



## Chapter 1: Basics of a Missionary

### WHAT MAKES A MISSIONARY

We are living in a time of many wars. Both large and small scales of battles between the tribes and nations cost the lives and properties in this generation. The most crucial and fierce war of all times is, however, the battle between Satan and his forces capturing the souls of people in darkness, and God's errands working to free them. Satan's forces are well-described as the rulers, the authorities, the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms in Ephesians 6:12. They are at work as diligent as never before. And we cannot afford to lose this war at any cost.

While people are in confusion and nations in disturbance everywhere, the Body of Christ has failed to realize the seriousness of this warfare. Some of us began to even forget the greatest command of our Commander-in-chief 'to go and make disciples of all nations.' Meanwhile, the forces of darkness began to invade even the Church in our weakness and laziness.

Whatever happened to the statement to say that evangelism is the debt of the church to the world?

*"I looked for a man (or woman) among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it ... " (Ezekiel 22:30)*

God is still calling and making His missionaries who will pay the debt of love to this dying world.

Let us look into this primary question. Exactly what makes a missionary? It is a question which we need to address for us to understand the whole concept of the missions. A missionary is made of two very important factors.

1. Passion for God (a call)
2. Compassion for people

The Book of Jonah describes Jonah as a missionary to Nineveh. Although he lacked compassion for the people he was sent to serve, he later renewed his commitment to follow God's call and was mightily used by God as a revivalist who brought an unprecedented repentance in that ancient city. Nineveh was the

capital of Assyria (near Iraq of today). Assyrians worshipped a god called Dagon who they believed would incarnate one day as a human form to give them a great revelation. And it is amazing to consider how Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and was vomited toward Nineveh later on. Because Dagon is a god, descriptive of a half-fish and half-human, God wittily used a great fish to swallow Jonah and in so doing probably the Nineveh people would believe Jonah to be the very messenger from Dagon. This eventually led to a city-wide revival. Jonah, therefore, was quite successful in following his missionary call, however, failed a great deal in showing compassion for people. He felt 'greatly displeased (Jonah 4:1)' when people of Nineveh turned away from their wickedness and were merited God's mercy. As much as a missionary is someone who loves God, he/she should learn to extend that love toward people he/she is sent to serve.



Missionary is *a person sent by God*. Thus a missionary often serves in a capacity of the apostolic ministry since the word 'apostle' means a 'sent one.' Therefore, missions are a divine enterprise which God wants to erect through His people. And it embraces the very plan of God for every one of His children. All believers have roles to play in missions. God has appointed a time and a place for every believer. Our highest duty in life is to find God's will for us within His plan and carry it out.

Here are several important truths to note about missions.

1. Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to take the gospel to the whole world. He intended missions to be the continual responsibility of the whole Church until Christ himself returns.
2. The Holy Spirit raises up missionaries from all nations, races and societies. Missionaries are people who proclaim the gospel in places where spiritual darkness is the greatest.
3. The Bible is our authority in missions. The Bible reveals the message of the gospel, the right motives for missions, and the goals and methods that please God.
4. Christians need to be informed about missions and be challenged personally by the 'Great Commission' which Christ gave the church.
5. Passion for God and a burning desire that God alone be worshipped everywhere is the fuel that keeps the fire of missions burning.

## THE OLD TESTAMENT BASIS OF MISSIONS

### **Genesis Promise**

Genesis chapter 3 contains the first missionary call and first revelation of the redemptive purpose of God in the Scripture. Genesis 3:8-9 says that God came looking for our first fallen parents. God called Adam, "Where are you?" God has been calling out for centuries in similar ways through prophets and missionaries and, most of all, through His Son Jesus Christ. We see for the first time that God

is a missionary in Genesis! And Genesis 3:15 is rightly called the 'mother of all gospel promises.'

*"And I will put enmity between you (the serpent) and the woman, and between your offspring and hers: he will crush your head and you will strike his heel."*

This promise is directed to all humanity. Awful conflict will persist, the verse says, between the two 'offspring'; that of the serpent and that of the woman. Someday as the offspring of the woman Christ will come, and he will crush the head of the serpent (*Call this the first 'birth announcement' of Jesus!*). Sin, suffering and judgment are overcome in the world view of the Bible through Christ, the Savior of the world.

### **Israel - A People Chosen for a Missionary Purpose**

God chose Abraham and his descendants to be the objects of His special grace and revelation, and a blessing to all peoples on earth (Genesis 12:1-3). Israel was called to be 'a missionary nation.' The people were to be servants of God, His witnesses, priests and mediators before the nations (Isaiah 42:5-7, 43:10-13). Israel was to be a living example or 'showcase' of the righteous kingdom of God.

Because of this missionary purpose, God made sure that Israel became a blessing to the nations despite their failures. After all, Jews received and preserved the Old Testament. They also wrote the New Testament in Greek, the most widely used language in the days of the apostles, so that the message of the gospel could be spread to all nations!