TO PREACH AND TEACH!

Tell me how we in the American church are doing this when 90% of funds are being spent on the feeding of church members and the evangelization of the American public. Tell me how we in the American church are doing this when only a small minority of them ever witnesses to anyone.

I fear we Christians gear our spending much as the world does! The world spent \$60,000 to get Humphrey, a whale that swam up from the ocean, back down the Sacramento River to the sea. How much have we spent on missions lately?

The latest figures show that the average Christian gives approximately \$.33 per day to missions. That is not even the price of a cup of coffee a day! Do you realize if we doubled the amount to \$.66 per day we could double the number of missionaries on the field? JUST HOW DO WE FIGURE THAT WE ARE REACHING THE WORLD FOR CHRIST WHEN WE ARE SPENDING MORE ON SCOPE MOUTHWASH THAN WE ARE ON FOREIGN MISSIONS?

The natural text to go to from this point is II Tim. 2:2 Let me quote it for you. "And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

This is missions in the proverbial nutshell. As we are going we are to teach those we lead to the Lord, so that they can be going to teach those that they lead to the Lord, so that they can be going to teach those that they lead to the Lord, so that they can be going to teach those that they lead to the Lord --- yes, it is an endless process of evangelism and discipleship unto the coming of the Lord!

Just where is the "going to take place? We have seen in Mark that it is the world. Acts 1:8 mentions that the world in view as well. Indeed, a basis for the world can be easily seen in both testaments very clearly. WE ARE TO BE GOING TO THE WORLD WITH THE GOSPEL!

Are we? I fear that we are not. Over 90% of Christian workers are laboring within the borders of the U.S. We are not going to the world. We are making a very feeble stab at going to the world, but I don't think the Lord is really all that impressed with this generation's missionary effort.

No, I can't know the mind of God on the subject but it doesn't take a mind reader to look at the facts and figures about missions and come up with the fact that the Church is blowing it on the world scene!

III. PERCEPTION OF THE HARVEST

The greatness of the harvest can be easily shown by a simple look at the population figures and a survey or two. To cut through the figures you can ruffly say that over 2 billion people have never heard the Gospel before. Dr. Robert C. McQuilkin states [New Tribes tract on God's call] that there have never been more than 35,000 missionaries laboring at one time in history. Remember these 35,000 people are dealing with the 2 billion that have never heard! (Most figures I see recently place the figure at about 50,000 missionaries on the field.)

Based on current figures this means simply that there are 3,333 LOST people dying every hour without ever hearing the Gospel.

Christianity is a dying organism by sheer numbers today. The population explosion is going to bury Christianity in the history books if we don't wake up to the fact that the Lord has a job for us to do - NOW!

B. URGENCY OF THE HARVEST

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:" Acts 13:36 David served his own generation. This is only logical. How could he serve any other generation? We are in the same situation as David. We can only serve our own generation. If we don't reach our own generation, then that generation will not be reached. Those people living right now will not hear the Gospel unless our generation tells them. That is simply put, and it is very URGENT!

NO OTHER STATEMENT NEEDS TO BE MADE! IF WE DON'T REACH THE PEOPLE ON THE EARTH TODAY -- THEY WON'T BE REACHED!

Lost people of our generation are dying at the rate of 3,333 per hour. How urgent a need do we have to have before we start acting? Before we start giving of ourselves. Before we start giving of our families. Before we start giving of our possessions.

IV. PARTICIPATION IN THE HARVEST

GOD WANTS YOUR PARTICIPATION! God wants men like Alexander Duff. Let me share a part of his story with you. He was a missionary to India.

"As an old man, he stood in Edinburgh, Scotland, and for two and one half hours he held his listeners spellbound as he told the story of trials and hardships and conquests. Then he fainted and was carried from the hall.

"When he came to himself, he asked: 'Where am I? What was I doing? Oh, yes. Take me back and let me finish my speech!'

"'You will kill yourself if you do!' exclaimed his friends.

"I shall die if I do Not!" And so they carried him back.

"The whole audience arose, men and women sobbing. He was unable to stand, but sat down and said: 'Fathers of Scotland, have you any more sons to send to India? I have spent my life there, and my life has gone; but if there are no young men to go, I will go back myself and lay my bones there, and let the people know that there is one man in Britain who is ready to die for India!'"
(This was in a tract put out by New Tribes Mission entitled "God's Call")

Today India is basically untouched by the Gospel. There is work going on but so little in relationship to the need! There are Christians there and the church is growing, but the need is so great that those working there are not keeping up with the population increases. As far as I know at this point in time India is closed to outside missionaries, other than those that go in as tent makers. (Those that go to a country with an occupation, such as doctors, teachers etc. and witness to those that they have contact with. The term comes from Paul's time of tent making to support himself as he spread the Gospel.)

CONCLUSION:

I would like to challenge you to think about what God has for you in this life. I want to challenge every one of you - young and old!

For the young I feel it is very important that you consider God's best for you lest you regret not giving your life to Him when you are older. You older folks consider what you might do for God even though you have not considered it before.

I would like to share a poem concerning a person looking back over his short life and realizing he had regrets.

V. Ben Kendrick

Just Thinking

"Dear Lord, I must confess that I often think it would be nice to be young again.

"But not to be able to run and jump and feel young would I wish this to happen.

"Just imagine a life with a new start which would allow me to do that much more for you.

"Lord, I think this with no thought for myself but only what could be done for your glory.

"As I said, Lord, these are just thoughts; for I realize that this could never be.

"I had the opportunity of serving in my younger days when life seemed like an endless span

before me.

"And perhaps that is why I think and wish I could start afresh and live it all over again."

I see in churches everywhere I go that the church has made missions an option to be gotten to if there is time, and if there is money. We have missionaries that are trying to get to the field but can't because the churches are so tied up in their building programs that they do not have time, nor finances to fund a proper missions program.

We have missionaries coming home in the middle of terms to raise up new supporters to replace those that have dropped their support in the middle of the term.

We have pastors in this country that do not care to talk with missionaries when they drop in to say Hi.

We have a pitiful missions program in American churches as a whole. We have missionaries taking more time to raise their support that it takes for them to receive their college training.

American Christians are committed Christians, but I have to wonder to what they have committed themselves to.

Are we committed to Christ or things?

Are we committed to missions or a building project?

Are we committed to saving souls or upholstering the pews?

Are we committed to saving the world for our Lord or to saving our cash for ourselves?

Are we committed to God or mammon?

I FEAR THAT THE MAMMON WOULD WIN OUT IN ANY POLL TAKEN BY AN IMPARTIAL JUDGE!

Matt. 6:24 simply states, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Money or things is the thought of mammon.)

Lest anyone say that this verse is for the Jews only, let me read another verse that simply restates the same principle from the letters of John. I Jo. 2:15-16, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

WHERE HAS MOST OF YOUR TIME BEEN SPENT LATELY? WHERE IS YOUR MAIN CONCERN? WHICH DO YOU LOVE MORE, GOD OR MAMMON?

The last part of I Jo 2:16 speaks of the "pride of life". This has the idea of having pride in your life style or way of life. Are you proud of the way you live? Maybe the love of the Lord is weaker than it should be.

God is interested in people that are willing to give all they have, including their lives to further God's purposes.

ARE YOU SUCH A PERSON THIS DAY? ARE YOU WILLING TO SAY HERE AM I LORD SEND ME? NOW, LET ME REPEAT THAT, HERE AM I LORD SEND ME. SOME INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN HERE AM I LORD SEND MY SISTER. ARE YOU WILLING TO SAY LORD USE ME AT WHATEVER THE COST?

We are intellectual, emotional and spiritual beings. We must respond in all three areas to missions.

INTELLECTUALLY: If we believe Christ died to save us from Hell. If we believe Christ is to return soon. If we believe the lost will go to hell then - we must get the Gospel out!
LOGICALLY THAT IS THE LINE OF THINKING!

EMOTIONALLY: We need to be burdened for the lost - realize what Hell is like. An eyewitness account from Luke states, "I am tormented in this flame"

There are people waiting to hear the Good news yet there is no one to tell them. In the Islands of the Pacific, missionaries hear of tribes that want to hear about God - there are no workers to send.

We need to move our sights from ourselves to focus upon Christ so that we can see these millions that are lost.

SPIRITUALLY: As we are going - preach and teach. We are told to go so we don't need to wait for a "CALL". We need to say, Lord, here am I - sent me.

"Professor Latane, Professor of Psychology at Ohio State University made a study of Americans' work habits, and concluded that people tend to slack off or loaf when they work in a group more than when they work alone. Mr. Latane concluded that there is a 'diffusion of responsibility' in groups; each person feeling less responsibility to help because others are present." (Wall Street Journal: 3/19/81) Is it possible that the American church assumes everyone else is doing the work? Is it possible that the American church assumes everyone else is responsible to do the work?

THE HARVEST IS GREAT. THE TIME IS NEXT YEAR - RIGHT? NO! THE TIME IS NOW!

What are you going to do for Him?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ORANGE

I don't normally use the Living Bible, but enjoy the way it puts this particular passage. Psalm 49:

"LISTEN, EVERYONE! HIGH and low, rich and poor, all around the world - listen to my words, for they are wise and filled with insight.

I will tell in song accompanied by harps the answer to one of life's most perplexing problems: There is no need to fear when times of trouble come, even though surrounded by enemies! They trust in their wealth and boast about how rich they are, yet not one of them, though rich as kings, can ransom his own brother from the penalty of sin! For God's forgiveness does not come that way. For a soul is far too precious to be ransomed by mere earthly wealth. There is not enough of it in all the earth to buy eternal life for just one soul, to keep it out of hell.

Rich man! Proud man! Wise man! You must die like all the rest! You have no greater lease on life than foolish, stupid men. You must leave your wealth to others. You name your estates after yourselves as though your lands could be forever yours, and you could live on them eternally. But man with all his pomp must die like any animal. Such is the folly of these men, though after they die they will be quoted as having great wisdom.

Death is the shepherd of all mankind. And 'in the morning' those who are evil will be the slaves of those who are good. For the power of their wealth is gone when they die; they cannot take it with them.

But as for me, God will redeem my soul from the power of death, for he will receive me. So do not be dismayed when evil men grow rich and build their lovely homes. For when they die they carry nothing with them! Their honors will not follow them. Though a man calls himself happy all through his life - and the world loudly applauds success - yet in the end he dies like everyone else, and enters eternal darkness.

For man with all his pomp must die like any animal."

I'd like for you to answer a question for me. What's the difference between an orange? Think about the question as you go along. We will examine it later.

This study has to do with a topic, which is seemingly not controversial, for I see very little written on the subject today. It is a topic of little importance for I have never personally heard a sermon preached on the subject. It is a topic that is quickly becoming obsolete in our SOPHISTICATED WORLD for we never talk about it any more.

Though it is seemingly being put aside, I feel this doctrine is of utmost importance. It is to me a doctrine, which is imperative to our understanding of other doctrines.

Without this doctrine -- A PROPER concept of this doctrine: we cannot properly understand heaven; we cannot properly understand Christ's work on the cross; we cannot properly understand Christ's suffering on the cross; we cannot properly understand salvation; we cannot properly understand witnessing; we cannot properly understand evangelism; we cannot properly understand God's justice; we cannot properly understand God's holiness; we cannot properly understand God's righteousness - NEEDLESS TO SAY I BELIEVE THIS IS A DOCTRINE OF SOME IMPORTANCE!

Jesus spoke of a place just outside Jerusalem several times during His ministry. He spoke of the sanitary landfill just outside of Jerusalem. This landfill was large and constantly aflame with burning refuse, trash, and garbage. This city dump is the topic we want to deal with in our study.

Now, you're wondering what the Jerusalem sanitary landfill and a goofy question have to do with spiritual things RIGHT? TRUST ME! THEY RELATE - I PROMISE - YOU'LL SEE!

There are several terms in Scripture translated hell. Let's look at these briefly.

The Hebrew word Sheol is translated hell 31 of 65 times in the Old Testament. It is also translated grave. I think that a good study of the usage of the term might bring about the change of the translation grave to hell in many cases. The Greek word Hades is normally translated hell. Another Greek word, gehenna is translated hell. This is the word used of the sanitary landfill as well. It was originally the valley of Hinnom and in Christ's time signified the after tormented after life. (You might enjoy the background of the place: II Chr. 28:3; 33:6; 88:6; Jer 7:31) Christ uses the term in Mk. 9:44 "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." When Christ spoke of eternal punishment the Jews knew exactly what He was talking about!

Now! What do I mean by this somewhat obscure question? What's the difference between an orange? It is meant probably most of all to illustrate a great lack in our witnessing today.

There is only one logical answer to this question and that is this, "A banana doesn't have any bones." You say that doesn't make any sense. You probably right! HOWEVER, I believe it makes as much sense as some of the witnessing that goes on today in America, as well as around the world.

What do I mean? I'm glad you asked that question! Let me illustrate it for you. What facts do you present to a person when you tell them about Christ? You are a sinner. You need to be saved. Accept Christ and be saved.

IF this is all you include in your witness, I believe you are presenting a question very similar to, "What's the difference between an orange?" You have given them a question that probably makes no sense to them. You have told them they need to be saved - but the question in their mind is, "Saved from what?" If they ask you what they need to be saved from you will reply, "From your sin." Ha - who wants to be saved from their sin? Please tell me who wants to be

saved from their sin! FORGET IT! THEY ARE ENJOYING SIN TO THE HILT --- WHY BE SAVED FROM IT?

If you think for one minute that the average American is concerned about sin or even concerned about what sin might be --- you are not up to date. The average American today IF, and I mean IF, he knows what sin is, he certainly is not concerned about being saved from it. To save Joe America from sin is to take away all his fun.

John 8 talks about the sin of lying. If you were to save many Americans from only their lying you would render them speechless. Some people lie as if it were normal English grammar.

You see something has happened in America today! Nasty, mean old Lucifer has gone underground. He's convinced the unsaved that he doesn't exist. He's convinced the unsaved that there is no such thing as sin. If it's okay to you then it's okay! He's convinced the unsaved that there is no such thing as hell. (even if there is, it's only here on earth.) He's convinced the unsaved that everyone is going to heaven. He's convinced the unsaved that a loving God wouldn't have a judgment -- God loves us too much. He's convinced the saved that it isn't good to talk about hell -- that's too negative. He's convinced the saved that it's only a separation from God. He's convinced the saved that if we talk about hell it will scare people off. He's convinced the saved that hell isn't a useful point of evangelism.

TELL ME! If you tell a lost soul he's going to be "separated from God if he doesn't accept Christ," SO WHAT! HE'S SEPARATED FROM GOD NOW AND HE'S ENJOYING HIMSELF!

How do you approach the lost, concerning eternal separation from God? Do you use terms like, you'll be lost, you'll be separated from God, you won't enter heaven, you need to have a relationship with Christ, you will be condemned Or do you use the term Hell and describe what hell is, what it is going to be like, and how terrible it is going to be.

A television evangelist put it this way when speaking of the judgment day. Rough quote. "If you've repented then you will have a reward, but if you haven't repented -- pause -- oh what a day." I think that we need to be a little more specific!

I was reading in a fundamentalist magazine some years back and the man was communicating what was involved in the Gospel. His first three points were good but he ended with the point that your acceptance or refusal determines your testimony. THIS COMES FROM A FUNDAMENTALIST! A FUNDAMENTALIST PASTOR EVEN! Acceptance or refusal determines your eternal destiny not just your testimony. Personally the eternal destiny is a bit more important!

There was no mention of hell or coming punishment. This isn't the whole story - we need Paul Harvey, you know, The Rest of the Story!

Look at the tracts that are available today - I have looked for tracts for years that explain eternal hell. I did finally, just recently, find one that mentions hell and uses the concept.

There is a doctrine found in Scripture concerning this topic of Hell and I firmly believe that we had better get a handle on it and start using it in our witnessing and preaching! We don't talk about it anymore. We don't teach about it anymore. We don't preach about it anymore. We don't tell others about it anymore. Worst of all we aren't teaching about it in many of our schools and seminaries. To my best recollection I have never been taught about hell. In seven years of Bible schools and seminaries - not one class, study or even chapel message.

I read an article some time ago that was in one of the leading newsmagazines. It was on the declining American view of hell. One of the "theologians" that was interviewed mentioned that he thought hell was one of the doctrines of the church that theologians were struggling with. While they wrestle with doctrines people are dying and wrestling in torment - in Hell! Excuse me but I think we are blowing it in our evangelism!

Did the doctrine of hell just pass into the closet of ignored doctrines and die? NO! Scripture talks about it - we should also talk about it.

Let's talk about hell for a moment or two.

Let me share with you a few modern misconceptions of hell. Some say that God won't condemn anyone to Hell. In the first church that I pastored, in the first message I delivered, I was interrupted by a young hippie that wanted to ask me a question. He told me that God loved everyone and that He surely would not condemn nor judge anyone. I proceeded to share a few passages from the Word that countered his false philosophy. These people forget John 8 which teaches that there are two classes of people - God's children and the Devil's children. True, God's children will escape hell, however the children of the Devil will certainly face it!

Another current concept of hell is that we have hell here on earth. The starving, the crime ridden, the oppressed of the world are suffering their hell here on earth. How foolish a philosophy in view of the Biblical teaching on hell. No suffering here on earth can hold a candle, pardon the pun, to the torment and suffering of hell.

This concept and line of thinking blames everything on our society - not sin. Let's name sin as sin and not cover it up by using people's suffering as a crutch to justify such rebellion.

One of their claims is, "Alcoholism is a disease."

Bologna - it's sin. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that Americans spend millions of dollars per year to catch. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that is bottled and sold to the public for their enjoyment. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that is advertised on national Television. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that people are

reluctant to give up. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that is taxed in our country. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that can be purchased duty free on international flights. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that is served at meals and parties. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that you need to talk the patient into getting rid of. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease whose side effects are illegal. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease the Bible teaches against. If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that can keep you out of the Kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:10). If alcoholism is a disease, it is the only disease that is dispensed in restaurants.

The alcoholic has a terrible problem! We must help deal with it, but we need to stop calling it a disease!

Our televisions are full of; "Homosexuality is a different lifestyle." Bologna - it's sin. Our televisions are full of; "Living together is the in thing." NO! It's sin!

A recent talk show had a panel of young people that for one reason or another had chosen not to have intimate relations until married. The audience did not receive them well at all. In fact, they were almost held as odd or weird for their decision.

Let's face up to this garbage the world is handing us and call it what it is and deal with it as it is - SIN!

Others believe hell is only a term for the grave - when we die it's all over - "there ain't no more." This is usually based on the Old Testament translation of "sheol" as grave. (Or should we say poor translation.)

A woman with the Universalist Church was asked what she said to people that were dying. (This is a rough quote.) After a pause she said, "I just recently talked with my son - he was about to have surgery and they didn't know how it would come out. I tried to encourage him by letting him know what a good person he had been and that he had meant a lot to many people."
THANKS A LOT, MOM! WHAT A HORRIBLE WAY TO GO THROUGH LIFE - NOT KNOWING THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH!

Secular research has shown that there are fewer suicides in religious families. A measurable difference in the rates. They feel that a belief in an after life helps a person to cope with this life.

Don't be fooled into thinking it's only the depraved and ungodly that have these concepts of hell. Many main line denominations are teaching people that God is a God of love and that He would never condemn anyone. Surveys have been taken in main line denominations that show a large percentage of the ministers do not believe in a real Devil or a literal hell.

The sum and substance of what I've been saying is this: To the Jew, hell was an ever-present concept. This concept was carried over into the New Testament. The early church and later

church fathers held to a literal hellfire - a time of eternal torment. The great revivals of only a few decades ago were based on a strong belief in Hell. But today we seldom mention it.

I'd like to ask a question - can we today witness to a people who basically don't believe in hell - without telling them what hell is and what hell is like? Can they really make a proper decision concerning Christ if we've only told them half the information?

What's the difference between an orange? Do you want to be saved? TWO QUESTIONS. They seem to be of the same type, to me, in today's society!

The next question I'd like to ask: If I were to give you a pencil and paper how many things could you tell me about hell? Do we really know what Christ saved us from?

Let us take only a quick look at hell. I'm going to mention a topic concerning what hell is going to be like with reference, then a brief comment.

1. DARKNESS: Matt. 8:12 (outer darkness); Ps. 49:19 ("they shall never see light") When in the service we had darken ship drills during which we closed all outside hatches and portholes so that if you were only a few feet away on a cloudy night you could not see the ship. From time to time I would have to go out on deck without a flashlight ---- that's dark ---- you can feel the darkness --- you begin to wonder if you are going to get where you are going. You wonder if the next step is going to be a wet one! Many times when in on deck during darken ship, I would get on my hands and knees and feel my way along.

2. BOUND: Matt. 22:13 ("...bind him hand and foot, and take him away" [outer darkness]) This may be the idea of the grave clothes seen in Jn. 11:44. Wrapped as a mummy may well be the idea! When in Denver we attended a small church for a special speaker from India. After teaching was over we went to prayer on our knees. I was back in the corner where there wasn't any legroom and my knees don't take well to hard floors due to cracked cartilage. To make a long story short, the prayer time went a long time. As time went on the pain increased in my knees. Not wanting to make a lot of noise, I refrained from moving until I couldn't stand the pain any longer and I got up on my chair with much noise and embarrassment. At that moment I could identify, somewhat, with the binding of hell.

3. MEMORY: Luke 16 (rich man remembered) All the times you had the gospel presented to you. All the Bibles you could have read.

All the sermons you didn't listen to. The family and friends still alive (Luke 16:28 the rich man wanted Lazarus to be sent to testify to his five brothers - "lest they also come into this place of torment.").

4. CONSCIENCE: You will have all of your past sins to confront you for eternity. The story is told of a woman that had beaten her child to death. The woman finally went to the insane asylum because she could never get rid of the cries of her child. How much worse for eternity - thinking

of the wrong you had done?

5. LUST AND DESIRE: Rev. 22:11 indicates the nature of the person before death will carry over into eternity. Can you imagine the eternal, never-ending desire and lust of an alcoholic or an adulterer for their sin?

6. NO HOPE: Isa. 38:18 "For Sheol cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for they truth." Prov. 11:7 "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth." No hope of ever seeing light again. No hope of ever moving freely again. No hope of ever being released. No hope of ever having a clear conscience. Death ends it - no hope! These verses also destroy the philosophy that everyone will be given a second chance to accept Christ after death.

7. FIRE: Jude 7 ("...eternal fire"); Matt. 5:22 (... "hell fire"); Mark 9:44 ("fire is not quenched") The Old Testament sacrifices were a picture of the taking care of sin. As an Old Testament saint, you were to place your hand on the head of the sacrifice to indicate that you were accepting the death of the animal as a sacrifice for your sin. The sacrifice was then burned in your place. To the person today that has not placed his hand on the head of the sacrifice, Christ, we must tell them that they will be burned. There is one difference however for the sacrifice of the Old Testament was consumed. The Bible tells us that the eternal torment is forever and as the song goes, "that's a long, long time!"

8. COMPANIONS: Rev. 22:15; Rev. 21:8 (read) ("But the fearful, unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.") Murderers, liars, and robbers. Nice to know that the one next to you, if you could talk to him or see him, is a murderer. We are concerned with the company our kids keep here in this life - have we helped them with their company in the next life?

With companions like the preceding you will be in great fear. When I was little I had to walk along a very dark street. I would run as fast as possible but all the time I was running I could almost feel someone close behind. I would arch my back to avoid their clutches.

10. ISOLATION: Jude 13 This speaks not only of darkness but also of wandering stars. This indicates to me that there will be a great separation between the inhabitants of hell.

11. PAIN: Physical pain I'm sure. Mental pain. Knowing what you were missing by not being in heaven --- eternally knowing this! And they will know, for they will glimpse the glories of heaven as they bow at the feet of Jesus. (Phil. 2:9-11) Imagine - seeing the glories of Christ and heaven and then being cast into hell for eternity!

There are other things probably that we didn't cover, however, I would think this list is more than

adequate to get an unsaved person to thinking about whether he really wants to reject Christ or not.

My concept is that of bound hand and foot, floating through space, never seeing, only crying in torment because of the heat and pain. I had a dream once -- I was crying out, but there was no sound. I was in great danger and terror yet no one could hear me. I have often thought that this must be a small portion of what hell will be like.

It seems to me that we know very little about eternity, however I do believe that hell is going to be just as horrible to the unsaved as heaven is going to be wonderful for the saved.

Many don't see hell as being forever. The term forever indicates just that - forever. It is used of God continuing forever. We might mention Matt. 25:46 which says in a context of separation of the just and the unjust, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

(everlasting and eternal are the same word.) If hell isn't eternal then heaven isn't either, and this is unacceptable in light of Scripture!

To hold to anything except a literal, eternal hell is to reject part of Scripture.

Let's recap: By hell I am referring to eternal torment for the lost. Hell is a literal place of torment. Hell is not believed in by many people today. Because they don't believe in hell we must then teach them about it.

This may sound odd but missionaries in some countries of Europe have to teach people there is a God before they can witness.

We're, talking about: Do you want to be saved today? There, the impossible question is: Do you know God loves you? **THEY DON'T KNOW WHO GOD IS! PEOPLE IN AMERICA DON'T KNOW WHAT HELL IS!**

To what point of application have we come?

As witnessing Christians let's give the unsaved a proper understanding of what saved means. Tell them about hell and their place in it if they don't accept Christ as personal Savior. He needs to be saved from 1) his sin nature, and 2) a life of sin, as well as from 3) hell and 4) eternal separation from God.

Scripture gives both sides of the decision -- why shouldn't we? Jn. 3:16 for example contrasts everlasting life and perishing. Rom. 6:23 a tried and worn witnessing verse, yet how often we skim over the death part and get on to the gift and a decision based on a partial knowledge. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." Give them enough information to make a proper decision! (Sin brings death - Rev. 20 and 21 mention

this death. 20:15 and 21:8 "...Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.")

Let's think about how terrible hell is going to be. It may move us to witness a little more often. Let hell put some fire into your witnessing.

If you are not a born again Christian then you have this day been fully warned of your eternal destiny. You know what hell is going to be like and you have a decision to make. Not a "What's the difference between an orange" decision but an "accept Christ or go to hell" decision.

Christian, do you have a better understanding of salvation? Of what Christ did for you? Of heaven? Let's put a little hell into our teaching and preaching and witnessing.

Jeremiah at God's direction, a large number of times, warned the nation of Israel of the coming punishment if they did not turn to God. This was physical punishment for their sin and wickedness. If, for physical punishment that might come, there were so many warnings SURELY FOR SPIRITUAL PUNISHMENT WE SHOULD WARN THE LOST! In Jer. 36:3 God finally tells Jeremiah to write all that he had told Israel down on a scroll "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; That they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

May we warn our world, may we warn our country, may we warn our town, may we warn our families, that God is ready to "forgive" them.

Consider the following: The Bible tells us that 'all have sinned and come short of the glory of God' (Rom. 3:23)! You are sinners and deserve the very best that Satan has to offer and that is, his eternal repose, that is, his eternal dwelling place, that is, the eternal burning fire of hell."

The sinner is lost and on his way to hell and nothing can stop that descent into the place prepared for him lest he call on the merciful name of Jesus Christ.

Your choice is heaven or hell. Your choice is eternal delight or eternal agony. Your choice is eternal life or eternal death. Your choice is the refreshing waters of the river of life or the flames of hell. Your choice is eternity with the Father or eternity with the father of lies. Your choice is eternal comfort or eternal suffering. Your choice is eternal joy or eternal sorrow.

Your choice is a glorified body or a tormented body. Your choice is accept Jesus Christ as your Savior or accept the consequences of following the devil into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:10; 20:15)

That is if you call that a choice. TO ME THE CHOICE IS OBVIOUS TO THE MOST CASUAL OBSERVER! To put it as one flippant observer of the Gospel has put it; "It's turn or burn!"

Now if I were to preach like that in many churches today I'd never be asked to return. Today we don't confront like that. Today we don't condemn like that. Today we don't antagonize like that. Today we don't confront sin like that.

Today we "get to know." Today we "build friendships." Today we "build relationships."
TODAY OVER 3000 LOST SOULS SLIP INTO ETERNAL HELL PER HOUR --
SOMETHING IS WRONG! Think of it - while you eat your lunch or watch a television show
3000 lost souls die and go into eternal torment.

WHILE WE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS PEOPLE ARE DYING! Now relationships are important in some cases, but I think Christians may be hiding behind the covers of a book because it is very safe and comfortable - they can just "get to know" until spiritual things tumble into the conversation. This method works so well you've noticed how the number of conversions has been on the increase lately - churches are bulging - even Christ built relationships in the Gospels. Take the nobleman that came to Christ to ask him to heal his son (Jn. 4:46ff) - or the woman at the well (Jn. 4:5ff). He took several months becoming friends, right? NOT! to use a current terminology. Paul with the Philippian jailer. Paul had him over for a barbecue and took him deep sea fishing - and finally was able to witness to him, right? NOT!

NO! Christ didn't take weeks or days or hours - only minutes. NO! Paul gave out the simple message of the Gospel. NO! The church isn't growing - it's shrinking. One of the major fundamental movements set a panel to study why there was no growth in their organization. THEY DON'T NEED A PANEL - WE NEED TO WITNESS!

While we build relationships the Mormons are building temples and churches to house their new people. While we build relationships the Jehovah's Witnesses build halls to house their new people.

While we build relationships the cults are burying us in their false systems. I'm told that the number of Christians has not changed drastically since the early 1800's, yet world population as tripled!

While we build relationships the world is slipping into hell.

Yes, build your relationships with the lost, but don't use this as your only witnessing! Yes, build your relationships with the lost, but don't use it as an excuse for not confronting others with the Gospel.

Hell is an ever-present reality. Hell is an ever-present danger to the lost. Hell is an ever-present fact that we need to communicate to the lost!

You know the phrase "It's turn or burn" may be uncouth, but you have to admit that it gets the message across. The alternatives to accepting Jesus Christ are limited. Indeed they are only one

and that is "burn!"

We may be uncomfortable with the thought of the lost burning eternally but maybe that is why the Church has lost its zeal. Maybe that is why we aren't witnessing as we ought. Maybe that is why God isn't really blessing the Church. **MAYBE WE NEED TO GET UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE THOUGHT OF BURNING SOULS! MAYBE WE NEED TO GET UP IN THE MORNING AND SPEND A MOMENT OR TWO THINKING ABOUT THE ETERNAL TORMENT OF THOSE THAT WE WILL BE SEEING THAT DAY. MAYBE WE NEED TO EMPATHIZE WITH THOSE THAT WE HAVE KNOWN THAT HAVE GONE TO ETERNITY WITHOUT THE GOSPEL.**

"So shall it be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and separate the wicked from among the righteous," Matt. 13:49 Earlier in the chapter the Lord also mentions that the angels will be used for the gathering of the lost of the ages in preparation for their eternal state. Can you picture the multitude of angels scattered across the face of the earth seeking out those that are to be condemned to eternal torment?

One is reminded of the Michelangelo work which depicts the ferryman beating the lost from his boat onto the shore of Hell. The agony on the faces of those men only depicts a taste of the true agony that will be had for all eternity by those that refuse the precious work of the Cross. Michelangelo had a proper fear of hell. We need to give this concept to the lost.

We have been chosen to be ambassadors of the One that offers so freely this salvation and yet we fail so miserably in our duty to share this truth with the world!

Today nine out of ten full time Christian workers labor in the United States while one in ten labors on the foreign field, indeed to the Church's detriment, we cannot always get the one in ten to the field. Many are ready to be thrust out into the harvest fields yet there is no financial means whereby they might be sent.

There is another aspect to this study. What is the Christian's relationship to the eternal punishment? Some say we will not see any of this -- we will be in eternal joy. To those, I say this. CONSIDER Luke 16:26. It seems at the very least the lost and the righteous could see one another. It is also indicated that there may be a desire on the part of the righteous to help the lost yet they won't be able to. True, this is the intermediate state but I must wonder. CONSIDER Isa. 66:22-24. The context is God bringing Israel back from the ends of the earth and God states that they will ever be before Him. The indication is that somehow the tormented will be visible in some way to those that are eternally before God. I do not know for fact that we in eternal joy will see those in eternal torment, but there seems to be that possibility.

I would like to shift gears for a moment. While in Ireland I was speaking to an Irish gentleman about my trip over from Oregon. I mentioned that I had a layover in New York City. He looked at me as openly as could be and said, "Oh, I have a friend in New York City - do you suppose

you know him?"

The missionaries in Ireland have had great difficulty facing this attitude. This attitude of the world being like their world. Their world consists of a small town of a few thousand and maybe the neighboring town. They have no concept of what the real world is like, indeed, they are not really aware that there IS a world out there. This is not to speak against the Irish. I suspect that this is true in many countries of the world. It is their perception of the world around them.

In one town the missionaries have been able to reach only a few people that have not been out of county they live in for a look at the world. It seems that if a person leaves their home they find out the world is there. When they return to home they are much more receptive to the Gospel. Most of the converts there are people that have left and then returned.

We may find this quaint, or odd, or backward, but I fear most Christians are in a similar frame of mind. I fear that most Christians don't know that there is a world out there. I was recently told that Moody has released a survey that shows that within two years of conversion over 90% of Christians have no non-Christian friends. Ninety percent of us within two years of being saved have completely isolated ourselves from the lost.

Separation from the sin of the lost is a necessity, but separation from the lost is a sin. How can we obey the great commission if we have no contact with the lost world?

I believe that the Church has little concept of what the lost are thinking in our society today! Do we really know that there's a world out there? Do we really know that there are lost people everywhere on their way to hell?

INDEED, DO WE REALLY CARE THAT HALF THE WORLD HAS NEVER HEARD THE GOSPEL! Half the world is 2 billion. I was asked to take counseling time at an Awana for 3rd - 6th graders. I wanted to illustrate 2 billion. I used M&M's. To eat 2 billion M&M's you'd have to eat 274 3/4 bags per day for 50 years! I trust that the thought of two billion people has more meaning to you than M&M's, but maybe that will give you some idea of the magnitude of the job before missionaries today.

If the present missionary force today were to witness to one new person per day it would take that force over 130 years to reach the untold world as we know it today. Indeed, the world's population will increase by one billion in the next ten years!

Our generation is responsible for giving the gospel to our generation. How can we say we are serving God if we aren't obeying Christ's Great Commission? Let me quote it for you. "And Jesus came and spoke unto them saying, All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. Amen." Matt. 28:18,19,20

To just tell those that have never heard the gospel it would take a missionary force 5 times as large as we have today working a lifetime (30 years) witnessing to a new person every day of the year the rest of his life.

WE ARE NOT REACHING ALL NATIONS TODAY! INDEED, IF AN IMPARTIAL OBSERVER OF STATISTICS WERE TO LOOK AT THE DATA I'M SURE THAT HE WOULD CONCLUDE THAT WE ARE TRYING ONLY TO REACH OUR OWN NATION.

Indeed, some today are suggesting that we increase our emphasis in the U.S. We are spending 90% of our monies here now and not growing. How can we believe more money will help here? More heart, more service, more witnessing, YES. More money, I'm not sure.

Yes, there is a world out there! Yes, those millions are lost and on their way to hell! Yes, it is our responsibility to tell them! But we aren't.

One of Israel's great sins was not being a witness for their God. If a sojourner came to them to follow their God they would accept them in, but they did not go out to tell others of Jehovah. I Chr. 16:24 shows they were to tell of God! Today we have thousands of churches waiting for the lost to come into the services so the pastor can preach to them. Christ said Go, not wait. We are to Go - witnessing!

Maybe the personal testimony of a man in the torment that we've been speaking of will help you understand the importance of what I have said. Luke 16 is the account of Lazarus and the rich man. Both have died and Lazarus is in joy, while the rich man is in torment. "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Lu. 16:24 (verse 23 "being in torment"- verse 28 "this place of torment.")

Another passage that you might read is II Thess. 1:7-9, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"

Two billion plus are waiting for the light unto salvation! We spend more in America on pet care than on missions. We spent 6 times more on diet pop last year than on missions. (1985) Christians in the last two years spent as much on Christian tapes, records, and concerts as they did last year on missions (late 80's).

SOMETHING IS DRASTICALLY WRONG! Where are the priorities? A church that I know of pays for their custodian but does not pay their guest speakers. Pay to have the bathrooms cleaned, but not to have their flock fed. Many churches have more aerobics classes than prayer meetings. Many of these same churches preach against rock, yet use it to exercise with.

WHERE ARE THE PRIORITIES? We pack the church parking lots on Thursday night for the church softball league, yet we can't fill a small room on Wednesday night for prayer meeting. The Lord said to take up our cross daily. Some do -- that ball bat must kill their shoulders after awhile. We won't talk about the cost of the equipment and uniforms. Bible College graduates are turning down \$20,000 a year and a parsonage because it isn't enough money.

WHERE ARE THE PRIORITIES? We could mention the gross materialism that is loose in the church today. We could mention the million dollar buildings. We could mention statistics in-nausium! OUR PRIORITIES IN AMERICAN CHURCHES ARE TOTALLY MESSED UP! We want to be comfortable and have fun. Who cares about the world that is going to hell.

I was one of several missionaries at a conference recently at a Chinese church. The pastor took us out for authentic Chinese food. I won't go into the details of the food - you know, chicken's feet - let it suffice to say the little girls of one of the couples were not impressed. The next day we went out again for Chinese food. The mother was trying to get the little girl to eat something and the girl's very audible reply was, "But Mommy, that stuff makes me barf!"

I wonder about the Lord Jesus as He views the church in America today! Rev. 3:15,16 "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So, then, because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Jesus picked the illustration! -- not me! He is going to spew, spit, or vomit, depending on the translation this church out of His mouth. The Laodcean church made Christ sick. This stuff makes Christ barf!

Let us close with those words from the place of torment. "I am tormented in this flame." May they move us to action be it seeking a Savior or serving a Savior! "I AM TORMENTED IN THIS FLAME"

Remember 3000 lost souls slip into torment every hour - 24 hours per day - seven days per week - 365 days per year - almost 44 million souls per year. OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS BELIEVERS IS TO REACH OUR GENERATION.
"I am tormented in this flame"

I would like to quote from a Bethany Farms Christmas card that I received in 1986. (Copyright 1985)

"Twas the Night Before Jesus Came"

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house
Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care
in hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
And Mom in her rocker with baby on her lap
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter.
I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here
With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
I knew in a moment this must be THE DAY!

The light of His face made me cover my head
It was Jesus! returning just like He had said.
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which He held in His hand,
Was written the name of every saved man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name;
When He said! It's not here! my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love
He gathered to take to His Father above.
With those who were ready He rose without a sound.
While all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;
Oh, if only I had been ready tonight.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear;
The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
There's only one life and when comes the last call
We'll find that the Bible was true after all!

MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL

I would like direct our thoughts to Revelation 3:14-22 in this section. We will follow this outline.

- I. Salutation 14
- II. Confrontation 15-19
 - A. Works Revealed 15-17
 - B. Council Delivered 18
 - C. Return Wanted 19
- III. Invitation 20,21
 - A. Method of Return 20
 - B. Reward of Return 21
- IV. Exhortation 22

As Christians we need a talking mirror like the one the stepmother had in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The stepmother was assured of her beauty until one day when: "Mirror mirror on the wall, who is fairest of them all? She waited, smiling, for the expected answer. But this time the mirror replied 'Through all the land for many years your beauty won you fame; But now a lovelier maid there is and Snow White is her name.' Marian's face grew ugly with hatred and anger. The girl must die." And later in the story when she again ask "who is fairest of them all": "Oh Queen, your beauty is full bright, but fairer far is still Snow White who deep in the dark woods doth dwell, with seven dwarfs who love her well."

The mirror was dreadfully honest - not like other mirrors that tend to reflect only what WE want to see. We need Christ to be our mirror - Someone that will be truthful with us!

Psalm 78 and 105, as well as other texts, remind Israel of what their past was like so that they could consider where they were, and consider their condition in the present. This is a principle used in business - you look at the year's profits to see if you are winning or losing over the previous year so that you can plan the new year.

As a church we need to look at the past to see where we are in relation to where we were in the past.

One of the main things that I learned in one of my Church History class was that the Catholic Church today is what its predecessors did with situations that they lived in in the past.

As I considered the events and the decisions made, I observed that as the church went through a part of its growth, the changes away from the scriptural way were so slight over so many years that no one noticed. Many of the adaptations seemed to be the logical next step in everyday life. **THEY JUST FORGOT TO LOOK BACK TO SEE WHERE THEY HAD BEEN!**

I have been musing over the church that I was saved in about thirty years ago. The changes that the church has gone through are tremendous. When I was saved the church was ultra conservative. The thought of the pastor preaching in one of the town's denominational churches and their pastor preaching in our church was unheard of in the 50's, yet in the 70's this came to pass. The denominational church had not changed, so you know which one did. In the 50's they had a yearly missions conference with many missionaries from the field. We received word recently that they had their first conference in many years. The last one I heard about was not staffed by missionaries from the field, but the heads of missions.

In the 50's the group of churches that the church was with was also very conservative, yet today within its ranks are men that would totally reject the teachings of the 50's on truth and ethics. Needless to say, we MUST look back to see where we were, so that we can return to what we once were.

Rev. 3:15,16 State, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

IT IS AN UTTER IMPOSSIBILITY FOR US TO KNOW IF WE ARE COLD OR HOT OR LUKEWARM UNLESS WE LOOK BACK TO SEE WHERE WE WERE - BASED ON THE BIBLE - AND COMPARE IT TO WHERE WE ARE!

Let me summarize the concepts:

HOT: Christ knew their "WORKS"

Ephesus 2:1-3/labors/patience/can't bear evil/hast labored and not fainted/(2:5 states they are to return to the first works so these must not be the first works.)/hate deeds of the Nicolaitans (Nicolaitans were involved in immorality and eating meats offered to idols and skirting on or at least identifying with paganism.)

Smyrna 2:9/tribulation/poverty/(tribulation and poverty probably related to their enduring the conditions)

Pergamum 2:13/hold fast Christ's name/haven't denied His faith

Thyatira 2:19/love/service/faith/patience/works

Sardis 3:4/some have not defiled their garments.

Philadelphia 3:9-10/hast a little strength/kept His word/"hast not denied my name"/"kept the word of my patience"

Let us recap what HOT might mean from this text: laboring, patient, hate evil, hate false

doctrine, withstanding tribulation, withstanding poverty, loving, faithful, serving, keeping the faith and upholding the name of Christ

What are the ramifications of works like these? Regularity at church, regularity of giving, doing something in the assembly, witnessing, speak against evil, speak against false teaching, and caring for one another

Now let us look at COLD.

Ephesus 2:4/left 1st love

Pergamum 2:14/have some among them that eat meat offered to idols and who commit fornication/15 have some that hold doctrine of Nicolaitans.

Thyatira 2:20/prophetess that is teaching fornication and eating of meat offered to idols.

Since most churches do not have people that eat meat offered to idols we can't discuss this unless you apply the principle of partaking of those things which the lost are involved in. In that case we could spend a book or two considering the believers problems in our day.

The world has their movies, which are full of material that is not correct for Christian minds; indeed, it is not fit for the minds of the lost. Many Christians do not go to the temple to watch the movie, but they don't mind going to the market and watching those same movies when they are on the television.

Let us consider now the thought of FIRST LOVE.

What might be meant by "first love?" Revelation 2:5 states "Remember, therefore, from where thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works,"

The first love is works! What are the works of "First Love"? What are some of the works or acts that are recorded in scripture when people first met and followed God?

Matt 4:18-20 Peter and Andrew left their lively hood and followed Christ.

Matt 4:21,22 James and John left their living and their father.

Matt 9:9 Matthew left a very good income to follow Christ.

Acts 6 Stephen went preaching after serving tables

Acts 8:39 The Eunuch went away "REJOICING".

Acts 9:20 Saul went preaching.

Acts 16:15 Lydia showed hospitality and provision.

What are some of the things which you have seen new Christians do as a result of their newfound

salvation? Witness, give all they can, read the Bible, go to every church meeting and Bible study they can, crave fellowship with other Christians, volunteer for all the jobs they can find in the church, pray, and talk about everything that they are learning.

I once asked a Bible study to list for me some of the attributes of a new believer. The group was quite prolific. I literally filled a fifteen-foot blackboard with a list of characteristics. I stepped back and asked why the new believer was involved in all these things. One of the older women quipped, quite honestly and seriously, that the new believers get over it. HEAVEN FORBID THAT THEY GET OVER IT! WHY AREN'T OLDER BELIEVERS AS THEY ONCE WERE?

We know many items that make up a church that Christ is satisfied with! Are you as an individual satisfactory as you look through this list? Is the Church in the United States satisfactory as you look through this list? Is your church satisfactory as you consider it?

WHAT CHANGES HAVE WE SEEN IN THE CHURCH IN THE LAST 20 YEARS?

BAD CHANGES:

A move to the center on the philosophical attitude in child discipline instead of on the Word of God.

A move to recommend a book to a person in trouble rather than The Book, the Bible.

Though missions giving is up dollar wise it has decreased drastically in relation to inflation.

Interest in missions is on the decline. This is usually due to the pastor not being interested; thus the congregation is seldom challenged.

Lifestyle evangelism seems to have tended toward the laid back approach to evangelism which is usually so laid back that it doesn't get done.

We are moving toward an entertainment air in our services - focusing on people and their enjoyments rather than God and his glorification. (Orchestras/Plays/Tapes/Acted out illustrations)

Move away from Bible Studies in our Sunday Schools to a more trendy Topical Studies method. Usually resulting in a lot of man's wisdom and not so much of Gods.

We are moving away from the concept of "SHEPHERD" and toward the concept of "RULING ELDER". Many pastors view themselves as the only intelligent life form in a church that can not possibly exist with out his total leadership. This is not to say I am against an Elder form of government.

We have lost the concept of "We are co-laborers with Christ" - we have relegated Christian workers into a hierarchy of importance.

A recent poll in a "Fundamentalist University" reports that in a survey of students ask to rank the Churches workers in order of "importance and value", they found that the Missionaries were "without exception" rated at the bottom below the custodian.

We are losing the concept of "ministry". True the pastor of a church should be rewarded for his labors however we have men turning down \$20,000 per year plus a parsonage so that they can wait for the \$50,000 pay package they hope for. This is not entirely a pastoral problem for we just received a report from one of our personal missionaries that is required to have \$2,827 per month for a stateside ministry -- that's \$33,924 per year. Hummmmmmm!!!! That is more than the average teacher makes in the public school system in America in 1992.

When I told my father that I was going to Bible College to become a minister his reply was, "Well there's good money in that." At the time this was a Methodist or Presbyterian outlook but it is now becoming a fundamentalist outlook.

We are moving to an "intellectualism" in our schools, which is detracting from the preaching of the Word!

We are moving toward inclusivism, which can only lead toward ecumenism ultimately. Illustration: The music advertised on a fundamental Baptist bulletin board in the 80's. A singer that had been on a recent Billy Graham crusade singing in a Pentecostal church. The concert was being arranged and financed by a Conservative Baptist Seminary.

The Charismatic and Charismatic Catholic get together might fit in here as well.

GOOD CHANGES:

We have backed away from the list of no-no's of the 50's but I fear we have left a void of "nothing nothing."

The Christian School movement has been good in many respects, in that it has taken the children out of the Secular Humanist environment of the public schools.

We have finally realized that the church leader can also be involved in Politics to the extent that our system of government allows. Since many of the early leaders of our country were very religious men the precedent was set in the early days of our government. Involvement to the detriment of an ongoing ministry is wrong however.

Let us draw some conclusions. What is the bottom line then?

WHERE DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE ON THIS LIST? WHERE DO YOU FEEL YOUR

CHURCH IS ON THIS LIST? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR CHURCH TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION?

While driving in the mountains a number of times I have felt that we were going slightly uphill yet I had observed that we were gaining speed with no increase of pressure on the gas pedal. I would ask my wife for her opinion and she would confirm that we were going uphill, yet the reality of the speedometer said different. When I looked in the rear view mirror I could see very clearly that we were going down hill. I have told this to others and they all tell me of similar times in their own driving. I'm sure there is a scientific explanation for this, but even without the explanation I think this illustrates well what I wish to communicate to you. We sometimes as individuals and as churches continue forward without looking back and what we perceive as good, may well be bad, if we were to look back to see where we have been.

We often have a wrong perception of what we are doing. Indeed, sometimes we refuse to believe the obvious facts of the situation and opt for the perception of good. Only when we look back to the Standard of the Bible and the example of Christ can we see where we really are.

Rev 3:17 is the condemnation - they were a mess yet perceived themselves as well and good. "Because you say, I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked," They were gauging their condition by their worldly possessions and situation.

Chadron, Nebraska was hit by a very bad hailstorm in about 1986. Cars were damaged extensively, as were houses and outdoor equipment. Many of the townspeople were in deep depression for several days over the loss of their possessions. It is interesting that God classifies Materialism as a heart problem in Matt. 6:19-21. Our ultimate reality should never be things!

Instead of BUILDINGS, BUSES, BUDGETS, AND BALL GAMES or PASTORS, PULPITS, PEWS, AND PROGRAMS lets have WILLINGNESS, WITNESSING, WORK, AND WALK!

May we take time to think about our own lives in relation to where we were and where we ought to be. May we take time to think about our church and reflect on what we were and what we are. Yes, there are some negatives in the past that are well to be rid of, however, are some of the positives gone? And have we maybe picked up some new negatives?

Let us look to the Word and Christ as our example not to other people, or other churches! MAY WE PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE US HIS PERSPECTIVE ON OUR LIVES AND ON OUR CHURCH AS CHRIST GAVE HIS PERSPECTIVE TO THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA!

A chart follows, which may help you see the passage more clearly.

Let us draw some application to all of this information.

1. Verses 20-22 are an open invitation to follow Christ. This is open to believers. Those that overcome will sit with Christ.

2. Our own opinion and estimation of our spiritual lives can, and probably is faulted. We must ask God for HIS opinion and estimation. Taking time with God in prayer asking that He would show us problems in our lives might assist in this area.

Compare yourself to Christ Himself. This will give you a proper view of your own life.

3. If God is rebuking or chastening you, then the only logical thing to do is to repent and clean up your life. Chastening may be effecting you in the area of family, health, finances or just plain problems.

4. The Laodiceans were gauging their condition on worldly possession and situations. They were gauging themselves according to temporal things, not spiritual.

Materialism was their ultimate reality. Take time to read Matt. 6:19-21. Materialism is a heart problem as well as a mental addiction.

5. It would seem that being luke warm is like calling yourself a Christian that is spiritual, when in reality you are not involved in any spiritual activities. The hot person would be very active, while the cold would be someone that is outwardly rejecting the Christian life - carnal.

6. The Philadelphia church in the historical interpretation represents the great missionary church of the last century. Laodicea on the other hand is the lukewarm church that is not following through with their predecessor. The Philadelphia church had an open door to the lost, but the Laodicean church has no time for such things.

How is your temperature? Are you carnal and inactive, are you "spiritual" and inactive, or are you truly spiritual and active. God wants at least the cold or hot, but preferably the hot. At least if you are cold, the world and believers know where you are. If you are lukewarm, you only look good and are a poor example of Christianity.

LET'S TAKE A TEST

Let's take a quick test to see just how much you know about missions.

FILL IN YOUR BLANKS ABOUT MISSIONS!

1. Today we have approximately 5 billion people on the earth. By the year 2012 there will be _____ billion people on the earth.
2. _____ people die in India every day without hearing the gospel.
3. Population increases in the world each year at the rate of _____ people per year.
4. There are _____ missionaries on the field today.
5. There will be _____ of these missionaries retiring before 1994.
6. There is one Christian worker for every 230 people in America. There is one Christian worker for every _____ people in the world.
7. The average Christian gives _____% of his income to the church.
Of that percentage _____% goes on to foreign missions.
8. _____ lost people die in America every day.
9. While Islam (Muslims) has increased 500% in the last 50 years, Christianity has increased _____% in 50 years.
10. _____% of evangelical Christians are witnessing Christians.
11. _____ lost people die in the world every hour.
12. The average Christian earns \$ _____ per year.
13. One Christian book publisher spends \$ _____ per year on postage to ship books. (That's at the 1990 book rate which runs about \$1 per pound.)
14. In 1985 the total giving to the Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker and Pat Robertson ministries was \$ _____ .
15. If there are 10 million evangelical Christian families in America and they earned an average

of \$20,000 per year, how much money would be given to missions if every family tithed to missions? \$ _____ .

ANSWERS TO TEST:

1. 16
2. 4,000
3. 77 million/that's 146 per minute
4. 50,000
5. 30,000
6. 100,000
7. 4% and 15%
8. 562
9. 4.7%
10. 50%
11. 2200
12. 29,000
13. 1 million
14. 693 million
15. 20 billion

SCRIPTURE READING: "He who testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20

The figures that follow have been gathered over the years 1984-91 from books, magazines, newscasts etc. I will just list and comment on the facts as I have heard and read them. I believe that this will be the most effective method of communicating all of the information. Though these facts are a little old, I doubt that things have changed for the positive in recent years.

In Christ's time there were about 250 million people. In 1620 world population doubled for the first time. It reached 500 Million. In 1840 world population doubled to one billion people.

In 1930 world population doubled to two billion people. In 1960 world population increased to three billion people. In 1987 it has been announced that we are at five billion people. OVER DOUBLE 1930 LEVEL!

Most agree that the population will be six billion before the turn of the century. (World Census Bureau states 6.2 billion by the year 2000.) According to some, ONE BILLION OF THESE PEOPLE WILL BE MUSLIMS, ONE BILLION OF THESE PEOPLE WILL BE IN CHINA, ONE BILLION OF THESE PEOPLE WILL BE IN INDIA. (I recently heard that the figures are

even more drastic than these are.)

In 1988 there were 5 Billion and by 2000 some say there will be 8 Billion and by 2012 there will be 16 Billion, according to a tape from Evangelical Teacher Training Association ("CAN I MAKE A DIFFERENCE").

One half of the world's population has never heard of Jesus Christ. That is 2.5 Bill. in 1991. I have heard television people mention that the world has heard the gospel because it is going around the world via television and radio. That is true if every man woman and child in the world have access to radios or televisions sets - which is absurd to assume.

Thousands of lost people die in the world every hour.

To just zero in on one country, let us consider India. In India 950 of every 1000 villages have no one to tell them of the gospel. Thousands die in India every day without hearing the Gospel.

It is estimated that today there are four to five thousand missionary positions open. ANYONE AVAILABLE?

Population increases by 77 million per year.

Estimates of numbers of missionaries on the field with the Gospel range from 50,000 to 80,000, but I see the 50,000 most of the time. That is all shades of Christianity.

It is important to know that reports from Moody Monthly Oct. 87 tell us that 30,000 of those missionaries will retire by 1994 and that we only have about 5000 candidates preparing at this point in time.

Again, ANYONE AVAILABLE?

The Mormon Church has doubled their missionary force since 1973 to 30,000 workers. (1988) (I believe these are permanent workers. I have seen figures of 200,000 fully supported missionaries which would be the short termers on bicycles.) Is it any wonder that 4000 people/week become Mormon.

Mormons take in \$3.5 million per day from offerings and business transactions. (1986 figures) That's 1 1/4 billion a year. That's almost comparable to Saddam Hussien's income!

For every one convert to another faith from Mormonism there are 40 that leave other faiths for Mormonism. (from Lela Gilbert, Jeremiah Films)

In case you would like to know, the tax-free status of religious organizations costs taxpayers millions in lost taxes. The Buddhists once had two city blocks in the down town area of one of

our major Midwestern cities with office and apartment high rises on them. The small temple was on one side of the property and the whole thing was tax-free.

The Jehovah Witness's have for every person baptized, visited 740 hours and distributed 1,650 copies of their magazines. That's over 2 hours a day and 4.5 magazines a day. HOW'S YOUR VISITATION THESE DAYS CHRISTIAN?

I've been told that there are about as many Protestants in America now as in 1830 yet the population has tripled. This would indicate that Christians aren't doing all that well at home.

I once sat through a message by the representative of a home mission organization. The messenger was questioning the cost effectiveness of foreign missions. I don't think that the cost effectiveness of American church conversions is all that good either.

There is one Christian worker for every 230 people in America. There is one Christian worker for every 100,000 abroad. (There are approximately 1 million full time Christian workers in America while there are only 50,000 foreign missionaries.)

The average Protestant gives 3% of his income to church or charity. In 1980 Christians gave 4% of their income to the church and 15% of that 4% went to missions. 1980 missions income was \$928 million.

The head of the missions department at Appalachian Bible College has a book out. He mentioned there were 90 Million unevangelized in America in 1987. He mentioned there are 40 Million evangelical Christians in America in 1987. That is 2 unevangelized persons per Evangelical Christian. If we each would witness to two people in the next year we could evangelize the United States in one year. Actually if you think about it the ratio of 2 to 1 is sick when compared with the 50,000 trying to reach the 2.5 billion on the foreign field. AND SOME TODAY CALL FOR SPENDING MORE HERE AT HOME, WITH SOME EVEN SUGGESTING TAKING FOREIGN DOLLARS FOR HOME MISSIONS!

I. THE NEED

World Religions in 1986

1. Islam	14 %
2. Roman Catholic	11.3 %
3. Hindu	10 %
4. Confucian	5.5 %
5. Buddhist	4.9 %
6. Protestant	6.4 %
7. Eastern Orthodox	1.8 %
8. Animist (Primitive)	3 %

9. Shinto	2 %
10. Taoist	1.7 %
11. Jewish	.3 %
12. Other	20 %

Microsoft's Encarta lists Christianity at almost 1.8 billion, Roman Catholics at 1 billion, Muslims at near 1 billion, Hindus at about 700 million, Buddhists at about 300 million and the nonreligious at about 850 million. Protestants are listed at almost 400 million. ARE WE LOOSING THE MISSIONS THRUST OF THE PAST?

Over one Billion call themselves Christian in the world today. HOWEVER, The following gives a little clearer picture for us.

PROTESTANTISM -- 6th IN THE WORLD! After almost 2000 years!

The communist party since 1945 has subjugated 6000 people per hour or 144,000 per day. At one time they controlled 1/4 of the earth's population. We were so excited in the early 90's because of the sweeping changes in the communist world, yet we still have a large part of the world's population under communist rule.

Christianity increased almost five percent in the last fifty years, but the Muslim world increased 100 times that in the same fifty years.

Need we suggest that the Protestant world is losing ground not gaining. We need to understand that all the isms of the world are pouring money into their evangelism, while we pour a small percentage of our finances into evangelism.

Just some facts:

For 50,000 people (the number of missionaries on the field today) per day to hear the Gospel in their own language it would take 165 years to tell 1/2 the world now living about Christ.

World Evangelical Fellowship estimates that there are about 70-150 million WITNESSING Christians today. Estimates say that there are 259 Million believers in the world so about 1/2 are witnessing Christians.

Gallup in 1980 reported 50% of Evangelicals in U.S. considered reaching the world for Christ a priority. Only 10% of the clergy felt their church had a successful missions program. (FOM May 86 vol xvi #2 p3)

THIS IS ONLY A PART OF THE PICTURE!

IT GETS WORSE!

Present population increase = 77 million per year, that's 210,959 per day, 8,790 per hour or 146 per minute. That is a lot of people for 50,000 missionaries to reach!

Christians represent 6% of world population

To maintain 6% of 77 mill increase it would take 4,620,000 new converts/year. That's one new convert per 59.74 Christians. Check the numbers in ten years and see if we were able to gain one convert per 59 of us believers!

If we were able to do this we will see a .04% increase in Christians in the world. Let me ask you a question. Would you put out \$100,000 at .04% as an investment? NO. Why should God be happy over a .04% interest on His Sons investment - His life!

With 77 million per year increase in population if 50,000 missionaries decided to only deal with the increase they would have to witness to 1540 people per year, or 4.2 people/day 7 days/week. Every year! That 77 million figure will increase yearly also.

In 1984 5,417 people per hour died on earth. 2200 per hour die without ever hearing of Christ.

There are 16,000 distinct cultural groups with no church. (22,000 in the world)

There are 7,000 languages in world -- 5,000 have no scripture in their language.

2,000 tribes have no written languages.

50,000 missionaries out today. Catholics in 1977 reported 138,000 in service.

There were over 500 Islamic centers in the US in 1989. It has been well reported that the Muslims are spending millions to propagate their beliefs around the world.

Over the next 10 years the US will retire missionaries 4 times faster than recruits will be found.

94% of all ordained ministers in the world minister to the 9% whose mother tongue is English. 6% minister to the other 91% of the world's people.

90% of all Protestants are among the 9% who speak English.

CAN WE SAFELY SAY THERE IS A NEED? IT'S OBVIOUS -- THERE IS A NEED!

II. THE RESOURCES

Churches give approximately fifteen percent of their receipts to missions. I've seen figures in the area of one billion dollars per year in recent years for foreign missions in all Protestant works.

I recently read that 20% of givers give 80% of income to churches. Think about that! It ought to put 80% of us to our knees to ask what we can do!

If you do some figuring the average believer gives less than the price of a cup of coffee per day to missions (about thirty-five cents).

"Giving declined by 8.5 percent from 1968 to 1985, while disposable income increased by 31 percent. The average percentage of the disposable income given to the church dropped from 3.05 percent to 2.79 percent during that time period. One researcher commented that 'people are placing a higher value on their life-styles than on their church.'" (a survey of 31 denominations. ANAM NOTES May Aug. 1988)

The United States is richer by far than any nation in history. While the United States has only 6% of the world's population, this country has been blessed with:

- 50% of the world's wealth.
- 63% " " " manufactured goods.
- 29% " " " railroads.
- 58% " " " automobiles.
- 44% " " " trucks.
- 56% " " " telephones.
- 43% " " " radios.
- 35% " " " electrical output.
- 26% " " " steel.
- 29% " " " petroleum.
- 22% " " " coal.

A few years back the save the _____ river front fund was created in Oregon. \$850,000 was the goal. In only weeks \$1.5 million came in.

Larry Poland in his book "Rise to Conquer" mentions a pastor showing him the new church. It's cost was over \$800,000 and was awaiting its \$125,000 organ. In the hall Larry was shown with pride a bronze plaque - "Our Missionary". He told the pastor they could be supporting 100 missionaries. His reply was this and I quote - He "laughed heartily".

1988 Christmas report on TV news mentioned that the average American child would get \$200 worth of toys for Christmas.

TRY THIS ONE CHRISTIAN! In 1985 \$400 MILLION WAS SPENT ON SPIRITUAL CONCERTS AND RECORDS AND TAPES IN THE US! Do you want to total all the books, films and videos up?

I received a letter in 1987 from one of the nations Christian publishers. They mentioned they

mail over two tons of books per day. I don't know what non-profit postage rates are but normal postage in 1989 was approximately one dollar per pound and that figures to over a million dollars per year for postage alone to mail out all the books we order.

It was reported that 6.1 million people went through PTL'S holiday resort a few years ago. IMAGINE! If each person had donated \$10 for an investment fund to support missionaries they could have set up 300 \$200,000 accounts. 300 couples could go fully supported to the field and live on the interest. The principle would earn interest until the Lord comes. 300 couples per year!

It takes six times what it took in 1966 to put a person on the mission field.

It takes eleven times what it took in 1946 to put a person on the field.

It takes twelve times what it took in 1926 to put a person on the field.

It takes thirty two times what it took in 1906 to put a person on the field. (from SIM Now. Nov/Dec 86 p7)

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

They say there are 40 million evangelicals in the US. If we assume an average income of \$20,000 per year and assume an average family of four, that is 10,000,000 families. If each family sacrificed a bit and gave 10% to missions it would put \$20 Billion into missions. THAT'S 800,000 FULLY SUPPORTED MISSIONARIES AT \$25,000/year. 16 TIMES AS MANY AS WE HAVE NOW ON THE FIELD! WE COULD MULTIPLY OUR MISSIONS FORCE IMMEDIATELY! TO 16 TIMES AS BIG AS IT IS TODAY!

IV. THE EXCITING NEWS

SIM reports 20,000 non-western missionaries on the field today! They also predicted that the non-western missionary would make up the majority in only a few years. (1987)

A new theological institution opens in the third world each day. (Church around the world Aug 87)

While we are here we might mention that the 3rd world equals in 1989 about 2.5 Billion people and they have 17% of the worlds wealth. Yet they have 20,000 workers out! (from Mission Handbook 12th Edition 1979)

Missionaries in Brazil and many other countries are having good success in reaching people and planting churches. The results are there if only we could get the workers out there.

A QUOTE TO CONSIDER:

"ARE MISSIONARIES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TOTEM POLE?"

"Dr. Don Sisk of Baptist International Missions, Inc., recently said that he has observed in visiting fundamental churches around the country that few if any prominent pastors have children of their own on the mission field. Is it possible that, regardless of our rhetoric, our children have sensed that being a missionary is really not important?"

"A young lady at a well known fundamental university recently surveyed her classes for a sociology project. The question was 'Rate the employees of the local church according to their value and importance.' Those included were pastor, assistant pastor, youth pastor, music director, evangelist, missionary, secretary, school teacher, janitor, musicians, etc. Without exception, missionaries were last on every list, even below the janitor. Frankly, that astonished me. Whatever message we are putting out, our attitude toward missions and missionaries is coming through loud and clear to our young people.

"Have you asked God to call your children and grandchildren to the mission field lately? It's not too late to start." (Pastor Norman Pyle; Riverdale, Georgia; from FOM's Focus on Missions vol. xvii #1 2-87)

I mentioned this quote in a church where I was speaking. We were at the time missionary appointees, and we had recently taken the churches custodial duties over to help make ends meet. When I mentioned the fact that the missionary was listed under the janitor, I also mentioned that I supposed that made us social climbers! NOT REALLY FUNNY, BUT TRUE.

Indeed, what messages are we giving to our young people these days?

II Pet. 3:9 mentions "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." (NASB)

We have over TWO BILLION lost people to tell of our LORD!

HOW WILL YOU CHANGE YOUR LIFE TO BETTER ACCOMPLISH THAT JOB?

HOW WILL WE CHANGE OUR CHURCHES?

HOW WILL WE CHANGE OUR PASTORS?

HOW WILL WE CHANGE OUR SCHOOLS?

HOW WILL WE CHANGE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?

THE GREAT COMMISSION IS STILL IN EFFECT!

THE GREAT COMMISSION CARRIES WITH IT SELF RESPONSIBILITIES.

MAY WE FACE UP TO THESE RESPONSIBILITIES!

MAY WE BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS!

James N. Spurgeon

"A job is at your choice;
A ministry is at Christ's Call.

"In a job you expect to receive;
In a ministry you expect to give.

"In a job you give something to get something;
In a ministry you return something that has already been given to
you.

"A job depends on your abilities;
A ministry depends on your availability to God.

"A job done well brings you praise;
A ministry done well brings honor to Christ."

"He who testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord
Jesus." Rev. 22:20

I'd like to close by reading a portion of the Hymn LIVING FOR JESUS.

VS 4. "Living for Jesus through earth's little while, My dearest treasure, the light of His smile;
Seeking the lost ones He died to redeem, Bringing the weary to find rest in Him. O Jesus, Lord
and Savior, I give myself to Thee, For Thou, in Thy atonement, Didst give Thyself for me; I own
no other Master, My heart shall be Thy throne; My life I give, hence-forth to live, O Christ, for
Thee alone."

MISSIONS IS

(First published as an article in the IFCA "VOICE" Jan/Feb. 1985)

Can you define "Missions"? If you can, please do so! "Missions" is a term which has undergone a drastic redefining in the past few years.

"Missions" fifteen years ago meant something that was honorable - something that was based on faith - something that had meaning to most pastors - something that was a part of the church.

Is this a valid definition in 1989? Let us consider a few comments that pastors have made recently that might make you wonder if "Missions" really has the same meaning that it used to have:

1. "If I don't personally know or if someone doesn't recommend them to me, I won't have a missionary in my church."
2. "I get so much mail from missionaries that I just throw it all away without reading it."
3. "I've never had a missionary in my church that was going to country 'X', so I asked you to come."
4. "Our budget just won't allow us to have any more missionaries in to speak."
5. "You can have five minutes in our morning service to present you work."
6. "Oh, you aren't with the same mission that 'Joe Smith' is with - Oh, I thought you were when I asked you to come."
7. "If there are so many missionaries that can't raise their support, why don't they just get busy and minister here?"
8. "The missionaries that tell a lot about themselves are the ones that get the money in our church."
9. "We can't find a missionary in this state in the summer when it's hot, but in the winter when the weather is nice they are just thick." (What missionary shouldn't consider that one!)
10. "I am a missionary pastor, and I don't want to have anyone in until I am fully supported myself." (This writer has been a partially supported pastor and assistant pastor in churches for ten years and never once found that a missionary detracted from financial support given by churches. If anything, the people were challenged to a deeper commitment to the Lord which naturally bore fruit in the area of finance.)

This list does not include the many and varied comments from men that want to make it clear that if you don't belong to THEIR group, you don't speak in THEIR church. (The fact that missionaries from THEIR group are out raising support in OTHER THAN THEIR group does not seem to bother them.)

In and of themselves these comments and many others like them do not constitute a problem, but when a missionary is faced with such comments on a regular basis, he must begin to wonder about the status of the missions program in this present time.

When nine out of ten pastors say they have a full schedule or that their budget won't allow for any more missionary speakers or both, a person must wonder - just WHERE IS the LOR OF THE HARVEST working?

The Word tells us to pray that the Lord of the Harvest send forth workers. We can be very confident that the fLord of the Harvest has not changed, yet we have a unique situation today. We have laborers ready, willing and able to go to the foreign field, but they cannot because they lack the financial support from the church. Are we really praying as we ought? Are we really committed to missions, or are we just giving lip service to the lost world around us?

Many pastors relate that they receive 3 to 5 requests per month from missionaries seeking funds. Many veteran missionaries are returning home to raise additional support in the middle of their term. Others are unable to return to the field after their furloughs because they have lost so much support.

This is NOT written as a missionary pointing a finger at the church but as a concerned Christian asking both the church and missions where we are in relation to where we were twenty years ago as churches and as mission agencies.

What has happened to "missions" in the last fifteen years? May a few suggestions be made for consideration?

STUFFISHNESS

We have fallen into the trap of materialism right along with the rest of the world. As a group many Christians are so tied up in keeping ahead of the payments that they have no time to serve the God that provided the job that allows them to live as high as they do.

In some Christian circles you hear the pastors discussing how neat the building is at so and so's church, or how modern a complex such and such put up. Where in the Scripture is the emphasis placed on the building in which we meet? Is it not the people that are the church and the emphasis in Scripture, and are they not the ones that we are to be building up? Would it not be more honoring to our Lord to be discussing how beautiful the assembly at so and so's church is growing or how mature such and such's group is getting?

SELFISHNESS

In the economic times in which the church and mission agencies are laboring today are we not becoming overfocused on maintaining OUR program with the limited funds that we have available? Have we not lost the concept of helping other ministries and relying on the Lord to supply the needs for both our ministry as well as the ministry of others?

Have all the Lord's cattle on the thousand hills been sold because the beef prices have fallen while the feed prices and inflation have been increasing? Never! Indeed, one must think that the cattle are overfatted because the church has been too self-sufficient in recent years to call upon their Lord for financial assistance.

Are we not so tied up in maintaining our own programs and schedules that we forget to allow time for others to come in to challenge us with their burden for the lost?

Are we so tied to our schedule and our budgets that we can't squeeze in an outsider now and then?

SHELFISHNESS

Have we not placed many things of twenty years ago on the shelf in deference to more trendy items? How many times have you heard a sermon on the "Seeking After Holiness" or maybe "The Denial of One's Desires" or maybe "The Striving to be Fruitful" lately. Instead, we hear sermons like "A Challenge to Love" or "Approach to Helping"" or "Let's Lean on One Another." All are needed, but there seems to be very little said about the holiness and godliness that we see so often in the Word.

If we were living holy and godly lives, then would it not be that the love, help and support would naturally come along? Indeed, maybe we wouldn't have to work so hard at love, help, and support when we needed to give it, for it would be coming forth out of a true heart, not one that has a servant's attitude because the person knows that that is what is expected of him (or her, as the case may be).

SHELLISHNESS

Many churches and agencies are so tied up in their programs, forms, questionnaires, evaluations and goings on that they have little or no time for the purpose for which they are in existence - that is spiritual reproduction, edification of the saints and glorification of God.

In church after church members of twenty and thirty years still can't teach a class or give you a reason for what they believe, much less give a defence of the faith which they hold. Where has the edification been? Where has the training been? Where has the discipleship been? (Indeed, some of the above may come from the lack of commitment on the part of individual church

members.)

When planning church programs, are the lost around you ever considered in your plans? Do you consider the lost when you change the time of your worship service for one week? How would a lost person feel if he came to your church on Easter or Christmas and found that he was too late for the service because the time had been changed?

Are your programs aimed at making newcomers welcome, or are they a bit foreign and embarrassing to newcomers?

We are in the business of reaching the lost, not isolating ourselves from them!

So often in the Old Testament our Lord so lovingly recounts all that He has done in the past for Israel in the hope that they will realize He is the only source of satisfaction and success. We as churches, organizations and individuals need to look back over the last thirty years and see what God has done. We need to evaluate the results from our corporate and individual lives - are they as fruitful now as they were in the past? If not, why not? We need to look at ourselves through the eyes of our Lord, not through our eyes that may be misfocused by pressures of the world and self.

Again, it is to be stressed that this is not the finger of accusation from a frustrated missionary but a voice of concern about what has been seen in recent months.

This is not to say that there are not some fantastic goings on in the churches. Indeed, God is truly working in some assemblies. May He have a freer reign over other assemblies and individual lives in the future to produce the same type of results!

Missions - is it what it used to be in your church or organization? Is it as much a part of your personal life as it was a few years ago?

Half the world is without the Gospel. The church is not keeping up with the increase in population. Is Missions what it was in past years?

THE GAME OF LIFE

The Apostle John introduces us, in his first, epistle to three phrases of importance. "the lust of the flesh", "the lust of the eyes" and "the pride of life".

It seems to be that John is trying to say, "If wrong MORALS don't get you then MATERIALISM or ME-ISM will.

John makes it quite definite that he is speaking of the things of the world, yet may we observe for a moment that it is the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and pride of life that are giving the Christian community fits these days.

Today it is the adulterous relationship that is hurting Christianity in America.

Today it is the improper thought life that is hurting Christianity in America.

Today it is the reading of wrong types of magazines that is hurting Christianity in America.

Today it is the premarital sex that is hurting Christianity in America.

It's the "THINGS" that sidetrack Christians today.

It's the "CARS" that sidetrack Christians today.

It's the "MONEY" that sidetracks Christians today.

It's the "EDUCATION" that sidetracks Christians today.

It's the "HOUSE" that sidetracks Christians today.

It's the "KNOWLEDGE ABOUT GOD" that sidetracks Christians today.

It's the "WANTING OF THINGS WE DON'T HAVE" that sidetracks Christians today. (May we say that this affects both rich and poor?)

Are not the attitudes in our way of life a problem?

"I'm a Bible College graduate, bow before me.

I'm the husband, bow before me.

I am woman, bow before me.

I'm the pastor, bow before me.

I'm a theologian, bow before me.

I'm spiritual, bow before me.

I'm rich, bow before me.

Though the following quote speaks of secular history it applies well to our spiritual history. "We are a product of the questions we asked in the past." I do not know the source of this quote though it is quite appropriate.

In response to questions asked, we Christians have made decisions based on information gathered to answer these questions. We are a product of decisions we made in the past.

When we see pastors and Christian workers talking of "PAY PACKAGES", when we see pastors, evangelists and laymen entering into adultery, when we see people constantly talking and thinking about sex, when we see Christians living together, when we see people knowledgeable about God but not of God, when we see the pastoral/layman gap widen, when we see the uplifting of certain "leaders" and when we see so much trouble in the churches, we must wonder what decisions to what questions that were made and asked have brought the Christian community to where it is today.

Let us consider a few questions that may have been ask in the past that evolved into some poor decisions.

1. Are there areas where the Word is neither black nor white? The gray area discussion.
2. Is the Word our rule for faith and practice and life? Faith and practice of the church? Certainly! For life? Maybe, seems to be the answer from many today.
3. If I want to do something is it okay? It is reported that over 3/4 of people polled believe adultery is wrong yet over 1/2 of those same people were involved in adulterous situations. They don't practice what they believe do they? Some would defend by saying that this was a secular poll and that it was, however among some Christians taken in adultery, counselors are finding that the person being counseled feels that there was nothing wrong in what they did. This is even a step further than the world has gone.
4. Are lists of "DO'S AND DON'TS" wrong? Watch your answer and check out the Law of Moses before you answer. Also check out Paul's do's and don'ts as well - yet anyone that has "DO'S AND DON'TS" is labeled a "LEGALIST".

To what conclusions might we come?

1. We need to look at the questions asked by the church twenty years ago, examine the answers that were followed and contemplate the results we see today.

IS RE-EVALUATION NEEDED?

2. An Archbishop of the Roman Church that had been excommunicated for his beliefs responded to Rome, "You may have the buildings but we have the faith."

Today Christianity has the buildings, the trappings, the facade, the pretense and the outward appearance of true spirituality, but do we have the faith?

That simple faith that Paul describes so easily and so well? That simple faith that leads to RIGHTEOUS LIVING?

3. Dare we observe that the "do's and don'ts" of the past that have been sifted through the term "LEGALISM" have become the "DO AS YOU LIKE'S" of the 1980's Christian community.

Does John's simple statement NOW concern you?

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

May we conclude the following and dwell upon our conclusions?

1. It is the clean thought life that honors God and builds up the Christian.
2. It is proper living that honors God and builds up the Christian.
3. It is being satisfied with what you have that honors God and builds up the Christian.
4. It is the knowledge OF God that honors God and builds up the Christian.
5. It is the servant attitude that honors God and builds up the Christian.
6. It is the proper view of Scripture and it's relationship to your life that honors God and builds up the Christian.
7. It is the spiritual walk that honors God and builds up the Christian.

"THE GAME OF LIFE"? No life is serious business to God. We must concentrate upon the fact that the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life are OF THE WORLD!

These are the tools of Satan to bring down the Saint, not the menu for Christian living!

As we enter into life's situations may we run that situation through our minds eye and strain it through I John 2:15-17 and find out if it is spiritual or worldly.

50 YEARS AGO

(First published as "Fifty Years Ago - How We've Changed!"; Baptist Bulletin; July/August 1988 issue.)

Recently I was listening to a radio program that was centered on music of the 1930's. The announcer mentioned that when this music was popular, a new refrigerator was selling for \$89.50, and one of those new toasters was only 89 cents.

A lot has changed over the years, we must admit - styles, transportation, attitudes, politics and a mir'ad of other things.

We question the wisdom of some of those changes, and rightly so. Some of those \$89 refrigerators are still running and many of the \$200 - 300, "better models" are rusting away in the refuse piles of America.

The changes in moral and political areas certainly are questionable. Yes, the church has changed, and that is what this article is about. Some church changes in recent years have produced glowing results. Others - well let us consider for a few moments.

In days gone by our forefathers viewed Christian service as a life-giving commitment.

Today we view Christian Service as a life-fullfilling commitment.

In days gone by, our forefathers viewed their lives as totally committed to their Lord.

Today we view Christian Service as a life committed to our Lord as long as we can do it in eight hours a day with 30 days vacation and a home of our own.

In days gone by, our forefathers viewed their belongings as a gift from their loving Father.

Today we view our belongings as our accomplishment and sustanance.

In days gone by, our forefathers viewed their entire being devoted to spreading the Gospel.

Today we view our entire being as our business and usable as we see fit.

TELL ME. HOW DO THE FOLLOWING TEXTS RELATE TO THE CHURCH IN AMERICA TODAY?

"Take up the cross and follow me." Mark 10:21

"Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable

service." Rom 12:1

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us..." II Cor 1:5

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us," Heb 12:1

Are we really running God's race for our lives, or are we running a race that WE have set before us?

Some may say these statements are much too sharp and critical. Yes, they are sharp, yet meant to be critical in a positive sense!

We in America have been playing church long enough, and it is time to look at ourselves in light of the Word and not in light of the world. A serious look at the church today, be it the liberal, evangelical or fundamental, will show many inroads of the world into the church.

NO? Then consider the high divorce rate in the church! Yes, we need to minister to those hurting folks that have ended their marriages, but we also must give the remainder of our congregations proper views of marriage so that the divorce rate in the church will drop to past levels if not lower.

NO? Have you polled the television viewing habits of the congregations lately? A very safe estimation is that the world is in the home many more hours than the Word!

NO? Which wins out the Super Bowl or the Sunday fellowship dinner? Maybe they just bring their portable to church so they can watch it there.

NO? Materialism wouldn't possibly have anything to do with declining church budgets and missions contributions, but possibly the need for more things is involved.

NO? Well maybe some might be inclined to admit hopefully at this point that, yes, the world is affecting us as Christians.

The problem is not that the Church has changed nor is it that the world has more influence in the Latter Days. The problem is that we the people are allowing the things of the world to influence our thinking.

God desires living sacrifices! A pastor recently made a statement in a sermon that is classic! I do not know if it was original with him or not but I would like to share it at this point. In relation to Romans 1:1,2 which mentions, "...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, Which is your reasonable service." The pastor said, "The problem with living sacrifices is that they keep getting down off the altar!" Now that has a ring of truth that can be heard the world over today!

Someone might well suggest that the Lord install escalators -- you know how tiring it is getting up and down. Somewhat similar to our NEED for a remote control on the TV, VCR, Stereo and garage door, isn't it. I was recently shopping in a department store with my wife. I had seen a very "NEAT" stereo that I wanted to show her. I told her, "I want you to come over here to see the stereo that I need to buy." Her immediate reply was, "NEED?" And I said, "Yes, I need it to satisfy my coveteousness!"

A recent visualized song depicting Matt. 6:33 ("But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.") which is in a context of God providing needs of life, shows the usual needs of life around the edges and in the middle a bright shiny new bicycle! Our needs today are very much centered on our wants and not the necessities of life!

While in Bible College, television repair was our means of support. One day after delivering a Television set to a woman that was super immaculate, I glanced back toward the house. There, in full view through the picture window, she was on her hands and knees inspecting the floor to see if we had scratched it. I was immediately reminded of pagans that bow down to wooden idols.

We won't discuss the first scratch on that new car a number of years ago!

May God challenge us to consider our NEEDS vs DESIRES as we enter the market place.

May God challenge us to consider our LEADING vs CHOICE as we enter the thought life.

May God challenge us to consider our MINISTRY vs PAY PACKAGE as we enter the work place.

May God challenge us to consider setting our "affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

JOB ONE

Please read: Matt. 6:21,24, & 33

OUTLINE:

- I. YOUR BANKER
- II. YOUR MASTER
- III. YOUR DESIRE

At Ford, "Quality is job one!" In Christianity "Quality is also JOB ONE!"

JOB ONE IN THREE AREAS

WE NEED A QUALITY BANKER
WE NEED A QUALITY MASTER
WE NEED A QUALITY DESIRE

I will be teaching a series in the coming days. I have selected a textbook for the series. The title is Uncle Scrooge.

I. YOUR BANKER

When I think of treasure I naturally think of my favorite comic book hero. When I was four and five I had a long sickness that caused me to be in bed for an extended period of time. Many of my folks friends wanted to do something for me so many of them would bring me comic books.

The one's that I really liked and identified with were the Donald Duck comics. Not so much for Donald but more for Uncle Scrooge than anything!

Uncle Scrooge was "IT" for me. We were poor and I really could identify with Scrooge's desire for money. I can remember him having a diving board installed in one of his safes so that he could dive into and swim in his money. I can remember him washing his money in large laundry machines. I can remember him leading caravans of dump trucks full of money up to his large buildings built in the form of safes. I can remember Uncle Scrooge opening one of his safe buildings and all of the money running out all over the ground. I can remember Scrooge having to build new and better and bigger buildings to store his money in.

We have modern day counterparts to Scrooge today in our society. I have read articles about the rich in our world today that tell of the warehouses that they build to house all of the articles that they no longer use. Jackie Onasis was supposed to have had a warehouse in Europe for just the clothing that she no longer used.

God says, (Matt. 6:21) "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." He isn't saying that if you have a bank account that your heart is in the bank - No, he is talking about our temporal values and allegiances.

If we are laying up treasures in heaven then our concentration will be in the heavenlies. If we are laying up treasures here on earth then our concentration and priorities will also be here on earth.

Let's face it, if I were Uncle Scrooge I think I would be just as the comics portrayed him - swimming in money and constantly worried about someone making off with a truck load of it!

A friend in graduate school shared a story with me. He was in a business administration class. An alumni had been asked to share of his great financial success. He came to the class and introduced his success by telling of the roll of money he carried with him. Indeed, he took it out and showed it - then passed it around. He explained that it was all \$100 bills, and that money meant very little to him. My friend said, however, that the man's eyes never left the roll of money as it went from student to student around the room.

Let's turn to Col. 3:1-4. "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Some items to notice:

1. THE FACTS: "If ye" is a Greek construction that has the idea in our language of "If and assumed so". If you are risen with Christ, and I assume that you are, then seek things that are above.
2. THE LOGIC: Seek things above! Why? That is where Christ our reason for existence resides!
3. THE POSITIVE: "Set your affection" above. If you really like something then be sure it is above. Your heart's desire should be above not here below.
4. THE NEGATIVE: Not here on earth.
5. THE REASON: You are dead!

Our life exists only in Christ. We have no existence here on earth. It is done and our residence is in heaven with God.

This is the Bible basis for the phrase - "you can't take it with you". My wife had an uncle that said that he was going to take it with him - he had an asbestos coffin! I guess that would be okay

if you don't mind risking cancer.

6. THE REWARD: We will appear with Christ in glory. TURN TO AND READ Rev. 19:11-16. In eternity we will reside with Him.

7. THE PREPARATION: "...Christ, who is our life...." We are to consider Christ as our entire life. We are to be so committed to Him that we are always seeking to be more like Him and to be seeking to please Him.

II. YOUR MASTER

Now as I remember old Uncle Scrooge was in a real quandary at times with the safety of his money. He was constantly building new and better safes for his money. He was constantly worrying about the thieves that were always trying to steal a truckload or two. His total concentration was on the safety of that money.

God says, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and money." Matt 6:24

We see the significance of the term "MASTER" don't we. God says that you cannot serve money and God, and He keynotes the principle with the fact that you will love one and HATE the other!

NOW

LET US THINK ABOUT THAT FOR A MOMENT IN RELATIONSHIP TO OUR LIVES TODAY IN AMERICA!

IF WE LOVE GOD WE WILL HATE MONEY!

IF WE LOVE MONEY WE WILL HATE GOD!

hate = 3404 = miseo = "to hate" - used of "malicious and unjustifiable feelings towards others" (Vine) This term is used in Jo. 15:18 where Jesus mentions, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." This is a real dislike to say the least!

If we were to grasp that concept and really love God we would have a very different lifestyle in Christianity in this day in America!

The idea of the construction of the text is that we cannot of our own accord serve both God and money. There is a built in impossibility in the idea. THE ONE EXCLUDES THE OTHER!

Application: Don't try for you cannot do it!

III. YOUR DESIRE

Now back to Uncle Scrooge. His entire being was keyed to his money. Even his gifts to Huey, Duey and Louie were money! He had no other desire in life. He wanted money, money and more money!

Now we can't in all honesty say that this is our desire as believers. Our consuming desire isn't usually to have and gain and hold money, HOWEVER at times in practical application and outward appearance it may well seem to the unsaved world around us that we are serving our desire for money.

We add unto our earthly possessions at a far greater rate than unto our heavenly rewards! DON'T WE!

Think about your thought life. How much time do you spend thinking of ways of using your money for the Lord's work as compared to how you are going to use your money for your own enjoyment.

Notice in Matt 6:33 that there are two things that we are to be seeking. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

The kingdom of God. This is a reference to the Millennial kingdom that Christ wanted to set up for the Jews. We are to be seeking after that kingdom. For the church age believer the kingdom means that they are with the Lord already! Our desire should be for His coming!

His righteousness. Now just how do we interpret that phrase in present day America?

May I read parts of an article from Moody Monthly (July/Aug.) to show you how some Christians interpret this thought.

From Moody Monthly; July/August 1988

FOR STARTERS by Jerry B. Jenkins

SHINE ON

"Item: A young man employed by a service company decided he'd rather watch the Chicago White Sox play than spend the rest of the day working.

"He drove the company truck to the ball park then called his office and told his supervisor that his early afternoon service call would take the rest of the day

'Fact: The young man told me that story.

"Item: A young reporter interviewed a famous personality at a downtown hotel. As the reporter was preparing to leave, the celebrity noticed his parking stub. "Let me have that stamped for you, he said. Not understanding what he meant, the reporter followed him to the front desk, where the celebrity told the clerk, "I'm parked in the hotel lot. Can you validate this for free parking?"

""You're a guest here?" the clerk asked.

"The man nodded and showed his mom key to prove it. The ticket was stamped. The reporter could have parked free. But he chose to pay instead.

"Fact: The reporter told me that story

"Item: A woman enjoyed lunch with an older lady and split the bill.

""Here," the older one said, "you can have the receipt for your income taxes."

""What do you mean?"

""List this as a business lunch that you paid for. You've got the receipt."

"Fact: The young woman told me that story

"Item: A middle-aged man had recently moved to a big city He parked at an expired meter, reasoning, "Even if I get a ticket, I'm changing my license plates soon. They'll never track me down.',

"Fact The man told me that story

"Item: A businessman was upset that this competition was underselling him by mail. When he received the competition's catalog, he mailed in every pre-paid business reply card and envelope they provided, but he ordered nothing. "They had to pay all that postage," he says with a smile.

"Fact: The businessman himself told me that story

"Item: A couple celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary their son, a salesman, called in sick so he could attend the party

"Fact: The couple told me that story clearly amused at their son's resourcefulness.

"Item: A young woman working as a telephone installer frequently absconded phones left by customers who had moved.

"She reported to her employer that the customers had taken the phones with them. She kept some of the phones, gave others to friends, and sold the rest.

"Fact: She herself told me that story

"The saddest facts of all:

"The white Sox fan is - and was at the time of his lie. - an active, church-going Christian who is involved in training youth.

"The famous personality is - and was at the time of his lie - involved in full-time evangelism.

"The older lady is - and was at the time of her recommended deception of the IRS - on the full-time staff of an evangelical church.

"The middle-aged man is - and was at the time he parked illegally - a pastor.

"The anniversary couple is - and was at the time that they took delight in their son's lie - active in Christian work.

"The telephone installer is - and was at the time of her theft a professing Christian, active in her church.

"Therefore, my dear friends... become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe" (Phil. 2:12,15)."

It seems that the Christian world is in a bit of a tizzy as to how they are to live before the lost!

We are to live as Christ lived! He is our example to go by!

His righteousness or righteous living is that which we are to seek in our own lives!

If we do this then He will add "all these things" to us.

WHAT A PROMISE! IF WE SEEK HIS COMING AND HIS WAY OF LIFE HE WILL GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT!

NO!

There is a negative and a positive side to this promise.

Negative: It is not stereos, clothes, cars, houses, horses, bank accounts etc.

Positive: It is the needs of life that is viewed in the context of the passage verse 25-32.

God does not promise the world but he promises to get us through the world!

YES, THAT PUN WAS INTENDED! HE DOES NOT PROMISE THE WORLD -- HE WANTS US TO SHUN THE THINGS OF THE WORLD NOT SEEK AFTER THEM!

CONCLUSION:

I am not asking that anyone change his or her attitude toward money. Just think about what we have talked about in this study and consider the things that God's Word has to say to you today. Let the Holy Spirit work in your mind and help you REALLY evaluate your priorities and commitments.

THEN CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDES TOWARD MONEY, TOWARD CHRIST, AND TOWARD LIFESTYLE - BECAUSE GOD CAUSED YOU TO HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART AND NOT BECAUSE I CAUSED YOU TO CHANGE YOUR MIND!

Let's turn to a familiar passage in I Jo. 2:15-17. This is the Christian life in the negative nutshell. If we avoid these things then we will be on the right track to serving God.

The lust of the flesh.

The lust of the eye.

Pride of life.

Wrapped up in these three are all of the wrongs that man can get himself into.

As Dr. Stowell mentioned in one of his editorials, if the morals don't get you materialism will. I might add if these two don't get you your pride of life may well be winner!

As you enter into a certain situation or consideration and try to decide what to do run the situation or consideration through this frame of reference and see if the Lord doesn't give you some insight!

Some have said that we can be so heavenly minded that we are no earthly good. The more I study the Word and see what God's desire is for us the more I think that this statement is false. God wants us heavenly minded. Indeed, that is what will motivate us to do the witnessing and preaching and counseling that we need to be doing.

Those that say that we can be so heavenly minded that we are no earthly good are using the phrase to say that if we dwell on the heavenly we won't do the ministry. I think that this is incorrect. If we are concentrating on the heavenly then we will naturally do the ministry.

Those that are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good are probably the phony believers - those that put on a facade of heavenliness and never get around to living out that heavenly attitude.

As we go out into the world may we keep the world at arms length as far as it's influence upon us.

MAY OUR BANKER BE GOD!
MAY OUR MASTER BE GOD!
MAY OUR DESIRE BE GOD!
MAY "QUALITY BE JOB ONE" IN OUR LIVES!

Just some side thoughts to the above:

To the poor these principles can be a blessing, because they have to live this way to a point, yet to some it is a curse because they rebel against God's position for them.

To the rich these principles can be a blessing because they may choose to live according to this life, yet if they want to live unto themselves it would be a curse to them.

SO, to each and every one of us no matter our financial statement, it is the attitude with which we approach things that will determine our joy or lack of peace in relation to living these principles.

HARVEST OR HOPELESS?

THE PROMISE

The Christian that views the world situation would tend to say the job of world evangelism is hopeless, yet we know from the Word of God that it is not hopeless but that it is HARVEST TIME!

Luke mentions in chapter ten verse two, "Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

There seems in that verse to be not only a promise, but like many promises of the Word there is also an equation or set of criteria to be met before the promise can be fulfilled.

THE PROBLEM

Before we look at the equation let us consider the problem facing the Church in the area of world evangelism.

Today we have around 2 1/2 billion people that need to hear the Gospel and only about 50,000 missionaries (If the higher estimates are correct) to do the job.

We have many if not a majority of our missionary force nearing retirement age.

We have people ready, willing and able to go to the field that are finding that deputation means several years due to the economic condition of the churches.

We have, according to statistics, several thousand LOST people dying every hour and going to an eternity in the Lake of Fire.

We have a movement growing that would take foreign mission funds for home mission organizations. All would agree that raising funds for home missions is the hardest job there is, however the key is not to take foreign funds for home but to raise more funds!

We have fewer and fewer pastors that are vitally interested in promoting missions today.

The problem is evident on many fronts if we but look.

God mentions via Luke that if we follow the equation, the laborers will be dispatched, or at least that is the implication - if we ask then we would assume that laborers would be sent forth.

Let us consider the equation mentioned. Harvest - Laborers - Lord of the Harvest - Prayer.

We all know that the harvest is truly great and we all know that the Lord of the harvest is God.

Most readily concede that we have the laborers ready, willing, trained and waiting to go but they are waiting on finances.

It is not to be suggested that finances have anything to do with the equation for God owns the cattle on a thousand hills and can supply finances anytime that the equation is complete.

If the harvest is present and the Lord of the harvest is ready to send and we have laborers waiting then we have only one part to the equation that can possibly be holding up the harvest.

PRAYER

A not so recent survey of "Evangelical Pastors" revealed that the average pastor in America prays around five minutes per day. If this be true then we can imagine how little the average Christian is praying per day.

Indeed we have only to compare Sunday morning service attendance to the prayer service attendance to see that PRAYER is not a priority in the Church today.

Paul in Romans asked the believers to "strive" with him in prayer, and he mentions of Epaphras that he was a man that was "laboring fervently" in prayer. (Rom. 15:30; Col. 4:13)

This term that is used in these passages comes from a term that has the idea of "AGONY".

Not to waste too much time wondering how many believers today agonize in prayer for the world. Some, yes to be sure but multitudes more would add the PRAYER to our equation!

This is the negative but there is a real positive that needs to be seen!

THE POSSIBILITIES

If the church were to begin to pray as it ought, might we not see some startling changes coming about.

Prayer will produce Co-workers. Indeed in our passage it was those praying that were sent forth. As people become involved in praying for the lost world they will become burdened and some will indeed go.

Prayer will produce commitment. Those praying will become more and more committed as they seek the Lord and the Lord in turn will move the laborers toward the commitment that they need.

Prayer will produce contributions. The economic phase now arrives on the scene. God seems to

provide funds through individuals that He moves to give. Might we suspect that part of the lack of finances today is due to believers that are not following the Lord's moving?

Prayer will produce cooperation. The local churches will begin to evaluate their young people and begin to direct some into Christian ministries. This will help the mission boards to recruit laborers!

Prayer may well be the answer that many missionaries, pastors, churches and mission boards have been seeking.

Not to say that agonizing in prayer will be easy! It takes time and concern, both of which are in short supply in our busy world.

Might believers the world over claim the PROMISE over the PROBLEM via PRAYER and watch the POSSIBILITIES increase to the honor and glory of the their Lord!

MISSIONS AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Q. How do you set up a strong missions program in your Sunday school?

1. The best start is to have a pastor that is very missions minded for he will set up the mechanics in the church organizational structure to insure that it will come to pass.

If this is not the case, and it will be all too often, then you should do the very best that you can with those that you can find that are interested.

Begin to see what you can find in the way of backing and then what you can find in the way of possible roadblocks. Evaluate your possibilities and do what ever you can without getting yourself into trouble.

2. If you have a missions committee let them know you are interested in using any missionaries that come to the church in the Sunday school hour. Also let them know that you would like to have any local missionaries to come in if it can be set up.

3. When you get a real live missionary in your control PUT HIM OR HER TO WORK! They will love it. have them show pictures, slides, snake skins, coins, stamps or anything else that will help the kids know that they are working in a foreign country telling others of Christ.

Have a map available to help them visualize how far away the country is from your church.

Have them tell of the people that they work with - how they live on a day to day basis - what kind of problems their people face in their lives.

Possibly the missionary could dream up a craft for the kids to do that relates to his country.

4. Until the missionaries start coming through you have some other options that can be effective.

Use missionary stories from time to time (flannel graph or flip chart type stories).

Filmstrips are available that are from missions or about missions.

Start a prayer card file and pray for a different missionary each Sunday in opening exercises or in the classes.

See if classes would like to adopt a missionary to write to and pray for.

Anything that will keep missions before the kids.

Start missions offerings either in opening exercise or maybe once per month in the classes. Make

this for some tangible project that can be given to a missionary. This will give the kids incentive to get involved.

Have missionaries the students know send tapes now and then that you can play in opening exercise or class.

Have the missionaries children share if they will. This could be a real challenge for the students. It would help the missionary children to feel a part of his parent's ministry as well.

5. Profits will be a long time coming however you can, even if you don't have a missions minded leadership, have a strong missions minded church in about 15 years -- when the kids grow up!

6. If the leadership is behind you you can do even more!

Try a missions conference banquet geared for kids one year. Have the missionary or missionaries prepare their thoughts on the kids level so they can be involved. You could even have a separate dinner in another room for the kids if the leadership is uncomfortable with the original suggestion. Have the speakers alternate between rooms so that the kids are being fed from the Word and challenged with missions.

7. Using missionaries for a week of daily vacation Bible school would be great. Have a live missionary telling the missionary story! Most missionaries would enjoy it and it gives them a good solid contact with a church at the same time. The pastor might be able to use him in some way as well when he isn't involved with the Bible school.

8. If your church has a missions conference see if the leadership would allow you to have a night or two of evening times for the kids using missionaries in different ways.

Use your imagination. Ask missionaries for ideas when they come through.

Just begin with what you have and do all that you can.

CHURCH MISSIONS PROGRAM

GENERAL PROGRAM

The top priority is that the pastor be missions minded. If he is not then you will have stone wall after stone wall to surmount. I would say for the missions committee to just get what they can done and plan like mad in the policy, future program, etc. to bring the church around to a missions emphasis as they can. All of this will be in place then when a new pastor is called. At that time the missions minded people must become very active to help in finding a man that has a real burden for missions.

1. Missions map in a very prominent area. Many types may work well. Some use plywood cut in shape of the continents with map glued on. Others use a large map and place pictures out to the side with yarn to the country where those missionaries serve. Some have lights placed on the map where the people serve and a switch under their picture. Press the button and the light comes on.

A church in Pennsylvania had a large map on the back wall of the entry area as you went into the sanctuary. Inside the sanctuary on both sides they had large 8 1/2 X 11 portraits of each of their missionaries framed and mounted on the walls. The missionaries of that church are on the minds of the people every time they come and go from the church.

2. Having missionaries in on a regular basis and using them as much as possible while they are there.

A once a month program seems to work well if you can bring it to pass with the pastor. (This will be the obstacle of all time in most churches!)

Invite a missionary to come once per month. If a missionary can't be found settle for a mission film or maybe a report from the field and a prayer meeting. (That would really rattle some cages - A PRAYER TIME ON SUNDAY EVENING and "I got caught!")

Ask the missionary to preach from the Word at least one of the services so that the people will be able to gauge his proficiency in the Word. Have them take one service for the presentation of their ministry. Allow all the time they can use and include a Q/A time if at all possible.

Keep them well informed in writing, of all you want them to do. Include early in your correspondence a map to the church, some information as to the size and make up of the congregation, anything that would help him to minister more effectively, and an invitation for his family to come and a sure offer of a place to stay.

Under the offer to stay if you have room you might offer more than just the times that you are scheduling. At times a place for weekdays between meetings is a hard one to work out. If you

have someone that could put him or her up between your meetings and his next one it would possibly be a big help for them.

3. Some projects that will keep interest are needed.

Writing letters to the missionaries. Have them addressed and ready for people to take home. Have them write of the church news etc. and possibly in the thought of trying to get to know the missionary.

Don't overlook the possibility of electronic letters. You could use audiotapes, VCR's (if the missionary has equipment available - don't push it as they might feel a need to get some) & computers.

COMMUNICATE IS THE IDEA!

Sending boxes of useful items to the field. Check with the workers however on what and how to ship. Some countries charge tariffs that make the items cost more than if they had purchased them on the field.

Include prayer letters in bulletins as soon as they come in so that the news is not stale.

4. Missionary conferences.

The once a day for a week system. A full Sunday of missions on both ends of a week where there is a meeting every evening. These are good but exhausting. (Don't let exhausting determine your use of this type for the benefits are worth it.)

You will need two or three missionaries at least and possibly use an area pastor on Sundays for a good Bible message.

You can intermix some home meetings with the missionaries so that the people can get to know them.

Be sure that your scheduling of slides is so that the entire congregation gets to see them. Some conferences break it up and some workers only get to share their ministry with one Sunday school class.

A round robin conference would fit in well with this type conference. This will make maximum use of the missionaries. The Round Robin conference is when two to four churches get together and bring in missionaries and run them around to the different churches so that all workers and all churches are getting the same information. The churches need to be in fairly close area or the driving will do the workers in.

All month conference. This is a conference where you just turn your normal services over to missions for the month and keep missions before the people. This can be done with whatever missionaries that can come in with the pastor delivering missions messages.

Other types would be quite workable as well with a little planning. A Sunday through Wed. might work or Wed. through Sunday.

A banquet at the end would be good with a testimony time and possibly a forum or Q/A sessions. This can be done by potluck so the expense is very low.

5. Do not dismiss the idea of going to the field with some of the church folks. You do not have to go to the foreign field for we have missions here at home. Ghetto, Indian, Oriental, etc. Something could be worked out to do it over a weekend so that the cost would be low - no lost work etc.

6. Bulletin boards are a lot of work but can be used as a very pointed instrument without anyone being hurt. It is an inanimate object that is giving a very pointed challenge to everyone's heart and life! USE THEM!

7. How about making your men's breakfast into a missions prayer meeting now and then? Even once a month would be great. If your breakfast is on Saturday ask your monthly speaker to come in Friday eve. and speak on Sat. morn. Many, many ideas would work if only someone would try them.

8. A missionary closet. An area where people can bring items to be given to missionaries. Quilts from the ladies etc. would be great, Canned foods, sealed snack foods for the trip home, stationery, pens, current religious books etc.

ADULT

1. When a missionary is scheduled have him give a time in Sunday school class or maybe have him teach the class. It might even be good to ask him to speak on a specific topic.

2. Use your adults for housing of the missionaries. Try to encourage them to be sensitive to the missionaries' needs. They have physical, mental and spiritual problems also. Maybe just taking him somewhere special will help or possibly recommend someplace he might enjoy if you are unable to take him personally.

YOUNG ADULTS

1. Something special for young adults and singles might be good. Possibly a retreat for missions. A time of personal challenge to the field for them. Most young couples have never been challenged in this area of life. They need to be!

YOUTH

Possibly schedule a time with the youth prior to or following the evening service. Q/A times or devotional times - whatever might be of interest to the young people. You might even involve them in the planning. **THEY MIGHT EVEN HAVE SOME GOOD IDEAS!**

CHILDREN

Starting your program here will supply you with a missions minded congregation in 10-15 years! This is the most important of the areas to concentrate in. If you get this area right then in a few years they will straighten out any problems left over.

Have the missionaries scheduled spend some time in the classrooms with the kids. Possibly in opening exercises but in the class might well be good. It cuts the missionary/student ratio down and this might be good for the kids.

SENIOR CITIZENS

1. Ask them what they would like in the way of a part in the program. I suspect they might have some ideas about what they want. Possibly teaching in their class or sharing testimony etc. A potluck breakfast before Sunday school or dinner after church.

2. Don't leave this group out when it comes to service in missions. There are a lot of fill-in jobs that they would enjoy if they wanted to move to a new place and donate some of their time. Most are in retirement and have time to spend. **HELP THEM DO IT FOR THE LORD!**

3. These are the real prayer warriors if they have matured, as they ought. Use them in this area! Have the church sponsor a meal a month for them when they can get together to fellowship and pray for missions. Use a missionary retiree if you can find one or just a missionary.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

1. MAKE UP.

a. People that are missions minded and committed to seeing that the church will one-day be the same.

b. The pastor should be a part of this committee but not the chairman. His responsibilities should be clearly up to his voluntary offers. This will not burden his time unless he really wants to.

2. PURPOSE

a. To set, institute and administer a mission policy for the church.

b. To promote missions within the church's overall program.

Pot lucks, fund raisers (within the confines of the congregation and its philosophy.) and any other activity that will promote missions.

c. To evaluate and invite missionaries to minister within the church program.

d. To find ways of encouraging and of challenging the congregation in the area of personal service on the foreign field.

e. To provide housing and meals for missionaries. To help be observant of any needs that they might have that might be met by the congregation. (A Bible held together with masking tape might indicate the need of a new one. I was in a church in Denver when the missionary came in. His Bible cover was more masking tape than cover. I could not believe that someone hadn't given him one of the dozens usually lying around the average Christian home! Yes, I gave him one! Possibly the need of a new tire or shoes or whatever.)

A fund might be set up for this purpose or you might open it up to the congregation that there is a need in case anyone could help out.

3. They should move to make it a part of the selection of church staff that they are burdened for missions and that they agree with and would support the missions policy of the church. This would eliminate the chance of losing ground already won by bringing in a non-missions minded pastor or staff worker.

MISSIONS POLICY

1. It should include a definition of missions for all in the church to know and understand.

2. It should set criteria, which must be met before a person can be supported, by the church.

a. The type of board that they are with.

b. The type of ministry that is involved.

c. The geographic location involved if the church is going to concentrate on one part of the world with their outreach.

3. Definitions should be set for "home missions" and "foreign missions". Each should have criteria set for just what is involved in each. (For example, will colleges and seminaries be considered home missions or will those donations come from other funds.)

4. Percentages of funds going to foreign and home missions should be set so that the guidelines

may be met.

5. Once the missions policy is set it should be presented to the congregation not for their changes but for their approval and then they should be asked to commit themselves to it.

It should be explained in detail so that they know exactly what it is and the purpose of it.

Suggestions should be sought from the congregation before the policy is set so that they have had a hand in setting "their" policy!

6. A fund should be set up for the committee to operate from. This should be for things that come up as the missionaries come through. Tires, Bibles, suits etc. - any way you can help them.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Use any thing that you can that will bring forth interest in missions. It will not hurt the church nor will it subtract from the general financial standing of the church!

2. If you have missionaries in, be sure to forewarn them that support is not under consideration but that you want to use them as you can to stir interest in your church missions program. This will not be a problem to most missionaries. (Indeed I suspect if this is a problem to a person - you wouldn't want them in your church anyway.)

A love offering should be taken at the end of the missionaries' time with you to help with expenses. A minimum amount to be given might be nice if the congregation isn't too missions minded as yet.

This does not eliminate the Holy Spirit speaking to individuals or even visitors from other churches. Who knows - the church might just take him on anyway. This has happened!

3. It may be hard to set down rules and policies yet it will save you grief in the future! Planning now will make for a smooth flowing missions program in your church.

4. Probably the most important step is the step between the time when your church has a missions program and when your church is a missions program! **THINK ON THAT FOR AWHILE AND DON'T EVER FORGET IT!**

A CHURCH SHOULD NEVER HAVE A MISSIONS PROGRAM UNLESS IT IS LESS THAN MISSIONS MINDED.

A CHURCH THAT IS IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE IS AUTOMATICALLY A MISSIONS MINDED CHURCH AND BY NATURE WILL BE DOING MOST OF WHAT WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT!

MISSIONARIES AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

We must remember for every day that the devil sidetracks us with problems that is a day away from the Lord's work. Just because you become a missionary you do not automatically become supersaint that has no everyday problems.

Indeed, many of the problems are the everyday get along problems that we all face except that on the mission field they are harder quite often due to the culture and the inconvenience of the country.

A missionary from Venezuela that worked with a tribe mentioned the nice two-story house that they had built. This in itself was a real time consumer. The type of construction they used was very loose to save on materials. There were cracks in the floor upstairs so that every time someone walked across the floor the dirt would sift down into the kitchen AND into the food. She was sweeping the floor several times a day downstairs keeping the place clean. She also mentioned going to the river to wash the clothes. The mundane work of the day to exist will be a major battle for some missionaries.

These same missionaries mentioned the constant battle of keeping the airstrip cleaned out so that the forest didn't overgrow it. He had to cut the strip on a weekly basis. That is a big lawn to mow.

I would like to just look at one area that has seemed quite ignored in the lives of missionaries.

Grandparents:

Q. What did you gain from your grandparents that helped you spiritually?

My grandmother had me come to her house on weekends at times. One Sunday she got me up and told me we were going to Sunday school. I really didn't want to so put on the tears and pressure and she finally said okay we won't go. I trotted off to play and have fun. About an hour later I was informed that we WERE GOING TO CHURCH. The pressure was on but to no avail. She would not change her mind. If I made her stay home from SS I was going to church.

To the best of my knowledge that was the sum and substance of my spiritual training at my grandmothers knee!

Q. What are some of the problems that a Grandparent can place upon the missionary family that is looking forward to foreign service?

1. Well are you certain that the Lord wants you to go there?

2. Well I really think that you are going to deprive your children if you do that! (This usually is verbalized before the children.)

3. Again in front of the children BUT I WON'T GET TO SEE THEM FOR FOUR WHOLE YEARS! OOOOOHHHHHHH!!!!!!

4. OH HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO ME?

5. On the other hand the grandparents can be one of the biggest assets a family can have.

1. They can be prayer warriors.
2. They can help the family with encouraging letters and packages.
3. Grandparenting is buying gifts and goodies for the kids. In missions all you have to do additionally is to mail it.

I would hope that our churches begin to communicate the importance of the home backing of those on the field!

4. Grandparents can save their money and go to the field for a long visit. They can help in the ministry. This will help the kids know that this work that mom and dad are doing must be very important if the grandparents come to help out.

5. Grandparents can be a fantastic public relations network for the children if they only try.

Paul seemed to place importance upon the grandparent relationship else why would he have mentioned a grandmother in II Tim 1:5. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother, Lois, and thy mother, Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."

The sad part of this mention of Timothy's grandmother is that this is the only mention of a grandparent in the New Testament.

How sad that grandparents are so eager to leave a good name to the kids, how sad that grandparents are so eager to leave a little money to the kids, how sad that grandparents are so eager to leave the keepsakes to the kids, YET those same grandparents don't give a second thought to leaving their grandkids anything spiritual.

Q. What did your grandparents leave you spiritually?

Proverbs 17:6 states, "Children's children are the crown of old men," How much crown polishing do most grandparents do?

The terms grandparent, grandfather and grandmother are totally missing in the Bible with the

exception of Lois! How does that reflect upon the grandfathers of all those generations? Many grandparents are mentioned for what they did in their own right however none are mentioned as being the grandparent of someone.

The phrase children's children appears nine times in the Old Testament, but only a part of these is relating to the family relationship we are speaking of. (Gen45:10; Ex 34:7; II Kings 17:41; Ps 103:17; 128:6; Prov. 17:6; 13:22; Jer 2:9; Exe 37:25.)

Due to the genealogies we know some grandparents: Nahar=Abraham; Abiel=King Saul; Kish=Jonathon; Obed=David; Matthan=Jesus; Heli=Jesus; Lois=Timothy.

The census people are predicting a large number of four to five generation families in coming years.

How about you, are you going to be a Lois or a nobody?

Don't chalk this up to, "well that is way in the future". Yes it is yet every one of us if the Lord wills will be a grandparent. Might I suggest if you aren't, one day adopt a grandkid. Most parents love it and the kid's will eat it up!

If we begin as parents with a proper attitude toward the family and Christian home the grandparenting will just be a follow through on life.

I have heard people say, I won't tell my child or grandchild what to believe in the religious realm."

Why not? The ads will! The press will! The movies will! The neighbors will! The politicians will! The communists will! The forces of sin will! May God forgive us if we neglect to tell them what they should believe and set an example for them to follow.

Others are very strong that they won't force their children to go to church yet they force them to go to school. The importance of spiritual over secular education is quite clear in some families.

This present older generation was so involved in giving their kids what they didn't have they failed to give the kid's what they did have! That is Jesus Christ as their savior.

Q. How can we be better grandparents? Grandparents that won't be seen as meddling but as loving training grandparents.

1. Be sure your home is based upon Biblical principles. If the kids see grandma running grandpa down or belittling him etc. they will not learn proper husband wife relationships. Grandparents can be strong figures in the young life and must be one of proper example.

2. Begin to pray for the grandchild at birth if not before. Ask the Lord to make that child into a great man or woman of God. Pray that the parents will have wisdom as they raise the children. Pray!
 3. Keep their gifts meaningful. Give them Bible stories etc. - records and tapes. Buy them for fun toys as well but be sure that part of their diet is on a spiritual plane. Bibles would also be good.
 4. Pray with them. Have your quiet times with them. Use any opportunity to share with them on the spiritual plane.
 5. Have Christian music on in your home.
 6. Watch the TV that you allow on in your home.
 7. Witness to them and be sure they know the Lord!
 8. When they come to you for advice be sure you are on the level and Biblical.
 9. Be sure you are a part of the discipline and not a cause for the need of it!
 10. Be up to date on what is going on in the religious community.
- If they ask your opinion about going to Bob Jones University or Dallas seminary. What could you tell them?
11. If the opportunity and possibility opens up when your children are on the field you might offer to house a grandchild for their college years. Even for a high school year or two if there is a need. Be the type of grandparent that the parent would feel free leaving their child with!
 12. Be available to the parents for advice and council.
 13. Be active in the local church. Part of the reason that the younger generation is following along with the world is that they have not seen Godly grandparent age Christians enough to pattern their life after them. We need the older folks involved in the Sunday school and all areas of the church.

A man I once knew had been a public school teacher for several years. He felt that God wanted him to go into the ministry so made plans to go off to seminary. When he announced his intentions in church one of the old old women came to him and was shaking a finger in his face and said, " _____, I've been praying for years that God would take someone from this church and send them off to the ministry and for the last three years I've been praying for you.

A prayer warrior will be of great help to parent and grandchild alike on the field.

14. If you are financially able offer to help a grandchild through Bible college for their first year of college.

A hymn writer penned the words that we have often sung:

"Give of thy sons to bear the message glorious;
Give of thy wealth to speed them on their way;
Pour out thy soul for them in prayer victorious;
And all thou spendest Jesus will repay.
Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace;
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release."

"O Zion Haste"

May we sing this song with meaning as we look to the future years of grandparenting.

Proverbs 13:22 states, "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children;" Have you seen the bumper stickers on the big mobile campers? "We're spending our children's inheritance."

Well the thought of the Prov. probably isn't only the idea of material, but also includes the thought of spiritual upbringing!

My father worked all his life to leave my brother and I something in the material realm. All his life and all he could muster up was a couple of thousand apiece with insurance policies. It was really appreciated, but I am not sure all of his hard work was worth the little he was able to leave.

His spiritual impact upon our lives was very minimal. Not to downgrade him for he most certainly was a good father yet had he spent the energy he did on the material realm on our spiritual realm I wonder if I would have been walking with the Lord in my teen years rather than my twenties and my brother in his teen years instead of his fifties!

Now to apply all this to missions!

Most of it is the type of thing that you will do for any grandchild whether he is going to the field or not. You just have to pack the verbal end of it in faster!

The outworking of your influence through correspondence and prayer and support will be the same as for a grandchild in another state.

Q. How do you help a grandparent understand that they can be an important part of their child's

and grandchild's life even if they are half way around the world. Relating the information given in this study.

Q. How else can a grandparent help the missionary family?

1. Go to the field a bit before and leave a bit after the furloughs of the family. They get time with the family. They get to help in the ministry. They can loan their home and car in the states for the furloughing family. My what a blessing that would be in and of itself! They can house sit the mission home for the furloughing family. They can keep up social contacts with the townspeople so that they don't feel that the missionary has taken off.

Many other benefits may come from this. The grandparents will go home to their church ready to be a real pest with the missions program until it is up to snuff. They will have a real "use" to the Lord in their later years when we usually write these people off as excess baggage.

2. They could keep the kids abreast of what is going on in the world of kids here in the USA and help them to know what they are coming back to on furlough. This could be tempered with a proper Christian perspective to what is going on in the kid's world.

3. Keeping up on the news that the kids might need to know. There are kids spots on Saturday mornings that are news for kids. You have to wade through "The Garbage Pail Kids" and the "Teenage werewolf" to get to them however, so beware.

4. Many missionaries or at least groups of workers on the field have VCR's available. The grandparent could make it a ministry to get some good tapes over now and then for the kids.

5. We've mentioned it before but this is probably the most important of all. It is the hardest of all as well! LET THEM GO! It is hard to see the kids go however it is A MUST! Give them to the Lord for HIS HONOR AND GLORY!

It might be a real blow to our ego to realize that it isn't that hard for the kids to leave grandma and grandpa. Indeed, it isn't half as hard for kids to leave the parents as it is the other way around.

We tend to feel that we are irreplaceable but believe me we aren't.

FAITH

DON'T DISMISS FAITH - IT IS NEEDED

In our first years of Bible College we were truly living by faith. We had entered school with several thousand dollars of debt and this was in the 60's. I was only working part time so things were a little tight so to speak.

We had seen a number of meals of pancakes - indeed - we had been having them as a main course for several weeks.

The school had received a truckload of "Scooter Pies" from the manufacturer. Someone had left out one of the ingredients and rather than throw them away they gave them to the school for students. Now, for those that don't know what Scooter Pies are, they are graham crackers with marshmallow between and all covered in chocolate. The ingredient that had been left out was the preservative. As the Pies aged the marshmallow hardened and became chewy. Not good for public relations, but great for Bible college students!

Scooter Pies, when we were on pancakes. We were given a whole case of them! We used them for breakfast - for treats for lunch - for late night snacks - the wives even created a small cookbook for Scooter Pie recipes. We enjoyed them very much. I often wondered if they would have been enjoyed half as much if we hadn't been on pancakes.

The point of Scooter Pies? We were dependent on God for everything - He supplied Scooter Pies! We could have been upset with having only Scooter Pies, but we weren't - we felt they were treats.

Today, if most Christians were offered Scooter Pies would there be much excitement? I doubt it. We are self-sufficient enough to buy three cases if we wanted them.

Why do we allow ourselves to live so self-sufficiently? We are commanded to live by faith. In the financial realm this requires us to place ourselves in a position where we are looking to God to provide our way. The widow that gave all that she had placed herself in this position when she gave her mites in the temple.

A slow reading of Hebrews eleven should encourage you along the way to understanding what I am saying.

YOUTH AND MISSIONS

Of fifty people that dedicate their lives to missions

Only three will ever reach the field.

One of those will leave the field before the first term is over.

One of those will not return for the second term.

Only one will return to the field for a second term.

I personally believe that if we were educating our young people properly we would not have such statistics!

Q. Why are these statistics true?

1. Lack of excitement from the churches in this country.
2. Lack of financial support.
3. Lack of commitment on the part of Christians.
4. Lack of evangelistic preaching and teaching in our churches.
5. Lack of proper missionary education in all levels of our church education.
6. Lack of missionary emphasis and teaching in our seminaries and colleges in all areas of ministry. The missions department is for missions people only. The pastoral department is for the pastoral people only. The pastoral major is seldom challenged with missions and as a result neither are our churches.

NOW LET US ZERO IN ON WHY ALL OF THIS IS GOING ON TODAY!

Q. Why is missions in such shape today?

1. The missionary education in all phases of the church be it local congregation or educational institutions has not been training those they are responsible for in the area of missions.
2. There is also a basic lack of desire of the general Christian public to commit themselves to God's program of evangelism. Those few that do commit themselves to world evangelism are often discouraged with the apathy that they run head long into.

Now that we have an idea why all of this is going on today the question is "How do we bring the message of missions to the young people in our churches?"

1. Get them saved. I really wonder the way many of the youth act if they are really Christians.
2. Get them to dedicate themselves to the Lord. If they are saved they quite often have never been confronted with a challenge to commit themselves to the Lord.
3. Teach them in the area of God's will for their life. Give them a Sunday school series on finding the Lord's will for their life.
4. Teach them that they have a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with not only their neighbor but with the world. A burden for lost souls is very much needed.
5. Begin to counterattack the baloney that they are soaking up on television.

Try to make them realize the problems that there are with television.

Commercials are pushing sex and looks at every turn. They are pushing materialism at every turn. They are pushing humanism at every turn. They are pushing women's lib at every turn. They are pushing "do your own thing" at every turn. They are pushing against the Christian home at every turn.

The same charges can be leveled at the shows that are on Television.

The cry used to be against the movies, but now we have all that in the home.

One of the independent stations in Salem, OR was running movies with frontal nudity during prime time hours. (This was in 1987)

The shows are showing lately that murder is okay as long as the guy deserves it.

6. Educating the parents to what the youth are getting in the public school system so that they can counter the wrong thinking when they bring it home.
7. Begin a missions education program within the church so that they are being trained in the direction that they need to go in the future.

YOUTH MISSIONS PROGRAM

Before you go any further you need to realize the youth will never surpass your own level of missions involvement and or support and excitement. Are you really missions minded enough? Maybe you need to get a jolt of excitement before you try to give one to your young people. Maybe you need to get on your knees before the Lord of the Harvest and ask Him to give you a proper burden for the lost and for the world before you venture to attempt a challenge to your young people.

1. First of all take the youth that you have through a quarter of seminars and classes on missions.

I'm sure there are some missionaries around that would love to drop by for a weekday time with the youth. Many have nothing to do between Sundays when they are out on the road and would enjoy having an opportunity to minister. Indeed, most missionaries have no opportunity to minister to the youth or the children of the churches they visit. They closed into an evening meeting where they share their ministry and share a little from the Word.

You might want to put them up for several days during which the youth could get together with him. Open the church facilities to the missionary and set up a meeting room so that the students can come and go as they wish.

You could plan several activities for those that could come.

You probably have someone in the church that is interested in missions that would love to work with you to help in any way they can.

This is where a questionnaire of interests, skills, hobbies etc. can come in handy. The pastoral staff or elder board should at some time give a questionnaire to the general church body asking for areas of likes and hobbies and areas in which they would like to minister. Then as new members are taken in ask them to fill out the same questionnaire. The results should then be made available to everyone so that if there is a need the proper person can be contacted.

Ask the pastor to give them a study or two on missions.

I'm sure that some of the larger mission boards could give you some further ideas. Several of the large missions have filmstrips and films available that give a missions emphasis.

2. Now that you have them somewhat introduced to missions you can have a steady but not heavy diet of missions and keep them up to date on what is going on in missions. Keep up on current events and as you hear of things of importance relay the information to the students. If they are knowledgeable about the world in which they live then when they hear of news events they can properly pray for workers and the lost of the different countries.

3. If you hear of a local Bible college having a missions conference write for a schedule and see if you can take some of your young people.

4. Have missionaries that are coming to your church anyway spend some time with the youth group. During Sunday school or possibly a social time after church in the afternoon. Make it a potluck for youth.

5. As you have Bible studies have them relate the passages to the world evangelism that we are to be involved in.

DO NOT BORE THEM WITH MISSIONS YET AS OPPORTUNITY APPEARS EXPOSE THEM!

6. When the church has a missions conference try to get the missions committee to include the youth in their plans.

If your church doesn't have a conference see if your youth could plan and produce a conference.

This could be tremendous experience for them. Some of the mission agencies would be glad to give ideas for setting up a conference. They may be willing to help in planning conferences and this would really excite the young people to do something of this magnitude for the older generation.

Be sure if this is planned that you try to encourage your pastor to stir the people up about missions so that they will want to come for the conference AS WELL as for the youth.

7. A missions trip would not be unheard of.

There are a number of Indian missions in this country that could help.

There are missionaries to Mormons, Muslims, Chinese etc. in the US and I'm sure they would like to get hold of some young people for a few days to show them their work and maybe even use them.

8. Contact several missions and ask if they have any workers with teenagers in the family in your area. Talking to a teenage missionary kid might just help them understand more about missions.

9. Acquire literature and books about missions and place them on a shelf and encourage them to read them. Many biographies are great reading for teens.

The book just out "From Jerusalem to Irianjia is a biographical history of missions and is tremendous reading. These books could be used as part of their devotional life. (Not to replace the Bible however.)

Magazines from missions will help. The Evangelical Alliance Mission has a magazine that is free and is published for college age young people. I would suspect Jrs and Srs in high school would enjoy it as well.

10. Writing to missionary children on the field would introduce them to life on the field.

11. There are cross-cultural games that will help the students understand Culture shock and cultural differences. One is called "BAFA BAFA". These are fairly expensive, yet the profit in challenged lives is worth it.

12. Find a missionary from a foreign country and have them pick up a monopoly game from their country. They have them for different countries and this might stir their interest.

13. Public Broadcast System has many good travel shows and histories of other countries. A VCR and TV would do lots.

14. Challenging them to get involved with missions on a personal basis with their money would be a real idea. Suggest a project for a missionary or have them write to workers and find their own project. Help them find ways of earning money for the project. Encourage them to give of their own money.

It would not be impossible for the youth group to take on some support of a missionary. They might get behind a fellow young person that is going out for summer ministry. Encourage them to support the person financially.

15. Involve them in evangelism in your own community. Try to get them to go out on the visitation teams. They can help pass out literature for the church or notes about special meetings at the church. A personal evangelism class would be good. Take them to evangelism conferences in the area.

16. Some misc. ideas that could be used.

Tapes from the field. Either video or audio. Encourage the missionary to share some of the real problems and needs of their fields and of their personal lives.

You might ask a missionary to create a display of coins, stamps, curios, maps etc. from his country so that it could be set up in the classroom for a few weeks.

Assign mission boards to the students for study. Have the students write to the boards for information and let them share their findings in class.

Assign countries for research and study. Encourage the student to write missionaries to find out the spiritual condition of the country. Allow them to find out that there is a lost world out there.

Have books available and possibly encourage book reports from the class.

Have reports from those involved in summer ministries that involve outreach. Camps, Five day clubs, Vacation Bible school etc.

Encourage the class to take on some support of a missionary or a special project that they could give and raise money for.

Create within the students a personal desire to pray for missionaries on the field. This will come

when you expose the student to the missionary personally.

Ask that some mission agency higher ups speak to the students a time or two. The General Director would be ideal. This is a person of importance that the student would respect and listen to.

Most anything that would be of interest would help them learn and become excited about the Great Commission.

HOW MISSIONS MINDED IS YOUR FAMILY?

Consider the following questions:

1. Our family has personal friends who are missionaries...
2. Our family prays for one or more missionary families regularly...
3. Our family has missionaries stay in our home at least once a year...
4. Our family discusses world development with reference to missionaries...
5. Our family participates in our church's missionary conferences...
6. Our family gets at least one missionary publication a month...
7. Our family uses missionary prayer cards from time to time in some way in the family...
8. Our family makes a sacrificial gift at least once a year for a missionary cause...
9. Our family discussed Bible passages with mission implications from time to time...
10. Our children could express the idea that the mission of the missionary is the same as the milkman, business executive or schoolteacher...
11. As parents we discuss missions with each other...
12. Our family talks about and accepts missionaries as real people...
13. We read and encourage our children to read at least one missionary biography a year...
14. We have spent a family vacation assisting missionaries in another culture...
15. We have nationals of other cultures (Christian and/or non-Christian) in our home from time to time...

These questions are from a magazine - questions formed by Dr. Howard Eyrich.

Some commentary on the questions and their application:

1. Our family has personal friends who are missionaries...

This would indicate that you are interested enough in missions to take time to talk to a

missionary long enough to desire to get involved with their lives. This will take more time than just over a cup of coffee after his meeting in your church.

It will take some time to talk, to share and to develop a friendship. That will cost in time and spiritual sharing which many are not willing to do.

I would encourage to take time to get to know a missionary on a one on one basis and have them in your home long enough to develop a friendship of some sort even if minor.

2. Our family prays for one or more missionary families regularly...

This will require that you have met the missionaries and have a name and face to associate with it. It may come from a meeting in your church or from a meeting at some other place.

Try to talk to the missionaries that come through and get to know them and something about their ministry. You might even ask to be placed on their prayer letter list so you can get to know them better even after they go back to the field. This also requires that your family is a praying family.

This doesn't need to be together necessarily but all family members should be having their own quiet times and they should each have a missionary to uplift in prayer. Someone that they are interested in praying for.

3. Our family has missionaries stay in our home at least once a year...

This will take some commitment on your part. It is easy to allow everyone else to have the missionaries in, but if you will do it you will be the one that is blessed. If everyone in the church attempts to do this you had better ask your speakers to stay a day or so so that everyone can work in a missionary now and then! Don't just settle for a meal. Have them in for an overnight stay. This will give you a lot of time with them to get to know them.

4. Our family discusses world development with reference to missionaries...

This is easy enough if you will only think to do it. Many are studying world events in school. You all watch the news now and then. These relate easily to the missionaries. The dollar slipping should move everyone to pray for the missionaries and their financial needs. The unrest the world over endangers missionaries almost daily. Relate it to the family so they can be praying for the workers.

5. Our family participates in our church's missionary conferences...

That is assuming that your church has a missions conference. Most churches try to have a conference once per year. It is a time when you have a real missions emphasis and have several

missionaries in for a week of meetings and studies. There is often a dinner or banquet at the end to give an informal setting to reflect on the weeks happenings.

6. Our family gets at least one missionary publication a month...

Almost all of the major missions have magazines that they send out. Most of them are free for the asking. There are also some mission magazines that you can subscribe to put out by independent mission organizations that are designed to give information to the Christian public.

7. Our family uses missionary prayer cards from time to time in some way in the family...

There are a number of ways of doing this. Some use them on a bulletin board or on the refrigerator door so they are reminded of the workers as they pass by.

Others keep them in a pile and pray for the one on top during that particular day and change cards the next day. Some pin them up at the office to remind them to pray from time to time.

8. Our family makes a sacrificial gift at least once a year for a missionary cause...

I have toyed with the idea of challenging a church to set Christmas aside for a year. They would go shopping for all the family members but instead of buying the gift they would write the gift on a card and give the card to the person to show their thoughtfulness and then give the money saved to some missionary work that they were interested in. Heresy plus isn't it. That would ruin the American economy!

9. Our family discusses Bible passages with mission implications from time to time...

During family meal times it is good to do this at times. Try to get the family thinking about what their responsibilities are toward missions.

10. Our children could express the idea that the mission of the missionary is the same as the milkman, business executive or schoolteacher...

In my way of thinking this should subtract from your score!

I think that we all agree that we are all witnesses and evangelism is the work of all believers. However I believe there is strong evidence in the Scripture that the missionary is to be called. They are different than the average Christian in several ways. They are called to the service of the Lord to GO and quite often a geographical location is involved.

There is the aspect that it is their full time ministry. It is shown in Acts 13 that they were set aside from the church for this ministry and that they were sent by the local church. Missionaries ought to be different than everyone else. This does not let the average Christian off the hook

either - they are still to be evangelizing.

11. As parents we discuss missions with each other...

If you as a couple are not committed to missions, then you are probably not going to be sharing missions with your family.

You will not likely open your homes to workers, nor your lives to their friendship. You will likely not be supporting missionaries either independently or through your local church.

12. Our family talks about and accepts missionaries as real people...

Missionaries are real people and they have real needs, and they have real problems, and they have real feelings, and they have real tempers, and they have real anxieties, and they have real families, and all that stuff!

Since you find all this to be true then you know how to pray for them and you know how you can help them if they have needs!

13. We read and encourage our children to read at least one missionary biography a year...

I'll be quite honest this is one that I've never heard anyone be involved in. I wish someone had recommended it to us years ago! The few biographies I've read have really challenged and undoubtedly molded my life.

14. We have spent a family vacation assisting missionaries in another culture...

In our life we haven't even had the opportunity to take a vacation much less go far enough to assist a missionary. This is a great idea, however if you can get the money together. You might consider making this a special project for the family to get involved with. Start saving money while the kids are young and take several years to gather the funds, talk to missionaries about possibilities - as a family of course - and plan it. Then when the kids are old enough to really appreciate the trip - DO IT!

Would that be special or would that be special?

15. We have nationals of other cultures (Christian and/or non-Christian) in our home from time to time...

This also would be a ruff one however there are many international students at many of our colleges and universities so you could work it out if you wanted to work at it. There is an international students evangelism mission that would be more than glad to assist you in finding foreign students to invite into your home.

THE EXCESSES OF MISSIONS

Please read Eph. 5:18-21

OUTLINE:

- I. Introduction
- II. EXCESSES OF WINE
- III. EXCESSES OF NEED
- III. EXCESSES OF MISSIONS?
- V. Conclusion

INTRODUCTION: When teaching I included missions in my Christian Education courses, in my Theology courses, and naturally in my mission courses. Some might wonder how I fit missions into Theology. I noticed in studying for my classes that many of the topics of theology are actually missions related.

If you consider the section we call "MAN SIN AND SALVATION". If that isn't MISSIONS in a nutshell I don't think that you will find it in a nutshell. We are to be talking to lost men about their sin and possible salvation.

As I was considering the Attributes of God. Many of the attributes of the Lord are the prime movers in His working in lost mankind's lives. Love of his creatures, Justness of offering salvation to ALL mankind, Compassion extended to the lost. Many many others.

As you consider Bibliology, the study of the revelation. Why would God want to bother revealing His Word to us if it weren't to COMMUNICATE TO ALL OF MANKIND? Let it suffice to say that MISSIONS should be an integrated part of our lives - EVERY BELIEVERS LIFE!

I would like to share with you this morning a few thoughts from my past - a time, which I am not terribly proud of - but a time that the Lord allowed me to go through.

I was saved in my senior year of High School and the man that led me to the Lord did nothing to teach me or disciple me in the things of the Lord. I could stop here and share a message or two on the importance of discipleship after you lead someone to the Lord, but we won't take time for that. Let it suffice to say that much of what I am about to tell you of my time in the Navy could have been eliminated from my life with a few hours of discipleship.

Some say today that we must experience things to really know what they are like. I disagree with that philosophy. You do not have to try drugs to know what they are like and know what their effects are. You do not have to try alcohol to know what it is like and what its affects are like. To those that tell me they have to try it to understand it I say, "Then why don't you see what

suicide is like." YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPERIMENT.

Much of what I am going to share with you is a result of two very common errors of philosophy in our current society, indeed of some of our churches in America. I have mentioned the philosophy of I need to try it to know what it is like. The other philosophy that I am speaking of is "SOCIAL DRINKING". Many churches are discussing the topic of social drinking again.

Let me say to those that say social drinking is okay. "Why are so many alcoholics started down that road by "SOCIAL DRINKING" if it is okay? Social drinking and experimenting in alcohol led me down a four-year course of wasted money, wasted time and wasted spiritual life!

The day I was discharged from the service I began drinking in San Francisco. The next morning I woke up in my brother's house in the Los Angeles area. I do not remember the trip at all. I had planned on taking the bus - I assume I did.

"SOCIAL DRINKING" and "EXPERIMENTING" are really nothing but tools of the devil.

Let me begin with the first Christmas that I spent in the Navy aboard an aircraft carrier. In the Navy it is traditional on many ships and duty stations to have a Christmas bash - I mean Christmas party. On the U.S.S. Hancock it was no different.

The Hancock had over 3000 men and officers aboard so they planned a very large get together. They rented the top of the Mart in San Francisco. It is a large building and the top floor has a fantastic view of the city. The ship rented the whole top floor of the Mart Building.

The night came for me to go to the party - you see they ran the party three nights and divided the crew into thirds for the party. I was enjoying the party and the friends that I had made on the ship. Within a couple of hours I was basically under my friends control. I did not care what I was doing. They would say, "Let's go listen to music," so they would lead me to the music. This went on for about an hour before I decided I needed to sober up a little. I was going to go out for some air. The ship, fortunately had the foresight to station SP's (the navy equivalent of MP's) at the front door of the Mart building to assist people like myself back to the ship. I remember part of the ride back but very little else till morning.

At one point during the party I had my head lying down over the back of a chair. One of my friends called my name. I tried to raise my head but didn't make it. He reached over and grabbed my hair and lifted my head. The next morning the top of my head was very sore around the hair roots.

The next part of what I want to share comes from a time on Okinawa an island in the Pacific Ocean. I was stationed on a troop transport at the time. Three of my friends and I were nearly broke. We pooled all our money and found that we had enough to go to the Air Force base and have a pizza and a very few drinks. We went and enjoyed our pizza. As we left the base be

passed a bar that was selling drinks for 25 cents each. Drinks usually were a dollar plus. We decided that was a very good deal. We went in and started buying rounds of drinks from our pooled money. We didn't want to pass up a sale!

As the evening went on things were getting a bit out of control. Several of us had a little more money put away for special things coming up in the future. We began spending that money because we were out of the pooled resources. Needless to say when we left the bar that night we were very fortunate to make it back to the ship. I wasn't so bad that I didn't know what was going on but there were times that night that I could not get myself to do what I wanted to do. I went down to take a shower and forgot to take off my clothes as I remember. I was so tired I slipped down into the bottom of the shower and fell asleep with the water running. One of my friends happened into the shower area and woke me up and headed me to bed.

I trust that a couple of things are true. Number one is that none of you will find this exciting and decide that you want to try it. That would be foolishness plus. There is nothing glorious in not being in control of yourself! Number two is that none of you will take offense to these accounts.

I hesitated a long time before doing this study. The reason that I went ahead with these thoughts is that my God and Lord is the one that chose the drunkenness of man to illustrate His truths at times in the Scriptures. If God wants us to relate to what He says we must know something about the illustrations that He uses. Not that we have to go get drunk to know what He is speaking of but that we understand the principles of what the illustration is saying.

Being drunk is basically the idea that the person no longer has complete control of himself. The alcohol has completely fogged his mind and the alcohol is in a sense controlling the person.

This is why people can not speak clearly when drinking, it is why they cannot walk properly, it is why they can not drive properly when they have been drinking excessively. I trust that none are offended with what I have said.

I also trust that there are many today that have not experienced what I have been talking about, and that you will vow to your Lord to never find out what it is like to be drunk. I hope that term isn't too offensive but it carries the idea much better than some of the \$24 words we use today to make the alcoholic feel better, you know words like disease, substance abuse, bad habit.

I am only going to share one fact with you and move on to the next point in my outline. Today we have several thousand lost people going into eternal torment in every single hour. That is LOST people. Most of these people have never heard of the Gospel and many of them have never heard the name, Jesus Christ.

As you sat through Sunday school class the last time several thousand lost souls died on planet earth and are in torment with the man of Luke 16 that cried to Abraham, "I am tormented in this flame!"

Some today accuse missionaries of being extravagant. I was in a pastor's office one day while on deputation and the pastor was holding a letter from a missionary that was trying to raise \$2400 per month of support to go to the field. He said something to the effect that if I could explain why the missionary needed so much money he would give me a meeting.

I told him that I did not think that the amount was out of line for the ministry that he was entering into. He was with a service men's group that supplies housing and meals on weekends for servicemen abroad. They have to have a large house with room for the men and the Bible studies etc.

As I began to explain the costs of missions the pastor began to be more quiet and I think that he was properly informed for the first time of the costs of missions today.

No, I didn't get a meeting in that church. I do think the other missionary did however, which was great.

I think that missionaries could tighten their belts some and many are doing just that.

We were appointees to Ireland for five years. The missionaries with our mission turned down cost of living increases yearly because they were making due with what they had.

When I hear of pastors wanting missionaries to tighten their belts I feel like asking them how tight their belts are.

An American Missionary Fellowship missionary spoke in chapel at the school where I taught and mentioned that he was told by a pastor that he was resigning and seeking a new church. He wasn't being paid enough. The missionary asked how much he was receiving. The pastor replied that he was receiving \$48,000 per year.

I certainly do not want to downgrade pastors but let me tell you, we have many men coming out of our schools and seminaries that are looking for positions and not ministries! Their first priority is not how may I minister to you people it is how much are you going to minister to my pocket book.

With this type of people you can not build missions.

We have been speaking in churches for several years all over the western part of our country and there aren't more than four or five that have any type of outreach program for the lost in their surrounding area.

We have attended one little Baptist church two or three times in the last 1 1/2 years and they have had two outreach programs. Something has to be right in that church!

As to the excesses of missions I personally believe that they are few. Most missions in fundamental circles operate on a shoestring and that shoestring usually is tied together in several places to get it to wear a little longer.

We do not have excessive workers today. Most missions could put 50 workers to work immediately in areas where they want to start works.

We do have an excessive amount of financial problems today in missions. We have many appointees that are taking longer to raise their support than they are taking to prepare for the ministry. That is four years of college and then five years of deputation.

We have appointees that can not get to the field. While on deputation we ran into a number of pastors that were ministering in churches because they could not raise support to get to the field as missionaries. Several of these feel that this was God's way to help them realize that He wanted them to minister here in the US. Faith and I spent over five years on deputation trying to raise support to go to Ireland. We, today feel that for now God wants us helping train others to go where we could not.

When we first arrived at the school where I taught we were on missionary support and needed to raise enough to live on. We sent out over 150 letters to churches and pastors in the area to see if we could come and present the work of school and the work that God has called us to. From the 150 letters we were able to schedule one meeting. That meeting was canceled because the church closed before the meeting. I mention this to acquaint you with some of the problems of missionaries today.

We have missionaries that are veterans trying to return to the field for their fourth and fifth terms and can not because they have lost so much support. We have missionaries come home in the middle of the term to raise enough support to remain on the field till furlough.

Most missionaries find that if they send out 100 letters and follow the letter up with a personal call to the pastors that they will get ten meetings. Of those ten meetings there will be one church or individual that will take on support. These facts are a little old and I suspect that they are even worse now from what I gather talking to missionaries.

Mission excesses? I don't think so for the most part.

Now let us look FINALLY! at a Scripture passage that we can tie all of this together with. I have purposely not brought us to a conclusion until now.

We have seen the excesses of wine and the drunkenness that causes one to loose control. Indeed, the alcohol takes control of the person.

We have seen that there is an excess in the needs of the world today. There are millions dying

without the Lord and no one is telling them about salvation.

We have seen that the mission organizations are not being excessive in their sending out of missionaries. Indeed, most missions could, TODAY, send out large numbers of workers if they had them available.

We need now to consider what drunkenness has to do with missions. Turn with me to a very familiar passage for a few moments. Eph. 5:18-21 "And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

Now I realize this is a text speaking of our community worship and times together. I do not want to detract from that interpretation of this passage. I want to however, spend some time thinking of verse 18 and how it may relate to the way we live our lives in America.

"And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit," Now, remembering it was God, the one that inspired the Scriptures, that chose the illustration of drunkenness. It is God that decided to compare the filling of the Spirit with the drunkenness of wine. Not Stan Derickson.

Now, if you will remember that the alcohol brings the person into a state where he no longer is able to do those things that he wills to do. That drunk driver coming at you wills to drive between the lines on the highway yet he is unable to.

Now how about some spiritual application? If the Spirit of God is controlling us, as He desires to, we will no longer do those things that WE WILL but those things that HE WILLS.

It isn't that we are slaves to the spirit but it is that we want so much to do what God wants us to do that our own desires fade into the sunset, or fade into His desires. When it comes to desiring and willing to buy a new car when the old one is still running very nicely it is submitting to the Spirit and doing something else with that money. Might we suggest the missions offering?

When it comes to desiring and willing to stay home super bowl Sunday, and you are perfectly free to do so - it is doing that which the Spirit would move you to do. Go to church and fellowship with the children of God. And I don't mean bringing your 5" TV so you can sit in the nursery and watch the game.

Let us think about these ideas of the Spirit controlling us as alcohol controls the drinker. The Spirit is desirous of seeing all of God's commands and requests of us to come to pass in our lives. The Lord has given each one of us the command to go. The Lord has given each one of us the ministry of reconciliation. We are ambassadors of God to bring the lost world to Him.

The Lord has promised to provide our needs. God is the commander in chief of the spiritual forces. He commands all the angelic host and he controls all the human host. Or does He?

Can we think along these lines for a few moments? He is the commander in chief and distributes His forces as He sees fit. He has a spiritual warfare in progress. The United States is today primarily the home base for God although that is changing. The U. S. is one country that still holds forth God as very important to them.

The war is taking place primarily in the rest of the world. Now, we know by facts and figures that around 90% of God's Christian workers are in the United States and about 10% of his trained workers are in the rest of the world.

Consider World War II when Hitler and Japan were cleaning our plow. If the president had stationed 90% of the trained troops on the west and east coasts and sent only 10% to the front how long would he have remained in office?

I rather think that there have been marching orders sent out to God's workers but they have been drunk with money, power, prestige and everything else. The Spirit has not had the control that He needs to move that person on out to the front. This applies equally well to the man in the pew as well as the man in the pulpit. There are, I would suspect many that have been called but that have not responded to prepare and to go.

I am not pointing the finger at anyone. It is just illogical to believe that the Lord would distribute the troops as they are now distributed.

Another area that we might think about for a few moments is the area of praying. While on deputation we challenged many congregations with the lack of prayer in our churches. The Lord told the disciples to pray therefore that the Lord of the Harvest would send forth workers. We today have the same Lord of the Harvest. He is God and He has not changed. We have workers trained ready and desiring to go to the foreign field but cannot because of lack of funds.

Is it a financial problem - is it because of the economy? No, for the Lord still has the cattle on a thousand hills that He hasn't sold. If there is a problem in the trilogy of Lord of the harvest, workers and prayer I think we all know where the problem lies. We do not pray in the church in America!

There is a story that I once read that was supposedly true of a church in mid-America that was having terrible financial troubles. They ask one of their deacons to be treasurer of the church. Not being excited with the financial problems he stated that he would take the job for one year on two conditions. One, that he would not be ask any questions, and two that he not give a report until the end of the fiscal year when he left office. The deacons knew and trusted the man so agreed to his requests.

At the end of the year the treasurer stood and gave his report. He had paid the entire church mortgage; he had paid all unpaid bills, and had excess in all funds of the church. The pastor in amazement asked the deacon how in the world he had accomplished all that he had done. The deacon said, "Well pastor as you know this is a farming community and most of our members are farmers. I work at the elevator here in town and when the members came in with their loads of grain I totaled their loads up and took 10% of their yield and placed the money in the churches general fund.

Now, folks I don't recommend that method of church giving, however it points up the fact of what we could do in America if all believers would only tithe.

The facts and figures show that the majority of giving in evangelical circles comes from a very small percentage of the overall church membership.

In two years we as believers spend more on Christian tapes, records and concerts than we do on missions in a year. You apply the needed truth of those facts to the church today.

Now, let's spend a moment or two with the person that feels that he is called to be a layperson ministering in the local church. Maybe you are giving 20% of your income to the church, and maybe you teach Sunday school class and maybe you are at every service of the church. You may be the model churchgoer. FANTASTIC - KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK! Do you witness for your Lord?

Every one of us is an ambassador and not a one of us has any reason not to be witnessing for our Lord.

I am a little technical in my definition of missions. Many today say that missions is witnessing at home. In a general sense, yes, that is true. In a general sense we are all missionaries, however if you look at the early church our missionaries were a bit different from the normal, stay in Jerusalem believer.

The missionaries of Acts were CALLED, they were SENT, and they were sent to particular geographical locations at times. We are all to be witnesses yet the missionary is someone that is called to do a specific work for the Lord.

Take time to commit yourself to the concept of the Spirit having such a control of your life that you are always doing what God wants you to do. Such control that you are always open to his leading in witnessing, in serving, in going to the foreign field if that should be the case.

I trust that you will meditate on the comparison that the Lord supplied to us of being so controlled with the Spirit that we are like the drinker that is controlled by the wine.

It is not that we are to be out of control because of the Spirit. That is a false understanding of the

verse. It is that He is in control of our lives so that He can guide and direct us into those things that the Lord would have us to do be it giving, be it witnessing, be it going, be it praying, be it cleaning, be it sharing, be it anything.

Challenge yourself and your family and your church family to be filled or controlled with the Holy Spirit.

I trust that the thoughts haven't been too mundane and heavy for you. I will close with one final illustration. A pastor that taught a class I was in during College mentioned that he was at one time an assistant pastor in a very large church. The church was so large that it had several pastors and assistant pastors. For some reason all of the staff were on the platform for one of the final sessions of a missions conference at the church.

The speaker had been giving a real challenge to the people about dedicating their lives to the Lord. The pastor mentioned that he had been considering the message but knew that it wasn't for him for the Lord had led him to be the assistant pastor of this church.

As the speaker went along the man began thinking and the Lord began moving and at the close of the service the man was really wondering if the Lord would have him leave his position and go to the foreign field.

The speaker began some final challenges and the final of these went something like this. "If nothing else you folks in this church have a bunch of pastors - why don't you send one of them to the field." The speaker was pointing point blank at the man. He, before the closing prayer had committed himself to go to the field and made public his decision that morning.

What has God been doing in your life this month? What will you let Him do in your life in the coming weeks?

THE EXCESSES OF MISSIONARIES

OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. Facts
- III. Fallacies
- III. Conclusion

From THE DAILY TELEGRAM p1; vol. 8 no. 102; Torrington, WY.

BOBCAT TAKING SURVIVAL TRAINING

KANSAS CITY, MO (AP) --- A bobcat turned wimp is being sent to Texas for survival training.

The 35-pound male cat has been in captivity at the Swope Park nature center since September, when it blithely entered a home. Naturalist Kevin Hogan said the cat, which obviously had been around humans, was as tame as a domestic cat and would not survive if placed back in the wild.

We will return to the bobcat later.

This is one of the dangers of capturing and keeping animals. they can not be safely returned to the wild. They can't survive.

It is not unlike Lot in the Old Testament. The city drew him in and trapped him - even when he was taken out of Sodom he lived as the sinful citizens lived!

I. Introduction

There are some in Christian circles that are working to bring foreign mission dollars home to home missions. This is understandable due to the great hardship of raising funds for home missionary work. It is not Biblical, however. The Lord has the world in view as He tells us to go with the Gospel.

Some accuse the foreign mission people of being to high priced and not producing enough fruit. We sat across the table from a man at dinner in Pennsylvania that was very concerned with the high cost per convert ratio in foreign missions. I am not sure how he decided that you could put a price on a soul. He was not sure that it was wise for the church to send people out and spend that much money when they aren't winning souls. It costs thousands of dollars for one soul to be won he said. This man was very serious and very concerned about the problem.

I had a mind to read the great commission to him as adapted by his thinking and attitude. "Go ye,

therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, if it gets to expensive to go just stay home and continue to heap the Gospel upon those that are saved and those that have heard it dozens of times, even unto the end of the age."

Yes, the man is concerned about costs, yet there are so few that are concerned about souls. Yes, we need to be frugal with our monies, but we are also told to "go". The cost does not change nor negate the commission to go.

I would like to contrast this man's thinking to the thinking of the missionaries of the past that have really and truly had excesses in their lives, excesses that make one wonder where the real missionaries of our own day are.

II. Facts

1. J. Hudson Taylor: Great man of faith. Trusted God to supply the need for he and his family and then for another worker, and another, and another until his entire mission was supported by faith. He went against the standards of his day and received much ridicule yet prospered for God.

Hudson Taylor - born 1832 in England - Wanted to be a missionary at 5 years of age.

O.K. Parents - how have we done in this area?

His father influenced him greatly in this. He was saved at 17. He fell in love with a woman that was not burdened for China as He was. "I know I love her. To go without her would make the world a blank." His commitment to God was first - they did not marry.

In Later years his frustration was similar to mine today. In speaking of China, "More than 1000 every hour are passing away into death and darkness." His frustration - if he had 1000 evangelists each reaching 250 people a day China could be evangelized in 3 years. Not so today.

I feel a close kinship with his frustration. I've been challenging churches with the facts and figures of our own generation for eight years plus and see no more reaction and change than Taylor saw.

His work resulted in a peak of 1,368 missionaries on the field under his mission in 1934. He died in 1905 at 73. His condition - "severe mental and physical exhaustion"

David Brainerd: A man that had as his entire desire to reach the American Indians of colonial days for the Lord. "He spent his life for that cause. At the age of twenty-nine, after a mere five years of missionary work, he died as a result of his strenuous labors. Brainerd's place in history is based largely on the tremendous inspiration his personal life has had on others."

His diet for many months was Hasty-pudding - you know we used to sing about it and always wondered what it was. It isn't pudding that mom made in a haste. It is oatmeal or flour boiled in water. His diet was hasty pudding, boiled corn and bread baked in ashes.

The following quote mentions two things of this man. He was committed to the work by the traveling he did. He was committed to the Indians. "My work is exceeding hard and difficult: I travel on foot a mile and a half, the worst of ways, almost daily, and back; for I live so far from my Indians."

He was plagued with sickness and problems throughout his ministry. His final end is not a pleasant one. After spending the winter in the home of a pastor-friend in New Jersey, Brainerd traveled to Northampton, Massachusetts, where he spent his last months in the home of the great preacher and scholar, Jonathan Edwards, whose daughter, Jerusha, he hoped to marry. This dream, however, was never realized. For nineteen weeks Jerusha tenderly nursed him, but to no avail. He died on October 9, 1747. The following Valentines's day Jerusha joined him, dying of consumption that she apparently contracted from him." (consumption is tuberculosis)

When I think of men like this the Psalmists thought is very clear to me. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Ps. 116:15 The death of all the saints is precious, yet one must think that the Lord must really rejoice to reach down and take someone that has been through so much and take him home to glory!

William Carey: Born into a poor family Carey became a cobbler or shoemaker. He worked to support himself while preaching at small Baptist churches as a layman. He became convinced that it was the churches responsibility to reach the heathen with the same life transforming Gospel that had saved him.

He wrote a booklet giving forth his view to a church that felt that the heathen were being killed off to make way for the white man. The heathen had no right to, nor reason for wanting to hear the Gospel. This was in the late 1700's.

The title of his book is very interesting though somewhat off the subject of our line of thinking. I'd like to share it with you just for information's sake.

"AN ENQUIRY INTO THE OBLIGATIONS OF CHRISTANS TO USE MEANS FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE HEATHENS. IN WHICH THE RELIGIOUS STATE OF THE DIFFERENT NATIONS OF THE WORLD, THE SUCCESS OF FORMER UNDERTAKINGS, AND THE PRACTICABILITY OF FURTHER UNDERTAKINGS, ARE CONSIDERED, BY WILLIAM CAREY"

His thinking led him to prepare to go to India. This was met by great opposition from his father that thought him mad and his wife that refused at first to go with him. His wife later went insane and was a constant burden to his ministry. He did most of his preparation and translation work in

the room next to hers. She was literally mad and raving.

He lost many translation works and manuscripts in a large warehouse fire. He went back to work and did the work all over again.

His life is tied up in a statement of his own, "I, however, never intended to return to England when I left it, and unless something very unexpected were to take place, I certainly shall not do it....My heart is wedded to India; and though I am of little use, I feel a pleasure in doing the little I can."

Adoniram Judson: He and his wife arrived in India in 1812. After long and hard work in reaching the people he was imprisoned due to a war in the the land. A quote will give you some insight to his time in prison. "The missionaries were confined with common criminals in a filthy, vermin infested, dark, dank prison house, with fetters binding their ankles. At night the [guards]... hoisted the ankle fetters to a pole suspended from the ceiling, until only their shoulders rested on the ground. By morning the weary prisoners were numb and stiff, but the daytime offered them little relief. Each day executions were carried out and the prisoners never knew who would be next."

He contemplated suicide at one moment when things were looking the worst.

In the mean time his wife with child was bribing the guards for visits with her husband. After the birth of the child both his wife and child became sick and ultimately died. He remarried and the second wife died after awhile and he married a third time. His third wife went through her own set of trials as well.

A final quote will end our look at the Judson's. "Adoniram and Emily served three years together in Burma. The birth of a baby girl brought happiness to them, but much of the time was marred by illness. In the spring of 1850, with Emily soon expecting another child, Adoniram, who was seriously ill, left on a sea voyage, hoping to recover. Less than a week later, he died and was buried at sea. Ten days later Emily underwent a stillbirth, and not until August did she hear of her husband's death." She returned to America with the remaining children to make a home. Her health was poor and she died three years after her husband at age 36.

Jonathan and Rosalind Goforth: The Goforths ministered in South East Asia. They were very effective in their lives and basically wore out in their old age. "...Goforth, at seventy-three, kept up his hectic pace of revival meetings. Even after being stricken with blindness he continued his ministry, aided by a Chinese assistant. At the age of seventy-four he returned to Canada, where he spent the last eighteen months of his life traveling and speaking at nearly five hundred meetings. he carried on to the very end, speaking four times on the Sunday before he peacefully died in his sleep."

Carey lived to age 73.

Taylor lived to age 73.

Judson lived to age 62.

In more recent days I have heard accounts that would be less troublesome than the lives that we have just heard, yet just as hurtful to families.

A Young family was surveying a possible location to begin their work in the jungles. The whole family was in an airplane when it crashed. All but one small boy was killed. The tribe of Indians that found the boy was well known for their hatefulness toward outsiders, however they took a liking to the little boy. They informed the outsiders of the boy being alive and allowed other missionaries to come in to get him.

Through this contact the tribe was reached with the Gospel and many were saved.

We heard a missionary several years ago talk of the tribe he worked with in South America. They had been among the Indians for a number of years with no success. They had not been able to share the gospel fruitfully at all. One day their child was swimming in the river and was killed by an alligator.

The couple was able to go through the experience with the peace of the Lord and the Indians began to ask questions. The gospel went forth and many were saved.

There are many others that could be mentioned both past and present. People that have taken their commission to go to the world seriously. These are people that hold Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; and Rom. 12:1-2 as something to be lived and not just read.

Missionaries of the past counted the cost of missions and went anyway.

Today many count the cost and find it to high a price to pay, so settle into an occupation and a comfortable church and do little!

Due to the labors of the Taylors, the Judsons, the Careys, the Goforths and the modern day Elliots many souls have entered into eternities glory.

Not because of the missionaries great works, but because of their willingness to go!

None of these did anything but serve the God that did mighty things through them. God said of the great people of faith listed in Hebrews chapter eleven (38) "Of whom the world was not worthy."

A human estimation on my part would be that the people we've looked at in this study were also people "Of whom the world was not worthy."

Just walking by faith.

Are you what you ought to be for God? Are your Christian instincts beginning to click?

You have heard a lot of info about missions. You have heard the same information that others have heard over the years. Each of us is responsible for what we have heard - seen and studied.

The people of the past had, as you now have, responsibility for what they knew. You now know and are responsible.

Not only is there responsibility but there is accountability for what you do or don't do. Since you will be accountable, then it is wise to act upon your knowledge.

Today we know that in crimes and accidents the public doesn't want to get involved. There was the report of the brutal beating and murder of the young woman a few years ago outside a crowded apartment building. No one wanted to get involved.

There was a young woman attacked and raped repeatedly in a crowded bar while all present looked on. No one wanted to get involved.

We become indignant when we hear of such coldness yet we know that most of the world is lost and on its way to hell, yet no one wants to get involved.

Folks! We are involved and God is going to hold us accountable for how we react to our knowledge.

Right now it is your turn to act upon what you know.

Responsibility and accountability require action. What is your action going to be? You might act by getting involved in missions in your church. You might get involved in prayer for missions. You might get involved or further involved in giving to missions. You might get involved by going to the mission field - summer - Short term - Full time!

The point is that action is required.

A little boy came to me one morning in a worship service and was talking about a new parrot in their house. There was excitement plus in his voice. His body was even getting into the descriptions. His father quietly informed me that the parrot was only a toy.

AREN'T WE LIKE THAT? GET EXCITED ABOUT A TOY MISSIONS PROGRAM, GET EXCITED ABOUT A PROGRAM THAT REALLY ISN'T DOING ANYTHING EXCEPT MAKING NOISE AND INTEREST FOR THOSE AROUND IT?

III. FALACIES

The fallacy that we can be our own person and do our own thing is something that we have acquired from the world that we tend to mimic instead of reach. The fallacy that we can work in our own desired field of business or occupation is again something that comes from what the world has told us. We are first to check with God as to His wishes and desires for our lives and occupations.

Adam was told by his creator that he was to tend the garden. Adam did not turn to his creator and say, "I'm sorry God, that I don't have time to become a gardner. I'm going to be a computer programmer." As He leads and directs so go we, is the original idea of things.

The fallacy that God's commands and instructions are multiple choice and/or optional is not from the Scripture, but from the philosophical nonsense that the world is giving us. The fallacy of morals, sex, ethics etc. are again not from the God of the universe but the from the world.

Let me now read a text for you. "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom. 12:2 Don't be conformed to this world. That is a statement of fact. Indeed are we not conformed to the world.

So many times we are so close to the world that no one can tell us from the world. People should be able to look at us and tell that we are something special - something that is not of this world.

Are we not told to be the salt? How can you tell if something is salty? It tastes flat. People should be able to tell that we are around. Are we not told to be the light? How can you tell if there is light in the room. WHAT A DUMB QUESTION! People should be able to tell that you are light!

Matt. 5:13-16 talks of our being the salt of the earth and that we are to show forth to the world around us. The men that we have heard about today were certainly light and salt to the world in which they lived. The question today is not about them but it is about you.

III. Conclusion

You are also to be salt and light. How do you measure up to the standard that has been set before you today?

We are told that Paul was to be an example to some of the people that he ministered to. How do you compare to Paul today? Is it a comparison that you even want to think about today? The apostle Paul went through many, many trials of his own and yet counted it worth it all. He was in the business of serving His Lord and Master. If you are a servant, then you do those things that your Master asks you to do.

What those things are or how hard they are is really not a part of the decision. You do it because

you want to be the best servant that you can be.

(From THE DAILY TELEGRAM p1; vol. 8 no. 102; Torrington, WY.)

BOBCAT TAKING SURVIVAL TRAINING

KANSAS CITY, MO (AP) --- A bobcat turned wimp is being sent to Texas for survival training.

The 35-pound male cat has been in captivity at the Swope Park nature center since September, when it blithely entered a home. Naturalist Kevin Hogan said the cat, which obviously had been around humans, was as tame as a domestic cat and would not survive if placed back in the wild.

Hogan said the feeble feline was being sent today to real bobcat experts," Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Inc. in Boeme, Texas.

The 8-to-9-month-old cat will be removed from human contact and placed among other cats on a 75,000-acre refuge in northwest of San Antonio.

"It's not difficult as long as they're fairly young, less than a year," said Kathleen Dowling, assistant director of the refuge.

"The instincts click when they get around other bobcats," she said. "All the memories come rushing back."

To summon up its feral instincts, the cat will be fed small rabbits, rodents, chickens and other birds it would catch in the wild.

"We want them to learn to identify these animals as food and not just as toys," she said. "When he is showing typical wild bobcat behavior he will be released."

I dislike the term wimp which means "a weak or ineffectual person" according to Webster, but his account reminded me of many Christians. We are tame and domesticated as far as the world is concerned.

Christianity as a whole is a wimp - we aren't up to the struggle of the wild world.

I would that someone could get our instincts to click! We need to be prepared to show typical Christian behavior!

HOW TO PRAY FOR MISSIONARY

Please read PS. 86:1-10

I have incorporated information from several sources to put this study together. They are listed below. I used some of the thoughts from the sources and expanded them with other thoughts/illustrations.

I would take this opportunity for the many mission agencies that put out information for their missionaries to give away while visiting churches. I have been challenged and educated in missions by much of this information over the years.

"HOW TO PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES" Pamphlet from CBFMS.

"HOW TO PRAY FOR MISSIONARIES "Tape by Dr. Dick Hillis

"PRAYER IS THE LIFELINE TO MISSIONS" Pamphlet from the Great Commission Prayer League.

"HOW TO PRAY FOR ME" Pamphlet from Sudan Interior Mission.

ARTICLE ON REAR OF PRAYER CALENDAR FROM CBFMS.

OUTLINE:

- I. HOW TO PRAY
- II. HOW NOT TO PRAY
- III. WHAT TO PRAY FOR
 - A. PRAYERS IN THE POSITIVE
 - B. PRAYERS IN THE NEGATIVE

INTRO: While pastoring a church in Nebraska we had the pleasure of inviting many missionaries into our home.

One Wednesday evening a young couple came. They represented New Tribes Mission in Papua New Guinea. We fed them supper and the whole family was just right and proper. Their slides and presentation were very well done. The question answer session went nicely.

Everyone from the church left (We were meeting in our home.) and We told the folks to relax and make themselves comfortable for the night. We got the kids to bed and began to talk. As we fellowshiped we began to talk about the "Missionary image" -- the straight lace, proper look and the super spiritual image -- I told them to relax as if it were their home. They both kicked off their shoes. He took off his tie and coat and pulled his shirt tail out and rolled up his sleeves.

She relaxed considerably as well.

We offered to tape music for them to take back to the field. They began looking through our music and found that we had older country western music. They went crazy over it. They liked it but had very little of it on the field.

As the evening wore on it became more and more evident that these were just plain people.

After they left we requested that their mission place us on their prayer letter list. In fact we ask for it several times but never received one. (They may not send one out!)

I prayed for them daily for a number of years and still do from time to time.

How do I pray for them when they send no requests?

I prayed for them as just plain folks. I decided if they liked country western they might get homesick -- they might get depressed -- they might get bored -- they might need money -- they might need to send out prayer letters.

How do you pray for just a name -- maybe someone that you've never met? Hopefully when we finish with this study you will know how. Hopefully when we finish with this study you will know how to pray more effectively for all missionaries.

This study is centered on Missions but applies equally to pastors and one another.

Please read Exodus 17:8-13

"Moses hands were heavy" It wasn't that the rod was neither magic nor that it had to be in the air. It was just that the Israelites needed to remember that was what was needed in the battle. The rod was a symbol throughout the journeys of Israel. As long as his hands were held high --- SUCCESS!

This is similar to what happens on the mission field. As long as prayer is held aloft the missionaries ministries flourish and the Devil is in defeat, but the moment prayer drops off the Devil begins to take the advantage.

This moves us to the question: How can we pray more effectively for missionaries?

I asked this question in California and the pastors reply was - stop lying to one another. We all say Oh, I'm praying for you - do we? He said he believes many people lie about this. We have the best intentions at the moment but never give footwork to our intent.

LUKE 10:2 Lays important ground work for our study. "Therefore said he unto them, the

harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest."

PRAYERS (PEOPLE)

LABORERS (PEOPLE)

THESE TWO ARE COLABORERS WITH GOD. Indeed, the "ye" were the Disciples and they were sent.

THE PRAYERS BECAME THE SENT ONES! BE CAREFUL HOW YOU PRAY! YOU MIGHT GET INVOLVED!

In the past this text has been used to show that laborers are few. Today this is still true but more to the point ---- pray-ers are few.

The emphasis is not at the moment on more workers to commit themselves but that the Lord would send forth those that are ready to go. Praying is not being done in proper amounts in this country today!

This involves a great responsibility. After we have prayed then we should be willing to go and willing to enable to go.

Evangelism is a spiritual battle that needs to be waged with spiritual weapons ---- PRAYER.

So, how do we pray?

PRAY INTELLIGENTLY:

Be informed about those you pray for.

PRAYER CARDS:

PRAYER LETTERS: How many of you read the prayer letters that are posted on the bulletin board? How many of you read the prayer letters that you receive at your homes?

PERSONEL LETTERS: I was privileged to go to visit missionaries in Ireland years ago, and one of the highlights for the whole family was when the mail came. They would gather in the living room to see if there were any letters from home. The parents would read these letters aloud to the children. Even the letters from churches and supporters were read. The whole family knew who was praying for them - a very special time to each of them.

Get to know them at church. Have them in your home for a meal or overnight if you have room.

Keep an account of their ministry in a scrapbook. Keep a list of needs based on their prayer letters. Keep track of their kids age and the problems they might be going through. Keep track of when a loved one dies and pray especially for them on those anniversaries. (Husband or wife)

Pray for the men that are in the 35-45 bracket when they might have a time of adjustment. Pray for aging women and their physical problems.

PRAY REPEATEDLY: Never give up until it's been answered or until the missionary tells you the Lord has answered no. Paul mentions praying night and day and he also mentions praying without ceasing. (We'll see these refs. later. I Thes. 2:13; 5:17)

PRAY AS THE SPIRIT LEADS YOU: Pray at first in general but then allow the Spirit to lead you to certain ones to pray for specifically. We have recently heard of a mission that requires each new worker to find 100 people that will promise to pray for him or her daily. This is required before they can leave for the field.

The Lord may lay a burden on your heart to pray for someone or something for no reason at all. Do it.

A case is very vivid to me in recent years. As I was praying - my mind tends to think - pray - think - pray etc. My mind came to rest on a couple at our church. We didn't know them well - I had decided we'd have them over - I felt they had need of prayer. I prayed for them in a general way, not knowing their needs. That afternoon I learned that at the time I was praying for them he had had an heart attack and had died. I had been praying for "Whatever their needs were".

PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING: The psalmists were very good at intertwining their thanksgiving with their prayers. Paul was heavy on thanksgiving. Col.4:2 "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Phil. 4:6 "With thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." I Tim. 2:1 "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men."

Missionaries should be heavy into letting you know how and when your prayers have been answered on their behalf as well.

MAKE IT REGULAR: Take a specific time of the day when you are going to meet with God. Don't let anything come between you and that time, short of an emergency. The time of day does not matter. However many people find in the morning when their mind and body is fresh is best for many people. Paul prayed day and night we are told in II Tim. 1:3 which is a good example to us!

Whenever you do it remember Paul comments in Col. 4:2 the NASB puts it in a light that I can relate to "devote yourselves to prayer keeping alert in it...."

CONSIDER IT AS A DUTY TO BE DONE FOR GOD THE SAME AS TEACHING A CLASS OR LEADING A BIBLE STUDY. IT IS A VITAL MINISTRY!

EXERCISE FAITH: Pray believing that God is going to answer! The some friends of ours out on the mission field ministering to servicemen, needed a large house for their ministry. When God answered the prayers of many He did it in a fine way. In Germany when you rent a house you rent a house. You do not get appliances, curtains, curtain rods, light fixtures etc. etc. The house God provided had it all and the landlords were great people as well.

PRAY FOR ALL SAINTS FOR WE ARE ALL MISSIONARIES OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER: Eph. 6:18 "Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

PRAY RIGHTEOUSLY: Do not try to petition God while living in sin. He won't be listening as closely as if you were on holy ground. I Pet. 3:12 "For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears attend unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against those that do evil." I've heard people that are openly disobedient to the Word state, "We've prayed about this decision and know it is what God wants us to do!" Baloney" God wants obedience before He leads"

HOW NOT TO PRAY

DON'T CONSIDER THIS A FAVOR TO THE MISSIONARY OR TO GOD. IT IS A MINISTRY THAT GOD HAS GIVEN TO EACH OF US.

DON'T GIVE UP EVEN THOUGH DISCOURAGEMENT MAY SET IN. PAUL ASKED THE ROMANS TO STRIVE WITH HIM ABOUT HIS MINISTRY. (Rom. 15:30)

I try to pray for many items so that if one item is "ON WAIT" from God I see other areas answered so that I don't get discouraged at not seeing prayer answered.

DON'T SUBSTITUTE PRAYING FOR MISSIONS FOR GOING YOURSELF. IF GOD HAS CALLED YOU, THEN GO.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO JUDGE PEOPLE WHEN YOU HEAR FROM THE FIELD. IF YOU FEEL SOMETHING IS WRONG ASK GOD TO TAKE CARE OF IT.

We have wondered about things from time to time concerning the missionaries we support personally. I have decided to just pray for the situation instead of worrying about it. God led us to give to these people and we were obedient. Now it is the persons job to be a wise steward with the gift. His job not mine. One of the missionaries we supported in Germany mentioned a trip to the mountains to ski. NOW! I can't afford to go ski - much less go the mountains - He's doing it on my money - WELL! The next letter mentioned another trip to ski - both were retreats

for service men - welllll okay --

God asks us to give, not give and regulate the spending!

WHAT DO WE PRAY FOR?

Pray for all their needs. If someone told you they wanted to pray for you what would you tell them to pray for? Missionaries have the same needs.

MONEY

FAMILY

KIDS

SUPPLY OF FOOD

SAFETY ON ROADS

STRONG SPIRITUAL LIFE

You might remember that their problems seem somewhat harsher in that they are away from the security of the U.S. and away from families.

After only two weeks in Ireland, when I stepped to the ticket desk at J.F.K. airport in New York the agent spoke and a relief came! HOME! I hadn't noticed the strain before that point.

PRAYER IN THE POSITIVE:

1. More workers for the field. I don't know of a mission that couldn't put a hundred or two hundred people to work immediately if they had them available.
2. Help raise money for missions & then pray that God will raise up more supporters.
3. Ask God to get only qualified people to the field. If any are not right ask that they be kept home. Remember, however that all that stay home may not be problem people. Indeed, some might not fit into the culture on the field yet do a fantastic job here at home. A friend prepared to go to Sweden - went - couldn't handle the language physically - had to return to the states. Very expensive. However he is very active with another mission agency in this country.
4. Pray for the salvation of individuals on the field by name. Get involved in the missionaries work and the people he is ministering to. Only God can open a persons heart and mind to the Gospel.

One of the single girls I used to pray for gave reports on a family that she was ministering to in her letters. It was like reading of someone that we were witnessing to. You become involved with lost peoples lives even though they are half a world away.

5. Pray for national people to take over in part of the ministry. We have been excited about the Navajo Indians in Colorado sending evangelistic teams to Canada. This is missions in action!
6. Pray for good health for the missionaries and strength to carry on.
7. Pray that God will help them through language school and help them to become good communicators.
8. Pray that God will give the missionary and his family a love for their new home and people. Some people we have talked with view the field as their home and furlough as something that they have to do from time to time. Others feel they are trapped in a very backward country. I overheard a worker after eating in a very top-notch place to eat on the field "well it's not to bad a place I guess - The best you can find over here."
9. Pray that God will give them a strong will to complete the task set before them. Discouragement is heavy when you are alone! Paul must have had his low times just as we do. II Cor. 1:8 "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life."
10. Pray that they will have wisdom in planning their future ministry. One error in judgment can be disastrous.
11. Pray that God will give boldness in their witness. They must be forward and outgoing in their contacts. This is not one of the prime assets of many missionaries. Indeed it is not a prime asset in most people. I recently took a personality - career - ministry test and it was mentioned that the vast majority of people feel they work best in a very small group as opposed to larger groups. Eph. 6:19 "That utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel," **EVEN PAUL ASKED FOR BOLDNESS!**
12. Pray that God will oversee their finances and help them to deal wisely with what they have been given. That they have enough. That they are frugal.
13. Pray for their children and their obedience. Pray for their salvation and spiritual maturing. Pray that they would adjust to all the changes in their lives.
14. Pray for open doors of service for them. Col. 4:3 "Praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ"
15. Pray for the governments over them as well as the U.S. government as they deal with foreign powers. I Tim. 2:1-2 "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men. For kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

Pray for safety from the terrorists of the world. Most missions tell workers up front that they will not negotiate and they will not pay ransom. In the 1990's several men were taken captive and held for years. How terrible for the families as well as the men and their ministry.

16. Pray for their travels and abilities to get where they need to go. Paul ask for prayers concerning upcoming trips. Philemon 22;I Thess. 3:10.

17. Pray for the spread of the Gospel in their area. II Thess. 3:1 "Finally brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified,"

18. A final very important item of prayer is the need to pray for the missionaries supporting churches and for that matter all churches in this country.

FOR REVIVAL

FOR RENEWEL OF MISSION FERVOR

FOR COMMON COURTESY ON THE PART OF PASTORS WHEN THEY ARE CONTACTED

FOR OPEN HOMES TO HOUSE AND FEED MISSIONARIES THAT NEED A NIGHTS REST

FOR COMMITMENT TO CARRY THROUGH ON PROMISES OF MEETINGS AND HELP

We have missionaries that have lost so much support while on the field that they have to come back for six months to raise enough to remain on the field till furlough.

PRAYERS IN THE NEGATIVE:

1. Ask that god will keep them from loneliness or at least give them the ability to cope with it so that it doesn't affect decisions and the ministry.

2. Ask that they won't loose touch with their own country. You can help by sending them articles from the paper or magazines. Write to them and fill them in on what is happening in this country.

I asked one missionary if a subscription would be good. He said an airmail one would be too costly and a regular one would be stale news by the time they received it. I try to select something that is current and send a short outline of it or a good article.

3. Ask that the Lord would keep them from spiritual lukewarmness. You might help by sending a tape of a good message or some Christian magazines.

4. Ask that laziness not be allowed to creep in. It's easy to say, "Oh, one morning of sleeping in won't hurt." In fact the next time it is easier and easier and EASIER etc.

5. Ask that they be kept from situations in which morals might be challenged beyond limits.
6. Ask that pride not be allowed to find a stronghold. Ask that the Lord would set a fall in motion before the pride is too large.
7. Ask that anxiety or worry not become troublesome to them. Over the many problems of just living not to mention the problems of the ministry.

Most of what we've spoken of can relate to people we do not know.

Praying specifically is the best way however general prayers are answered specifically as well.

From an article in Eternity Magazine P. G. Zimmerman (He listed several topics and expanded them. I have taken topics and given application of my own.)

1. LOVE THE LORD: This is the key to being able to stay in some countries. To know the Lord loves you and that He has placed you there and that He is going to supply your every need. Love Him, love His plan for your life and love walking with Him.
2. GENUINE LOVE FOR OTHERS: The Irish aren't a dirty people however they have some different ways. They re-use tea cups at times when you come in. They do not rinse dishes after washing them. The job is to love them as they are! God does not check hygiene at the pearly gates!
3. DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD: This is true with all Christians - to be able to teach others we must be deeper than the ones we desire to teach. We need to be on a growing basis with the Lord, as our people should be.
4. SPIRIT - CONTROLLED LIVES: The Holy Spirit is essential to knowing how to approach people and when to witness to them. We must be slow yet not behind His leading. Mistakes often cost dearly on the field.
5. FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: Most foreigners continually watch to see if the missionaries loose their temper etc. The missionaries had better be clean living people if they are to pass their scrutiny!
6. WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE: Some of the isms of our day talk the same language that we do yet they are meaning something different usually. We need wisdom to know how to approach them and how to understand what they mean by what they say. Knowledge of the isms and their teaching are essential to answering their questions and helping them see the errors of their faith.
7. COURAGE: When in Ireland some of the people on literature distribution looked like they wanted to tear me apart. One older woman stepped to her door and said, "sonny, pick that up!"

speaking of the tract I had placed at her door. I reached down and picked it up and handed it to her. She thanked me very nicely. She explained that she could not stoop over. When she first spoke I thought that I had really gotten myself into trouble.

8. RECEPTIVE HEARTS: Many people feel that their destiny is set in their church. They don't have a need to speak of spiritual things thus God must open their hearts and minds to the spiritual need that they have.

9. DISCIPLES: Most missions feel that the key to evangelizing the world is to train the nationals to go out doing the work of II Tim. 2:2. Discipleship is the key in many countries today. Teaching converts so that they can teach their converts etc.

10. A STRONG FAITH: Many are the accounts of modern day missionaries facing harsh trials even some unto death. It is a place for a very strong faith. A strong faith is essential to surviving under the pressure of living in a foreign country as well as the everyday pressures of living.

11. STEADFASTNESS: Some missions have ministered in the same area for 20 years with little result, but we know that many have been confronted with the Gospel. Some of these areas all of a sudden blossom into great works. Missionaries to the American Indians ministered for many years before seeing their first converts.

12. A STRONG FAMILY: A family problem on the field would be very harmful to the work and to the national believers. A strong family can also be a good example for the believers to pattern their families after.

That might give you some insight into those that you are thinking about supporting. Do you want to send them to the field as a good example of a family? Do they meet that standard?

13. PROTECTION:

Traveling
Dogs
Health
Terrorists

14. MATERIAL NEEDS: I am a stereo lover - I spotted a portable AM-FM with two cassette decks and a CD player - only \$500. I was walking with my wife and said, "Come this way - I want to show you something I need!" She said, "Let's rethink this now - You need or you want? Always a critic isn't there? I said, "Oh, I need it - I need it to satisfy my covetousness." NO, I DIDN'T NEED THE STEREO!

THE MISSIONARY NEEDS TO REALIZE WHAT HIS NEEDS ARE. ONE SONG THAT HAS BEEN VISUALIZED FOR CHILDREN IS BASED ON MATT. 6:33. "But seek ye first

the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." As the kids sing of the Lord supplying their needs they see clothes, food, housing etc. and in the middle is a bright new bike. Now what are we teaching the kids? The needs are promised not the luxuries!

15. HEALTH AND STRENGTH: Health is a problem in some countries due to weather. Busy schedules tend to leave one fatigued and open for colds and flu bugs.

A young woman we met that had been to South America had contracted parasites and it took her over a year to get rid of them.

I'm sure that these items would be on the hearts of many missionaries around the world.

"NO CHRISTIAN IS GREATER THAN HIS PRAYER LIFE."

"The church has many organizers, but few agonizers; many who pay, but few who pray; many resters, but few wrestlers; many who are enterprising, but few who are interceding. People who are not praying are playing.

"Two prerequisites of dynamic Christian living are vision and passion, and both of these are generated in the prayer closet. The ministry of preaching is open to a few. The ministry of praying is open to every child of God.

"Don't mistake action for unction, commotion for creation, and rattles for revivals.

"The Secret of praying is praying in secret. A worldly Christian will stop praying and a praying Christian will stop worldliness.

"Tithes may build a church, but tears will give it life. That is the difference between the modern church and the early church. Our emphasis is on paying, theirs was on praying. When we have paid, the place is taken. When they had prayed, the place was shaken.

"In the matter of effective praying, never have so many left so much to so few. Brethren, let us pray." Author Unknown On a TEAM pamphlet.

Just picture missionaries as regular people. Just pray for them as regular people. Have you prayed for your own missionaries lately?

Prayer is not easy - it is laborious - it takes time - it takes effort - it takes commitment.

Let's commit ourselves to praying for the saints. Let's give of ourselves for the needs of others.

We need to pray for one another!

Let me give you one last example of what prayer can do. Our church in Salem had a day of prayer for us. The next day we received a gift of \$500. The next day we received word that a church was going to back us. The next day a door opened for me to talk to a college that I had been trying to get into for three years. The next day I scheduled a meeting.

PRAYER WORKS!

Let us uphold our missionaries! Let us uphold our pastors! Let us uphold one another!

OUR GENERATION

Please read Lu 16.19-31

OUTLINE:

- I. THE BEGINNING From the day of Pentecost to AD 500
- II. THE BENIGN AD 500 - 1500
- III. THE BETWEEN AD 1500 - 1792
- III. THE BOOM AD 1792 - 1960
- V. THE BOMB AD 1960 - 1987
- VI. THE BOON AD 1988 - ?

In one of my missions classes I used the following outline that will give you a quick overview of the history of missions. We will not dwell on the outline, but it will introduce us to one section of the outline that I would like to look at.

I. THE BEGINNING From the day of Pentecost to AD 500

We know that this period saw the Gospel spread to the known world. Paul the apostle went as far as Rome for certain and many think to Spain. Other apostles are believed to have gone to Ireland, India, China and Africa. The early church and their disciples did a fine job of spreading the Gospel far and wide.

II. THE BENIGN AD 500 - 1500

During this period of history there was very little done in the area of missionary work. Several generations lived and died and are now in torment because the believers of that day did little to spread the Good News of the Gospel, indeed, the number of believers may have been few.

III. THE BETWEEN AD 1500 - 1792

Both the Catholics and the Protestants were beginning to realize that they should be out spreading their message. Sad to say the Catholics were doing a far better job than the Protestants. This was the period during which the explorers were out doing their thing, and being good Catholics they made all the new territories Catholic at the point of a sword if need be. By the way, have you heard what the ecumenical movement - national council of churches has done? They passed (1990) a resolution condemning Columbus for invading America.

III. THE BOOM AD 1792 - 1960

Through the work of Carey, Taylor, and many others the church realized there was something for them to be doing and the modern missions movement began. More was done in this period for

missions than any period since the period of Pentecost to AD 500.

V. THE BOMB AD 1960 - 1987 (87 is probably a little early as I view it from the late 90's.)

The Bomb is a period during which the missions emphasis began to diminish. There were many problems plaguing the missionary effort and this is the section that we want to talk about today.

Then there is one final point in the outline, and that is what the future may hold for missions.

VI. THE BOON AD 1988 - ?

This is the period that we are now in, and it is a period that seems to see some exciting things happening. We live in exciting times.

I trust that you will make yourselves a part of these times of growing interest in missions.

In looking at what I call the bomb I don't want to dwell on the negative, but just to look at where we've been and where we are in the church in America today.

Please read the great commission that we are all to be involved with. I trust that you will keep it in mind as we go through the information to follow.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28 18-20

We might add Acts 1:8 which is also of vital interest to us as we consider these thoughts. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

I trust that you realize that both of these passages are incumbent upon every single one of us. They are a simple statement that as we are going, we are to teach and disciple. The emphasis is on the "AS WE ARE GOING", the text assumes that we are going.

Most anyone that has observed things over the last ten to twenty years has undoubtedly noticed a decline in the overall missionary emphasis of the church in this country. I have discussed this

with Bible Institute freshmen and even they in their 18 to 20 years of observation have noticed a decline.

I spoke to a man that went to the field in the 50's and the average deputation took six months. Today it is 4-5 years with some taking seven years. You see, the title Th Bomb has basis.

There may be a number of reasons that this has occurred and it is the purpose of this study to suggest some possible reasons for this present condition of the church missions outlook. Possibly it will stir some to suggest further reasons so that we might begin to act upon these things in our churches and our institutions to turn the trend around.

Let's just list some observations and some possible reasons for the problems.

1. Mission conferences are declining in number, as well as excitement. Many of us can remember conferences with 10 missionaries from different organizations telling of their work around the world. Today many conferences are lucky to have 2 or 3 missionaries. Indeed, a few years ago I put on a one missionary missions conference.

The reason? It is too expensive to bring the workers in. Why? Some missionaries need to fly instead of drive. Indeed, some will not drive. The cost of transportation is up in all modes of travel.

Some have observed that we can't just have a potluck banquet to close the conference. We must have it catered or have it at a fancy banquet hall.

2. Schools are not emphasizing missions. Today in many schools the missions courses are for missions people and the pastoral courses are for the pastors. It seems very wrong to not train missionaries in the art of church planting and pastoring, when indeed that is what many will be doing, and it is also very wrong to not train pastors, in the art of exciting people toward missions. The church is the seed plot of missions, it is the sending agency, and it is the financing agency, and it is the prayer agency. If the church is not centered on missions then missions will decline due to lack of interest.

3. Pastors becoming more materialistic has tended toward seeing missionaries as taking funds away from the church when the funds should be going to the home front. In some cases this is true. The church has a commitment to allow their pastor to have a living wage, however at the same time the living wage is not what I see offered in many of our churches today. A living wage is something that you can live on, but not necessarily get "well off on." I have heard much more discussion about "pay packages" in the last few years than I have about any excitement of "serving" the people of their new church.

In case you didn't know a "pay package" is the total value of all things that a church offers to give a pastor. It may include any or all of the following: Salary, Car expenses, Social Security,

Workman's comp., Health Insurance, Library fund, Parsonage or housing allowance, Convention/seminar expenses, etc.

We might insert here as well that it has been observed that the missionary force at times is becoming very materialistic as well.

4. Christians have gone the same route as the Christian workers. They are becoming more materialistic all the time. How many churches have you been in lately that did not have padded pews and carpet. How many choir lofts have two microphones hanging from the ceiling. Do you know that some of those things cost \$300 + apiece?

I was in a new church a few years ago that had spent over \$40,000 on their sound system alone. That would support two missionary couples completely for a year on the field.

Many churches have a color TV and video recorder - OR TWO - OR THREE. How many churches have free socials Vs the "paid for socials." We have been in churches where it costs every time they have fellowship. Indeed, we recently ran into a church that has a soup supper/prayer meeting on Wednesday evening that you are asked to pay for. THE TOPPER IS THAT YOU WEREN'T ALLOWED TO ATTEND THE PRAYER PORTION WITHOUT ATTENDING THE SUPPER PORTION. I'd call that pay to pray. I'd also term it purely pitiful.

How many Christians are really sacrificing in our world today?

Much of the churches finances are used to support the ministry of the local church at home. Very little makes its way into missions. We sat in a church and watched the congregation raise pledges of \$700 a month to pay a part time youth pastor to minister to about 15 young people, yet that same church would not increase a veteran missionaries support by \$50 per month to help him get back to his field of ministry.

We might even get personal and talk about the money that the people are spending on themselves in their personal lives. Many have huge homes that will be sitting idle as soon as the teenagers leave. Hundreds of thousands of dollars sitting with no practical use. They do find a use for it however. They redecorate it. They refurnish it, repaint it, recarpet and they may even put up a missionary in it once in awhile.

A friend of ours was visiting supporters on the West Coast. He had just come from a supporter in Northern California that had a huge multi-bedroomed home. They had a stereo in every room, a satellite dish, a TV in almost every room, every modern appliance that you can think of and several cars in the garage. My friend said that he didn't know how to react to the people. He had always felt that they were very committed Christians, yet they were so wrapped up in things of this life.

5. We are pretty much through the real hard financial times of the early 80's. Much of the lack

of successful missionary deputation during that period was due to the economy. The churches were hurting. This was a fact. Many churches were in a mess financially. Why? Some because many moved away to find work, yet many had problems because their believers were far in debt and when the crunch hit, the church was the first name withdrawn from the basket at the first of the month.

The interesting part of the economic crunch is that even if all the church financial problems were based on the crunch, the church has not recovered from the crunch. The believers became used to not doing for the church so they are still not doing for the church.

6. The missionaries may well be part of the problem as well. I see missionaries that have \$4000 worth of sound equipment to sing with. I have yet to be in a church that needed a sound system that did not have one. I see missionaries with VCRs and video cameras. I see very few missionaries driving old cars even though there are several organizations that supply older cars free of charge for use while in the states. I see missionaries that will not help in the homes in which they stay. They assume that the host will do all the work. They assume that the host will do all the clean up. They assume that the host will do all the cooking. Etc.

I have been told by pastors of small churches that the missionaries never contact them for meetings because they are too small to give support.

I have seen missionaries pick three churches to attend on furlough. One for Sun. AM, one for Sun. PM, and one for Wed. They hope to get to know the people and get support from all three churches. **THEY ARE TO BE PART OF "A" LOCAL CHURCH WHICH SENDS THEM OUT TO THE MINISTRY!!!!**

I have seen missionaries come into our home and talk of nothing but material things. A couple recently had four missionaries in their home for dinner and the topic of conversation NEVER left the material spectrum.

A pastor in California mentioned that it is hard to plan a conference in his area during the hot period of the year because all of the missionaries are in the cooler climated states.

I have seen missionary presentations of slides that were more of a travelogue than of a ministry. I have seen presentations with slides from every country in Europe with a few from the country in which they minister. I've seen presentations that are so full of other parts of the country that one is left to wonder when they ministered.

AT THE SAME TIME I SEE MANY MISSIONARIES THAT ARE THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF ALL THIS!!!

7. The shift of importance in raising our children. In the 60's a child going into missions was great. Today it is a sign of lack of proper understanding of the world system by the child. They

have to go into business if they are going to amount to anything. Serving Christ used to be an honored work, but today it would horrify many Christian parents to hear that their child was going into the ministry.

8. The shift in our worldview has added to the missions problem. In the 60's we saw the world as lost. I think that today we view the world as just like us. Economics, lifestyle etc. are very similar in many of the larger nations. They have Coke and MacDonaldis so why do they need the gospel. According to an IBM commercial a vineyard grower in France can finish his doctorate via the Internet with a university in America, so why would we consider him backward enough to need Christ.

9. There is a real bias against cultured and economically progressive nations when it comes to supporting missionaries going there. It is hard for missionaries to Europe to convince people that the European community is lost. They are still "Christian" in many peoples minds.

The hardest field to raise support for at present is the United States. Again it is assumed that there is a bias toward supporting someone in a Christian nation.

When on deputation to go to the foreign field we would write letters then make phone calls to the churches. For each 10 phone calls we were able to schedule one meeting. This was an overall average.

When we started raising support for our teaching ministry we sent out 150 letters to Midwest churches. Out of that we were able to schedule one meeting, which was canceled before we got there due to the church closing its doors. We had in 3 years one official deputation meeting, which by the way was due to the pastor being out of town and needing someone to fill his pulpit. I don't say this to complain, but to illustrate how hard it is for missionaries in this country to gain support.

10. Cost effectiveness is the word for our recent day. In 1990 I found that a group of church planters in the U.S. make 2000 phone calls. If they don't get a certain % positive response they move on - it wouldn't be cost effective to plant a church there.

We should be ashamed of ourselves! Planting churches is commanded, not decided on a cost effectiveness basis. May I put it BLUNTLY? CAN YOU IMAGINE A LOST PERSON STANDING BEFORE GOD AT THE JUDGMENT AND TELLING THE LORD THAT HE HADN'T LIVED IN A COST EFFECTIVE AREA SO HE HADN'T HEARD THE GOSPEL?

11. I have run into home mission organizations that require that churches fully support their pastor before they consider supporting missions. This is good in principle, for the pastor is needful of support, but on the other hand the people are to be involved in world missions. They can not be involved if they never are confronted with missions by missionaries. Most of these churches will not allow missionaries to even come to present their work and seek prayer support.

I might add that I've been in many small struggling churches that have allowed missionaries to come, and the love offerings were great. The churches have never suffered because the missionaries took some of the funds. Indeed, most mission minded churches prosper.

12. I have seen home missionary leaders preach that we should take foreign mission dollars and shift them to the home mission organizations so that they can plant lots of churches here and build a "strong economical base" from which we can then send missionaries.

This is not in keeping, however with Acts 1:8 which tells us that we are to be working at home and in the world at the same time, not working at home until we can afford to work in the world.

13. There are many people now that just do not know what missions is all about. They have never been trained and have no idea that the world is the Lord's field. These need to be taught!

One of our freshmen students at the Bible Institute where I taught didn't know what missions was and he was saved in an Independent Bible church. He thought missions was going to one of the missile sites in the area and watching a missile launch in the plains of Wyoming.

14. Mission agencies may be responsible for some of the problems. In a rush to gain funds some of them are lowering themselves to some questionable tactics.

Some are telling their appointees to skirt the church by going directly to individuals to gain support. They even suggest telling an individual that they want them to support them for a certain amount, and then tell them they will get in touch in two weeks for an answer. Others are using telemarketing to raise funds. I did not ask what those techniques were.

The amount that the agency takes from funds raised is growing steadily as well. Some agencies are now taking as much as 20% of the funds a person raises to support the home office.

15. Last but not least - indeed, this should probably be number one because it would cure all the others. Turn to Lu 10:2 for a moment. Notice three things: Laborers - not few today but they are unfinanced; Pray; Lord of the Harvest.

Harvest is still there - we have laborers that can't go. Lord is God - hasn't changed. Prayer is left. Or should I say left out. I have read that the average evangelical pastor prays five minutes per day according to some surveys.

Churches of 200 run 20 in the prayer meeting.

If we were praying as we ought the fire for missions would be caught.

I think it is obvious there is an overall lack of commitment to God thus the lack of prayer and lack of missions.

SO, WHAT IS THE ANSWER TO ALL THE GLOOM AND DOOM?

VERY SIMPLE! I CAN GIVE YOU AN ANSWER IN TWO WORDS! You are.

1. People like you that realize what has been said is true, will have to go out into the world and train, and teach, and encourage, and exhort, and challenge, and wake up all those people out there that have either turned a deaf ear to missions, or that have never heard of missions.

Some of you may be able to teach and exhort a pastor. The pastor that can train and challenge his church in missions is invaluable. Indeed, I am almost to the point of thinking we need mission minded pastors as badly as we need missionaries.

Some of you may go into missions. As you go out on deputation be sure that you are communicating well, the needs and the story of missions. You might be asked to teach a class or preach a sermon. Use that time to instruct and challenge to missions in general.

Sunday school teachers can do great things if they put their minds to it. If you instill missions into every class you teach, then some day the church membership will be missions minded.

2. As you meet other Christians, instead of talking about the fellowship trio, news, weather and sports, ask them how they feel about missions. If you know anything about missions you can spend several hours on the subject just talking and challenging.

3. Get involved as much as is possible, for yourself. Go to short term projects. Give. Pray. Support the missions committee in your church. Support the pastor if he is trying to strengthen missions.

4. Remember that unless individuals commit themselves to being missions minded and start working toward that goal, then nothing will be done. This is between you and God, not your neighbor and God, not your neighboring church and God, but you as an individual and God. Then you can start work on your neighbor and your neighboring church!

5. Don't give up just because you feel like the Lone Ranger! There are some great churches out there that are supporting missions like mad. There are pastors out there that break their backs to help missionaries. A friend that was on deputation for Japan had a pastor that did all of my friends contacting with pastors and churches. The pastor wrote all the letters and made all the phone calls and set up the appointments. My friend just had to show up for the meetings. That is a pastor that is involved! The church cares for their finances and puts out their prayer letter for them. They supplied them with housing while they were on deputation.

BE GLAD THAT YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH TODAY, WHEN THINGS ARE COMING AROUND!

We are seeing some great things happen in the church today! Some of the real big religious leaders of the nation are realizing what has not been done, and are now trying to stir the American Church into action! They are beginning to speak out and call for action!

We are hearing great reports from around the world about what is going on. We hear of many coming to know the Lord. We are hearing of strong indigenous churches being planted and turned over to national pastors. We are hearing of third world mission organizations, and the workers that they are sending out to the world. The third world has 30,000 workers on the field today, compared to the western worlds 50,000!

I would like to read a portion of a letter that a missionary friend of mine received after he had been to a conference:

"Your introducing Faith Promise to our church in 1986 has had a major impact upon the church and my family as well.

"First of all, it has deepened our faith. It has taught us to learn to stretch for the Lord. We had always tithed and given liberally, but with Faith Promise we learned to trust the Lord in a greater degree.

"I have a good income, own a home, drive a late-model car; now we are willing to leave that and trust God to meet all our needs.

"I saw the Lord triple the income of our church in three years; at the same time He enabled us to pay off our building, purchase new property paying cash, and pay all our bills. all of this since Faith Promise began.

"If Faith Promise for Missions had not been introduced to [the name of the church], I would not have learned to trust the Lord by faith, and would not have been ready to respond to God's call to Hungary. My wife and three children are as excited as I am to be going out to the mission field for the Lord."

The missionary added that the year before all this the church had canceled all missionary support and could not pay their winter heat bill.

The Brazilian church is growing and spreading.

The African church is growing and sending out missionaries.

The Korean church is growing and is now sending out more missionaries than the United States.

The Internet is growing like mad and Christians have really been taking good advantage of this medium. There is a lot of Christian information on the net.

We live in exciting times. I trust that you will make yourself a part of these times of growing interest in missions. I trust that the Christian world will wake up to the fact that the world is on its way to hell and we are doing precious little to stop it.

It is our generations task to reach our own generation. If we don't there is no generation that can. Either we will reach our own generation or fail to reach our generation. It is a choice that we, the American church are making each and every day.

I might share one statistic that may help you to understand the urgency of our mission. In the last hour several thousand LOST souls have died and gone to hell. That is based on current world figures. Several THOUSAND LOST PEOPLE!

I'd like to close by having you read Ps 71:17-18.

In a Psalm about the concerns of old age we see the concern for the coming generation.

I trust you have shown your children your God.
I trust you have shown your grandchildren your God.
I trust you have shown your neighbors your God.
I trust you have shown your coworkers your God.

It would seem God wants us to tell our generation about HIM!

WORLD VIEW

What's your sociological perception? OR Do you need to clean your spiritual spectacles?

INTRODUCTION

I. DEFINE WORLDVIEW

II. IMPORTANCE OF WORLDVIEW

III. BASIS FOR WORLDVIEW

III. YOUR WORLDVIEW

V. RENOVATING A WORLDVIEW

CONCLUSION

I love bumper stickers! MOST bumper stickers ANYWAY! At times I wish I could hit the delete button on my onboard computer to erase some of them from my memory - but most I enjoy.

DRIVE DEFENSIVELY - BUY A TANK.
MY OTHER CAR IS A PIECE OF JUNK ALSO!
I OWE, I OWE, SO OFF TO WORK I GO!
I'M ENJOYING MY KIDS INHERITANCE!

Recently I saw one that wasn't really funny but was a little puny.

"Wyoming's view is up to you. Don't litter."

This introduces us to what I want to talk about in this study.

A few years ago our son mentioned our neat view from our apartments front window. I have really enjoyed watching the sky, the clouds and the sunsets myself. The interesting part is that our view was not all that great. We were in a basement apartment, across the street were more apartments and a large blacktopped parking lot, lot of electric and phone lines and poles, yet you could see the sky and a little grass and it was enough to be enjoyable.

Some would have looked out our front window and seen nothing but the negative and feel that we had such a poor view, yet my son and I saw the beauty of the Lord's handiwork from that same window.

We view things differently as believers.

We want to consider the fact that we all view differently - that we all view the world differently. Indeed, that is the world's trouble today! Indeed, that is the church's trouble today!

We Christians all view the world differently and as a result there is little being done for God's

overall program in the American church.

Let me illustrate an improper worldview for you.

Read of Cain and Abel in Gen. 4:1-8.

Cain's problem wasn't Abel - it was Cain's worldview that was at fault. He viewed the world as created for him and his pleasure - he could do as HE pleased. He didn't have to do it God's way! Abel on the other hand knew God's worldview and acted upon that knowledge to God's glory.

Another Illustration. The Jewish nation. When they were walking this earth, they were to be expanding God's kingdom to the world. If you read through the Psalms you will find many references to the fact that God's knowledge was to be spread to the world. Indeed, the Israelites did not do this due to their worldview being messed up. They also thought the world revolved around them and no one else. They did not spread God's message - they as the church is doing today, sat on their glories, and buildings, and homes, and did nothing about those that were going to hell around them.

I. DEFINE WORLDVIEW

I would like to read a paragraph from a book entitled "SPIRITUAL WARFARE" by Timothy M. Warner (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991).

"Worldview is the thought system we develop for explaining the world around us and our experiences in it. It is determined almost entirely by the society in which we grow up. In most instances, it is something we absorb subconsciously more than something we adopt after careful study, although study can change worldview drastically. James Sire defines this as the 'set of presuppositions or assumptions which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic make-up of our world.' It is a set of categories we develop into which we plug the data of our experience to give it meaning." p 24

What he is stating is that we take in information from around us all of our lives and we form it into "OUR" picture of the world around us.

I'm OK you're OK is a worldview.

Life is just a bowl of cherries is a worldview.

Eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die is a worldview

Wyoming is God's country is a worldview.

Indeed, Are not most bumper stickers a statement of a worldview.

Q. Do any of these really depict the world as it REALLY is? NO!!

II. IMPORTANCE OF WORLDVIEW

Why is our worldview important?

Let's look at one illustration that we can all identify with. Adolph Hitler viewed the world as filled with corrupt, inferior people, while he and his people were a superior race. He acted upon his worldview and began slaughtering millions of people, while trying to conquer the world. His worldview was very messed up.

I personally believe that this is the problem with world evangelism today. We as believers have our worldview messed up to the point that we are doing very little to produce results for God.

We have about 50,000 missionaries on the field today, but that is going to shift drastically. They figure that most of that missionary force will be retiring within the next ten years and we have very few workers ready to replace them.

I talked to a missionary recently that is with one of the major fundamental mission agencies in the country and he mentioned that he was at his headquarters for orientation for the new years candidates. This mission had a whopping eight missionary candidates!

Those that we have ready to go to the field, in many cases can not raise funds to get to the field.

III. BASIS FOR WORLDVIEW

Gen. 3 is God's basis for a worldview! Gen. 3 shows that God is over all, that He has created, and that man jumped into sin the first opportunity that he had. Satan was able to cloud man's mind to the proper worldview that God had set in motion. We as man have through most of the ages viewed the world as a bowl of cherries to be eaten rather than a populace of lost sinners sliding into hell. That, in my opinion is the glaring problem of the church today.

If we were evangelizing we would fill our churches. If we were evangelizing we would be alive. If we were evangelizing we would be financially sound. If we were evangelizing we would be doing what God wants done!!

The only valid worldview is this:

God created man to glorify Him.

Man jumped into sin.

Christ came to provide salvation for all of mankind.

God has set man as his main messenger of reconciliation.

If man fails, then the lost will suffer eternally in the lake of fire.

This worldview will produce a church that is evangelizing the lost around them as well as sending others to the world to do the same.

III. YOUR WORLDVIEW

I would like to read another quote from the same book. "So if you want to find out what individuals really believe - what their worldview is - you don't ask them, you watch them. You especially observe them under pressure and in crisis. What they do at such times reveals their real belief system, especially their beliefs about God and spiritual power." pp. 25-26

I would expand on that and state that you can know what a person's worldview is by watching how they live everyday life. How do they spend their money? How do they work in the church? How do they spend their time? How do they talk? How do they help others? How do they react to shady stories?

A. Some questions: HOW DO YOU LIVE? Do you live as if Christ were coming tomorrow. Consider your cars, houses, etc. when you answer that question. Did you live Saturday as if Christ could come Sunday morning? Do you live as if the world were lost?

We were invited out to eat one Sunday. After a great meal we were walking to our cars and were talking of the meal. The other man mentioned, "It isn't fair that we eat like we eat and many are dying of hunger in the world." I agreed. Then it hit me - just what have that man and I done about it? NOTHING. If that were REALLY our worldview we would be out raising money for the starving people of the world.

The world is lost and on it's way to hell and what are we doing about it?

More questions: WHY DO YOU LIVE? Do you glorify God? How do you glorify God? Really, how do you glorify God? Do you advertise God? We need new terms you know. Advertise is to update that old term we used to use - witness. Or as an up to date missionary told me recently, "Do you interface with the lost?"

Do you evangelize? According to our quote, by observing these things we can analyze and determine our own TRUE worldview! Not the theological worldview but the real one, the "folk" one as this author calls it.

Another quote to stir our thinking. "The 'profession' level of belief is usually a theoretical or theological statement of the accepted dogmas of one's religion. This is the level at which religion is usually studied and discussed by the scholars and at which it is taught to the followers. The followers, however, usually practice the religion at a very different level - a level that is very life-related. This is often referred to as the 'folk' level of the religion. worldview finds its expression most clearly at the folk level of our beliefs, not the intellectual level." p 25

Christianity is more than a religion. Recently one of the people that I work with called me to his desk and asked, "Stan, you're a religious person, aren't you?" I replied that I hoped that I wasn't and then quickly added that my answer was a trick answer. I told him that I felt my beliefs were

more of a lifestyle than a religion.

Even understanding this, we study things on the theological level in the church, but the Lord would have us go out and live it on the folk level.

V. RENOVATING A WORLDVIEW

If this is not your worldview you are part of the multimillion person deception - the church has been duped by Satan's lies via our: educational system, our national media, the federal government (they have done this by their example, and the laws that they pass that tell us the Bible is wrong. Abortion for one.

The Devil has duped us with false books and music that is on the market under the guise of being Christian. Why are we flocking to BOOKS when we have THE book for all the answers, to all of the questions that we have?

How do we renovate our worldview? Acknowledge God as supreme truth, and the only truth giver. Compare all "truth" with THE TRUTH - GOD! Acknowledge the Bible as the truth of God. Find the Bible's worldview.

We will restate the Bible's worldview:

God has created man for His glory.
Man has fallen into sin and eternal separation from God.
Man, if not stopped will spend eternity in torment.
God has provided man's needed remedy.
God is relying on you and I to deliver that remedy to lost man.

We are in a conflict and the enemy desires to set us aside by confusing us on what is important in this life.

Choose your side and stand on it!

CONCLUSION

What is your worldview. Does it line up with God's worldview? OR does it line up with Satan's worldview?

Are you viewing your neighbor God's way? Are you viewing your money God's way? Are you viewing your life God's way? Are you viewing your belongings God's way? Do you cling to those things?

I think that it is natural for us to like things. I have always liked my things. I have always liked

buying things. I have always liked giving my family things. I do think however that the Lord has taught me one thing in the last move that we made. We loaded from 4:00 to 6:00 drove an hour and began unloading. In about an hour I knew that I was physically exhausted. We finally found some help and finished unloading. As I was sitting looking at the heap of THINGS that almost filled the living room, I was struck with the thought that: ONE OF THE JOYS OF DEATH MUST BE THIS - YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE IT WITH YOU!

Things aren't where it is at!
Money isn't where it is at!
Houses aren't where it is at!
Cars aren't where it is at!

God says that mankind is lost and on their way to hell. THAT IS WHERE IT IS AT.

Our worldview must line up with God's! God says in II Peter 3:9 that He does not want anyone to go to hell. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

I would like to close by having you read a portion of John's gospel. (Jo 3:14-21)

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

"For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

"But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

God desires that all of mankind hear of His free salvation.
God desires that all of mankind have an opportunity to be saved.
God desires that we be the channel of that opportunity.

Our worldview will do one of two things.

It will demand that we sit on our pews come Sunday and do nothing come Monday.

OR

It will demand that we witness to those that we come in contact with.

I trust that you will consider your worldview.

THE USUAL CHRISTIAN'S WORLDVIEW

TOPIC	BELIEVERS RESPONSE
GLORIFICATION	SELF
SERVICE	SELF
COMMITMENT TO	SELF
GIVING TO	SELF
LIFESTYLE	SELF CENTERED
EVANGELISM	THE PASTOR SHOULD DO IT
WORLDVIEW	SELF IS TO BE FULFILLED
BELIEVERS	THE CHURCH
LOST	THEY EXIST/UNIMPORTANT

This represents what we can see in the next chart as Satan's worldview. Most believers by serving self are furthering all of Satan's worldview points, when in reality we ought to be fulfilling God's worldview.

TRUE WORLDVIEWS

TOPIC	SATAN'S WORLDVIEW	GOD'S WORLDVIEW	BELIEVER'S RESPONSIBILITY
GLORIFICATION	SATAN	GOD	GOD
SERVICE	SATAN	GOD	GOD
COMMITMENT TO	SATAN	GOD	GOD
GIVING	SATAN	GOD	GOD
LIFESTYLE	WORLDLY	GODLINESS	GODLINESS
EVANGELISM	NOTHING	MANKIND	WITNESS TO MANKIND
WORLDVIEW	SATAN FIRST	HIS GLORY	GLORIFY GOD
BELIEVERS	THE ENEMY	SOLDIERS	FIGHTING FOR GOD
LOST	HIS	DESIRED	MESSENGER TO

ABILITIES OF A MISSIONARY

I would like to think about missionaries for a moment.

Let's think of some of the knotheads I've met over the years.

Faith and I were barely making ends meet when we were first married. In fact we weren't really making it. We were refinancing every six months to keep up.

The pastor had asked for someone to feed a missionary family that was coming. We had never done this and we were excited plus. We cut into our regular budget heavily to do something special for them. We had barbecued hamburgers wrapped in bacon strips and a lot of little appetizers.

The evening finally came and so did the missionaries. Their kids started off the evening when they didn't like the appetizers - which was not entirely without understanding but when they started mean mouthing the main course of the dinner and their parents started talking about the steaks that most people fed them my patience as a very immature Christian was stretched to the limit.

Now let's look at some of the good missionaries we've met.

Think of the good missionaries that you've met and try to concentrate on their good points. What stands out in your minds about these people? What were some of the things which impressed you with these men and women of God.

Some of the characteristics that come to my mind are honesty, friendly, student of the Bible, patient, slow to anger and many more.

Let's consider some of the abilities which should be present in the missionaries we send forth to the field. I might add that these abilities are not unlike abilities that we should look for in all ministers of the Word.

Indeed, we should strive for them ourselves.

I am just going to list some items and comment briefly.

1. SENDABILITY:

That means SALVATION is a prerequisite!

That means SUBMISSION. Isa 6:8 God called and Isaiah responded. He went knowing the people wouldn't hear (vs. 9-10) Jeremiah was told the same thing. Ex 30:11,59 and others.

Moses was told to do something - "And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying," Ex. 40:16 he did it. "Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he." Matt. 9:38 Lord of the Harvest sends - God must be in control of your life if He is going to be able to send you.

That means FREE TO GO: Don't let a situation keep you from going! Acts 8:26,27 - Phillip left a very successful evangelistic campaign to go to another place to speak to one man. I heard that Jack Hyles related years ago that he was very hesitant to leave his first church which he had started and nurtured and seen grow. In fact he was very slow in making the decision. He was on a long trip and had been considering the decision he was faced with - to leave the growing work to go to another area to minister - Hammond, Indiana is the town - he fell asleep at the wheel. When he awoke he was about to crash into the back of an oil tanker. The tanker had the name Hammond painted across the back. He went to Hammond, IN. (Hammond Oil Co.)

Free to go also means that we should be free to travel - unencumbered by financial obligations and or other anchors. We should be pilgrims in this land. I believe it was Carey that started out to the field with a friend. The ship was stopped and both men were removed by the creditors of the friend. Carey did later reach the field.

2. DEPENDABILITY: When we attended a little church in Denver we had one family that was so very dependable. You could depend on them - the whole family (five or six) to be 1/2 hour late any time they came to church. Be it Sunday school, Morning worship, evening worship or midweek Bible study - they were always 1/2 hour late. They even were a half-hour late for their sons wedding in the church. II Tim 2. Faithful men are to be trained for God. "And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." I Cor. 4.2 Stewards are required to be faithful. "Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." I Cor. 4.17 Timothy was faithful. "For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved son and faithful in the Lord....." Col. 4.7-8 Tychicus was faithful. "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord," Col. 4.9 Onesimus was faithful. "With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother...."

This area moves into many areas of life. Titus 2.9, 10 mentions, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again; not purloining...." In short be honest. Be it money, materials or time. Give an honest days work, be honest in use of equipment and don't steal.

3. BENDABILITY:

Acts 16.6-10 Paul had plans: He planned on going to Asia and God said no. He planned to go to Bithynia and God said no. God led him to Macedonia. God was in control and guided Paul and Paul was open to that leading or changing of direction.

Christ worked differently with different people. He didn't have a "four verse" plan of salvation

He had to force upon everyone he met. He worked with them according to their needs and understanding. (Nicodemous - the woman at the well)

A family went to Dallas, TX to attend Bible College. The man responding to God's call was hesitant to say yes for he knew God would send him to Africa. (He disliked black people) He told God before going that God would have to change his attitudes about blacks. When they arrived at the college the dean recommended a group of apartments near the college. They drove over and the majority of people there were black. Not just a small building, but several city blocks full of Black people. The man in his mind said no way am I going to move my family into that place. Within 24 hours the Lord had worked a situation that saw the family returning to the complex to apply for an apartment. There was none available, but the lesson was learned and the attitude had been changed.

4. IGNITABILITY: In model rocketry you have what is called an igniter. It is a small chemical device that flashes as you apply electricity to it. If the igniter is close to the solid propellant engine then you will get a quick blast off. If the igniter is not firmly seated in the propellant you may or may not get a quick blast off, indeed, you may not get a launch at all. As I view the Word I see that God has slow igniters and He has fast igniters yet he is happy with them all in the end. The emphasis is on the launch. God doesn't care if you are slow or fast only that you get off the pew, I mean the launch pad. True, God would rather not have slow igniters yet he is always pleased with them in the end.

SLOW IGNITERS: Moses Ex 3&4 But I'm not eloquent - but they won't believe me. Gideon Jud. 6.12ff He was slow to believe God. Had to lay out some fleece.

FAST IGNITERS: Joshua Josh. 1.1-11. God spoke and he acted. (spoke 1-6; acted 10-11) Isaiah Isa. 6.6-8 Who will we send-who will go - here am I Lord, send me! Stephen Acts 6.5 selected WILLING, Acts 6.6 WORKING, 6.8 WITNESSING, 7.60 WINGING. From servant to heaven in two chapters!

REMEMBER, the speed of ignitability often depends on the proximity of the igniter - the Holy Spirit to your life!

5. IMITABILITY:

We've all seen the commercial of the boy and father - the dad skips a rock on the pond and the kid follows his example. Both sit down under a tree - father takes out cigarette and throws down the pack - the kid picks up the pack and starts to pull out a cigarette. If you're around our family long you'll find out that my children love corny jokes. You won't have to be around me long to know why.

Christ is our example: John 13.15 in washing of the disciples feet. "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." I Pet. 2.21-23 In how He reacted to revelers.

"

Paul is our example: I Cor. 4.14-17; I Cor. 11.1 "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Phil. 3.17-19. He knew that his life was centered and based on Christ and that he was an example to other believers in his life.

Could you feel free to challenge others to follow your example?

6. DISPENSIBILITY:

Know that he will die one day. The missionary must not build his work upon himself for when he dies the work will suffer greatly. He must build so that he can be replaced overnight. I met a pastor in northern California that had his men so well trained that they cover the preaching when he is gone and could take over if he left on a days notice. Another pastor in Oregon had his men filling pulpits for pastors that went on vacation.

He must know when to leave a work. When it is on its feet - turn it loose and move on to other works. The goal of any missionary should be to work himself out of a position.

Know that he isn't as important as he thinks. GOD CAN DO THE WORK WITH US OR WITHOUT US. HE LIKES TO USE US WHEN WE REALIZE HE IS DOING THE FAVOR OF LETTING US WORK WITH HIM NOT THAT WE ARE ALLOWING HIM TO USE US.

We may labor with very little fruit for years. But that little fruit may be a Carey or a Moody or a Taylor.

NOT ALL OF US WILL SET THE WORLD ON FIRE! The men that contacted the Accua Indians lost their lives in South America very quickly. Many were saved through it, however much later.

A young lady from Portland, OR went to Europe to serve in a printing ministry and was killed in a car accident within weeks of her arrival. Fruit? None that we know of. However God had His plan complete in her life.

I gave my freshman Genesis class an extension on their term paper due date. A couple of days later a senior class began moaning and groaning and asking for an extension. One of the students mentioned, "But you gave the freshman one." I said, "YES, BUT I AM SOVERIEGN AND I DO WHAT I WANT TO! I DO AS I WILL!" She immediately stopped with her line of reasoning.

7. UNDERSTANDABILITY:

For example: "...existential phenomenology seeks to elucidate the existential nature of social

structures by uncovering the surface institutional phenomena of the everyday, accepted world; by probing the subterranean, noninstitutional social depths concealed from public gaze, by interpreting the dialectic between the institutional and the noninstitutional..." from Sociology of the Absurd. p 71 The joke is - I'm beginning to understand some of that stuff.

One of my professors in school was the youngest Doctorate to graduate from Dallas at that time. So very knowledgeable, but he could not communicate on the level of students. He forgot that his students didn't have a doctorate in theology. He did do better as time wore on thank the Lord.

A retarded person came to a mission asking to serve. The mission finally allowed him to work in the area of a manual labor job he could handle. They took him to the field. One day in the bush he disappeared for a short time. When he returned he told them he had been visiting the such and such tribe. The missionaries knew of no such tribe. A few days later he disappeared again. It was a week or so before he showed up with one of the Indians. The Indians had taken to the young man. The contact led to the salvation of many due to this lads chance meeting of a nomadic tribe that had not been heard of before. God is able to use all kinds.

8. SERVABILITY:

Willing to serve others as Christ taught in the washing of the disciples feet in John 3.2-5, 12-16.

A single woman missionary from South America mentioned the problem of missionaries getting along with one another. She hit the nail on the head when she said, they are all trained leaders - all chiefs and no Indians. When they serve they do well together.

A pastor was called to serve a small church that had run off a number of pastors after only a few months. He stayed for several years. Someone asked one of his congregation why this man had stayed so long. The man stated that this pastor was willing to get out and work with the people. He was even known to come out to the ranches and help out on the machinery when they had trouble. Because of this he was able to reach an old rancher that had been very cold toward the church and the Gospel. The rancher had an old piece of machinery that needed work and could find no one to work on it. The pastor had been a rancher and had owned a piece just like it many years previous. He went to the rancher and offered to fix it for him and through the contact was able to lead him to the Lord.

9. MOLDABILITY:

Matthew the tax collector became a disciple, Peter the fisherman became a preacher, Carey quite school at 12 to become a cobbler, yet became a great missionary and linguist, Derickson the TV technician became a teacher, you fill in the name - became a minister or missionary

He can use any of us if we are His to use and willing to change.

10. ACCEPTABILITY:

Doctrinal correctness.

Living correctness. Living a Godly life. This is important in almost all countries. The people watch to see how you live. Living in a manner that won't offend the people you are ministering to. This is not much of a problem in Europe, however it can be a problem in some cultures.

These are qualities you should be looking for in people in your church. Nurture these qualities in people. These people may be future missionaries and pastors.

Christ is, so to speak, the Commander in Chief of His army. He has a worldwide battle to fight. We are at war spiritually. We must have soldiers at the front. Consider this yourself. Encourage others you know to consider God's marching orders.

During WWII we won by the grace of God and because Americans were unified in their effort to win. Why did they win?

1. Unity to defeat the foe and to win. Everyone disliked the foe and how the foe was treating the world.
2. Everyone sacrificed to get the job done. They sacrificed the comfort and ease of living.
3. Everyone gave all they possibly could.
4. Most were willing to go to the front to confront the enemy.
5. The rest sent them.

NOW APPLY THESE TO OUR SPIRITUAL BATTLE TODAY. We need this today among Christians. Most Christians don't know we are at war today! Most don't really care if they do know we are at war.

11. SENSIBILITY:

You need to be sensible enough to know that these are goals. You aren't born this way. God can make you this way however. Someone has said, "God does not call those who are fit; He fits those whom He calls."

A man about 30 years ago was laying in bed praying. He felt God wanted him to go into the ministry. He was super shy. He stuttered badly. He smoked. He cussed. He was hot tempered. He was ignorant of the Bible. He was over \$6000 in debt - in the 60's. He said okay Lord but you have a lot of changes to make. TODAY HE IS IN THE MINISTRY.

God isn't looking for pre-made ministers or missionaries - though He won't turn them down if they come along. He is looking for you as you are - He will make the changes and updates that are needed. Your response needs to be HERE AM I LORD, SEND ME.

12. OBEYABILITY:

Heb. 13.7, 17 mentions that the church folks are to obey the elders. We all have those that we are to follow, be we church members or workers or ministers of the Word. Titus was told to speak and exhort and rebuke with authority. We should have men that can lead and those that can follow.

A speaker in chapel mentioned that a Canadian military officer had told him once, "He that would command, must first learn to obey." Those are some words of wisdom for today. We have no place in our pulpits and boardrooms for men that can't obey their Lord and their superiors.

13. FRUITABILITY:

We all are called to do a job for Christ. Matt. 28.18-20; Acts 1.8 etc. show us clearly that as we are going we are to be witnessing and discipling.

14. TEACHABILITY:

We must be open to learn from all believers. The teacher must be free to learn from his students or he will soon be embarrassed. II Tim 3.14 mentions continuing in what has been learned. II Tim. 2.24 mentions that we are to be apt to teach if we are to aspire to the office of elder. There may be two sides to that phrase. Not only are we to be able to teach, but to be teachable. You cannot teach unless the Word and the Lord have first taught you.

15. MATURABILITY:

We are to be mature in the faith. I Cor. 16.13 tells us to "stand fast in the faith" and 13.11 talks of putting away childish things. We are to be maturing believers. In the process not sitting idle. Read Eph. 4.14-15 when you have a chance.

Maturity comes when we face problems like an adult. Maturity comes when we have a realistic view of our abilities. Both high and low view of our abilities.

Our children had no concept as they were growing up that dad might not be able to fix everything. One day one of the boys plastic guns broke and I tried every kind of glue I could find and none would hold. I finally told him that I was sorry but that I didn't think it could be fixed. He was so disappointed I couldn't believe it. It was disappointment in dad not being able to fix it, more than in the broken gun.

Rom. 12.3 may fit here. It has to do with having too high an opinion of yourself. "...not to think of himself more highly that he ought to think...."

Maturity comes when we are self-disciplined. Lack of maturity in a child is lack of attention span. If you have a person that starts a project, but doesn't like to finish it you have an adult with a short attention span. There may well be a lack of maturity in that life. This is quite probably why we have pastors staying in churches for only a year or two. They don't have the sticktuitiveness required to work through to a long ministry.

16. LAUGHABILITY:

If you can't laugh at yourself you can never be a missionary or Christian worker without problems. There is no Scripture for this however it is essential.

One year when I was teaching three faculty members were placed in the front of the student body and whipped cream was placed on their noses. Students were then given water guns to try to wash the faces off. The whipped cream tasted pretty good until the water came.

17. HUMBLEABILITY:

James 4.6 tells us that God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble. Do all jobs as unto the Lord - even the distasteful! When we were janitors at our church we found who the humble were. The teachers in the lower grades would not clean up "accidents" in the children's bathrooms. They would come and tell the janitors.

18. CONTENTABILITY:

Phil. 4.11 Paul tells us he was content in whatever state he was in. He was speaking in the context of money. Content with much money. Content with no money. I Tim 6.6-8 tells us to be content with food and raiment. Give your children the attitude of contentment. It is hard in a society where Jordaches, Levis, Nike's etc. are absolute musts.

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Now be honest! Is that the attitude of this world? NO!

Well, how many of you feel you measure up to this list?

Remember now! # 17 HUMBLEABILITY!

We speak of missionaries yet these are abilities every one of us should be striving for!

GOD DESIRES WE

1. BE SENDABLE
2. BE DEPENDABLE
3. BE BENDABLE
4. BE IGNITABLE
5. BE IMITATABLE
6. BE DISPENSIBLE
7. BE UNDERSTANDABLE
8. BE A SERVANT IN ATTITUDE
9. BE MOLDABLE
10. BE ACCEPTABLE
11. BE SENSIBLE
12. BE OBEDIENT
13. BE FRUITFUL
14. BE TEACHABLE
15. BE MATURE
16. BE HUMOUROUS
17. BE HUMBLE
18. BE CONTENT

May we strive - now remember - strive Biblically has the idea many times of agonize. May we agonize to make these qualities a part of our everyday lives.

PROBLEMS OF AN APPOINTTE OR LIFE OF AN APPOINTEE

When on deputation a pastor in California asked me to come to his church for a missions conference. He specified what topics each missionary was to cover. One of my topics was the problems of an appointee. I was somewhat uneasy speaking of the problems that I had been facing after several years of deputation, but since it was an assignment I put together these thoughts.

These thoughts may be a bit negative in the beginning however I trust that as we proceed that you will see God's hand in all of it and be able to say with me in the end "To God be the glory!" for indeed it is because of Him and His glory that we and others have done what we have done in past years.

A topic I would like to hear addressed sometime by a panel of Pastors would be "The problems of pastors as they deal with missionaries."

I have heard some real horror stories!

One pastor told me that he had a missionary speak on the subject that anyone ministering in the USA was out of God's will, that all people should be on the field.

While associate pastor of a small church we had a female missionary that had been supported by the church for years speak. In Sunday school she was just plain preaching. During the break the elders and deacons met with her and asked her not to preach, but to just share what she had been doing on the field. She stood in the church service and preached again.

Pastors have mentioned missionaries coming into a service after the service had started, they have missionaries that don't confirm that they are coming and don't call so that the pastor knows that they are, while others just don't show up.

One missionary pastor mentioned how much he appreciated me contacting him for a meeting. We are a new church and struggling and missionaries usually won't come to this kind of church, they want to go where the money is.

A pastor mentioned that he can't get missionaries to come to his church during the hot season of the year. Missionaries plan their itineraries according to the hot/cool seasons of the year.

This may tell us why pastors are the way they are to missionaries at times. Having said all this, as a pastor and missionary for many years the above mentioned missionaries are the minority - most are quite considerate.

Nothing in this study is said in sorrow of doing it or going through this time of deputation. Indeed, many laymen are called upon to do similar things by their Lord at different times of their lives and they respond as we have - in obedience to His leading.

Deputation has been described as calling pastors that don't have time to be interrupted to ask them for meetings that they can not give you to gain support from their church that they do not have.

In light of the economic situation that churches are were in when we were on deputation I really found it surprising that we were invited to as many churches as we were. Many of the pastors that invited us were on a part time basis themselves.

As we begin to survey the problems of an appointee we might take a short look at the lighter side of deputation.

At our first meeting we were finished setting up except for the projector. I ask my son where the slides were. His silence should have been the tip-off but you know dense old dad had to look to see why he hadn't answered. The sick look on his face told me that they were at home in the closet (about 150 miles away). After the panic attack subsided we revised our plans around not having slides and the meeting went quite well. Indeed, we received some support from that

meeting.

From no slides we might move on to the wrong directions syndrome which struck us every now and then. We were following written directions when we found an unmarked detour. The directions were wrong and we thought we had to go further so headed out on the detour. We finally stopped for directions, and were told that the church was back at the beginning of the detour. We finally found our way to the church in the nick of time.

We might move on to the church that massacred our name. We rounded the bend in the road to see the large reader board announcing "Sam Derickson". Isn't that the way it is -- you finally get your name up in lights and they misspell it. I was introduced as Sam - as Mr. Erickson etc. Etc. all morning. As we drove home we looked at the love offering check and found that they had made out the check to some one but I couldn't really tell whom. The name was completely different from ours. I took it to the bank fully expecting them to refuse it. They did accept it though I'm not sure why. My honest face I guess!!!!

The meetings in all of these churches were very good I might add!!

I would want to start such a topic with the statement that these are the problems that we have faced on deputation and that each couple or individual faces not only some common problems with us but also problems relating to their own particular location, personality, and life style.

I have broken the study down into five areas, Judgmental, practical, mental financial and spiritual.

I. Judgmental

A. In my time on the road there were a number of pastors and lay people that were convinced that we had to be out of God's will because He was not raising up support. Now the average time on deputation at the time was two and a half years, so I'm not sure how they could assume we were out of the Lord's will. To have an average of 2 1/2 years there are people out less than that as well as longer than that.

B. We were driving a car that was two years old with well over 100,000 miles on it and we were questioned on having such a nice car. We had purchased the car before the Lord lead us into missionary work - I guess we should have sold it and bought a junker.

C. There were a number of pastors that would not invite us to their church because we did not belong to their particular group. This even though I had graduated from two of their approved schools.

II. PRACTICAL

A. Bathrooms. Let us get down to the real living. Ever try to find a restroom for a family in a strange area of Washington State? They are quite rare in some areas. While on the interstate system this isn't a large problem but get off of the interstate and you need to plan ahead.

One afternoon I turned down a road that was marked as leading to a state park. The only problem is that the State Park was fifty miles down the road.

B. Keeping awake. More than one Sunday morning we packed into the car at 3:00am drive till 9:00, minister in three services then drive till 2:00 am to get home. Then the fun part - get up at 6:00 to get to work. This was ruff on children as well when they had to go to school the next day.

C. Place to stay. I made month long trips to the Midwest for meetings several times. On these trips there were no offers of a place to stay. I had a friend that pastored nearby so stayed in his church office at night. Actually this was not a real problem, but one must wonder about the hospitality of believers in this day and age.

D. Diet. My stomach is allergic to some foods and never knew what I was going to run into when invited out to a meal. Other missionaries have dietary needs and have talked of the same problem.

There is also a problem of the amount that you are served. Everyone wants the missionary to eat a big meal, which is appreciated, but not necessarily healthy. One kind farmers wife invited the pastor and me for dinner. She served the meat (roast) on our plates then had all the trimmings on the table. My plate had enough roast on it for our entire family. No, I didn't argue - it was great. She kept pushing us to help ourselves and because everything was great we did. She then asked if we would like a little pie. Well, just how could we turn her down? We said sure, and she placed it in front of us. She had taken a regular pie, divided it four ways and given each of us a piece with a ton of ice cream on top.

Yes, I'm afraid to say I did eat it! As I remember I did forgo the evening meal that day!

It is fantastic to see as I look back that the Lord always provided for housing as it was needed. And quite often I noticed that the Lord saw to it that the foods didn't upset my system as much as usual.

E. Not being given enough time to set up equipment when you arrive. We were given five minutes in one church and naturally that was the night that the slide tray spilled on the floor. I suspect many pastors figure that most missionaries won't be there till five till anyway.

F. Trying to be properly prepared for three services after being on the road five or six hours. Often I would park in a parking lot and go over my materials before reporting into the pastor or

church.

G. Sometimes there was little info as to what was expected for the visit to the church. This didn't happen to me however, I observed the events transpire. It was the first session of a Missions Conference and about 15 minutes before the session was to begin. One of the missionaries had just arrived and he was promptly informed that he was the speaker for that hour to all age groups. For having no preparation he did quite well.

H. My wife had to run the house and transportation while working full time while I was out on the road. The family also took care of our custodial duties at our church while I was off running around the country.

I. Most missionaries are accustomed to long busy days, then when on deputation you minister on Sunday and maybe Wednesday, but between there is nothing to do. This can be frustrating to the busy person that feels they are wasting time.

J. Arriving early with no place to stay and no money for a motel. On one trip I was to have a meeting in one state and then drive to another state for a conference. When I arrived in the second location, it was four below zero, two in the morning, and not enough money for a motel room. Thank goodness the Albertson grocery store was open and I could get some coke and donuts - I ran the car about every ten minutes to keep it warm enough. Finally I just began driving around until time to check in at the church.

I have noticed that many of the things that I dreaded about the inconveniences etc. and the things which people I talk with think are horrible for me to do or go through are only horrible or dreaded because of our "1985 American I can't survive without convenience" mindset. Things like going over notes in a Macdonald's parking lot seemed fairly crude but it wasn't that bad. I slept on the floor for five weeks in a sleeping bag in Nebraska on several occasions. I am completely deformed from the terrible experience as you can see. Ha!! We in America seem to think that if it isn't four bedrooms at 72 degrees and paid for that we are suffering for the Lord. NOT SO!!

I have done many similar things -- I have even slept in the car overnight several times while traveling across the country. I was really uneasy about it before I did it, but found that it didn't hurt a bit - in fact I enjoyed completely getting up and seeing the sunrise and to share in the beauty of the Lord at that terrible hour!

We need to get out of our padded pews and realize that the world is in need of evangelism much worse than we are in need of our many many comforts.

III. MENTAL

My personality is such that I have never adjusted to meeting new people, nor to carrying on a

conversation with strangers, nor making phone calls to pastors to ask for meetings in the hopes of gaining financial support.

I have been told by other missionaries that this is the case with them as well so it is not uncommon. Overcoming the mental blocks and uneasiness of these situations take their toll in extra fatigue due to nerves.

Again, I must give God the praise for the improvement in this area over the months of deputation. He has been able to stretch my personality somewhat. He has also been faithful to place me in homes of people that love to talk so I have not had to carry the conversations to often!

Probably the worst frustration is spending 2 or 3 hours on the phone and getting only one meeting.

There is a strain on all members of the family due to the traveling as well. The kids are in a new Sunday school class every week or so - they are very seldom spoken to except in passing. We were in a church in Washington State for a Sunday of meetings. When we were on the way home our sons mentioned how at home they felt in the church that day. I questioned them as to why. They decided it was the fact that people talked to them. Don't be afraid to speak with missionaries and their children - they are people too.

There is also a problem in that the future is in constant change and there are very few anchors that you can hold onto. You can never plan to be too involved at your church in case you get a meeting. Hobbies have to be curtailed because "we can't ship all those things to the field." We sold furniture to gain money for orientation. Do we replace it? No, that would be foolish if we are leaving in 6 months. Two years later you wonder if you should have sold the furniture.

We decided to be ready to go so we bought materials for crates. We lived for three years with three crates - two foot by two foot by four foot in size - in our apartment with three children. (Really wasn't that bad - used them for storage, for desks, for beds etc.)

IV. FINANCIAL

A. Stewardship of investing \$16,000 to raise \$400 a month support. That is actual expenses for the ministry and has nothing to do with living expenses for the home and family. That translates into something like this. If all of those contributors give for our first term on the field then the Lord will have broken even on the investment and the 2nd term will be profit for the Lord's stewardship department.

B. Never knowing if there will be enough money to go around. I Left one day on a five-week trip to Nebraska needing \$1100 to meet unpaid bills - had \$75. and two credit cards for gas/food when I left. Yet the Lord is always there to supply the needs and when I returned home we

actually had a few dollars extra and the credit cards were paid.

It is of interest to me that in Phil. 4:14 Paul states of the Philippians gift to him, "Ye have well done, that ye did share with my affliction." The term affliction has the idea of a pressing down. It would seem that the apostle Paul was concerned about finances! To worry all the time certainly isn't proper but a concern seems to be within reason.

C. Stretching things to their limit - saying no to yearbooks at school for the kids. Putting off eye and dental care etc.

D. Knowing that you are in churches looking for support when you know those they support on the field need the money they might give you. There were many churches where the pastors were not fully or properly supported.

Veteran missionaries are having problems getting back to the field after furlough at times. Some are even coming home in middle part of their term to raise enough support to return for the remainder of their term.

E. Another frustration is when the missions computer goofs and you aren't reimbursed for your expenses and you were counting on the money to pay bills. An error in our records caused us to transfer all of our funds from our accounts to an outgoing fund to correct the error. We were without operating funds from that point forward and had to function on funds that we could earn in secular work.

Again, I would want to emphasize that the Lord always met every need.

VI. SPIRITUAL

A. A consistent quiet time is hard, for your schedule away from home is different every day and quite busy if you are at a conference. Finding time is not usually a problem however to have it at a regular time of the day is sometimes impossible.

B. Keeping your eyes upon the Lord in spite of some of the many frustrations and problems is a constant job.

Support slow in coming in. Equipment problems. Car problems. At times health problems.

C. Rudeness in person as well as by phone and letter. We sent out form letters after many contacts with churches. The letter had boxes to check - not interested - not interested at this time etc. one came back and the not interested was x'ed in ink once and in pencil two or three times and then the sentence was underlined. Only about 40% of the pastors even returned the questionnaire when we provided the self addressed stamped envelope.

Another pastor after telling me on the phone that he would call me back with a date for a meeting sent a letter stating that they supported only "Baptist" missionaries. Another pastor sent the following letter, "I'm sorry to say that we will have to cancel this meeting time we had planned with you.... we are somewhat inundated with missionaries right now. Four of those we already support are home from the field this summer We do feel an obligation to give these people priority in our schedule." A friend of ours was a member of the church and had been on staff at the time of the letter and he told me (not knowing of the letter) that the church was in bad shape financially at the time. They had decided not to have any more new missionaries in and begin raising their present missionaries. HHHMMMMMM !!!!!

D. Knowing that the unsaved are watching to see if you are going to make it. This bothered us where my wife worked. They kept asking her if we are still going, etc. One man in particular was very concerned with our situation and was constantly asking.

E. Speaking to pastors of large churches whose church supports two missionaries and they think they have a good missionary program. Others that have no interest in missions.

There are others that are very involved in missions and are frustrated that they can do no more.

CONCLUSION:

I trust this has not given you a negative view of deputation for it is not negative in its totality. Yes, there were hard times and there were negative times but as a whole we can look back on it and feel that it was a positive time.

It certainly gave us a view of the condition of the church in the western states. The church is hurting in many many ways. Some of it is the economy - some of it is sin in peoples lives - but I really feel it all stems from the spiritual condition of the churches people including some of the leadership in our colleges and seminaries. The schools are going down hill and as is usual through out church history the church is tagging along behind.

Trials? Yes, many. Loneliness? Yes, bunches! Lack of money? Yes, constantly. Tired? Pass the coffee. Frustration? Not more than daily. Disappointed? The Lord knows how often. Blessings? More than enough to compensate for the other items of consideration!!

I'd like to just share some of the blessings that we've received from the people that we've had the privilege to meet.

Letters

"I am writing to encourage you. But I really don't know how to do it so I trust that the thoughts and effort will say that. ...I can tell you that we both know who is on the throne.... Be

encouraged - easier said than done.

"Today I came across your letter where I had unfortunately set it aside when it arrived almost two months ago. I want to apologize for not answering your inquiry. I believe our Lord would have us be both courteous and prompt and I really blew it on this one."

"Oh how short but sweet was our visit the Sunday just past. Your words, your friendship and your ministry lingers on with us."

"I have received many good reports of individuals lives who have been touched by the time you shared with us."

One ten or eleven-year-old boy was entranced with the stamps on our display table. I told him I knew of a way for him to get a lot of free foreign stamps -- write to missionaries. He ask if I was serious and I said yes, very definitely. A couple of days later I received a letter from him stating, (ruff quote) I'm fine. How are you? I'd sure like some stamps. I sent him some from Ireland with a note. About six months later I received another letter. How are you? I am fine. sure would like some more stamps if you have any.

COMMENTS

After a sermon in eastern Oregon Several came up after the service and said that the sermon had been especially meaningful to the congregation.

Thanks for answering that question -- I've wondered about it for years.

The young college girl that ask, "Do you think that the Lord could use me in Ireland?"

I've been wanting to serve the Lord in England but didn't know any mission working there till tonight. Do you think that your board would be interested.

"You have really challenged us." "You have been used here."

ACTIONS

We were able to guide a young woman away from a short-term mission trip with a questionable group she had been planning and she decided to go to South America with our board instead.

We had opportunity to put a number of people in touch with the mission that were interested in serving with the board.

We had many opportunities to share the ministry of the mission, our future ministry in Ireland and a number of chances to minister from the Word.

We had the time and opportunity to just listen to pastors and some of their frustrations and problems.

In closing I might add that being a missionary is not unlike being a pastor in some respects. I have pastored and co-pastored for a number of years and the two jobs are quite similar. You want to retire sometimes on Monday yet you know that if you did you would be miserable. You know the problems weigh you down at times but you also know that the blessings outweigh any problems you have.

It is called being in God's place for you. I know at this moment in time this is what God wants me doing and that is what I must do to be happy before the Lord.

Thank you for sharing with me in an area of life that very few have a part in! I trust it has been a positive time for you!!