

The Priority of Missions, Part 2

Sunday, February 13, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

- Do you remember how we define “missions?”
 - The actions of God through the local church to spread the Gospel message to all the earth, and to establish new churches that will do the same.
- For most American Christians, missions is not often on our minds. But think about these questions (not for discussion):
 - Have Christians successfully completed the Great Commission? Has the Gospel been delivered to every creature?
 - Are the people in the world who have never heard the Gospel somewhat dependent on those who have heard it and received it?
 - Another thought: What control did you have over being born where you were born? Especially if you were born in the USA where the Gospel is proclaimed freely and there is a Baptist church on every corner!
- We are a blessed people. And with great blessings comes great responsibility.
- Last week we saw how the topic of missions is one of the main themes of the entire Bible, and spent the majority of our time in the New Testament. But missions is also found throughout the Old Testament.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Theme of Missions (review)
 - a. Last week we reviewed some key Scriptures that reminded us of God’s redemptive plan. Let’s just review two to refresh our memories.
 - b. John 3:16-17 – These verses have been called the central text of the Bible and is also the central missions text. Notice the object of God’s love: the world. See how Jesus came to save the world.
 - c. Acts 1:8 – One of the accounts of the Great Commission given by Jesus Himself. Again, note how we are to begin sharing the Gospel where we live and then to branch into all the world.
 - d. The Bible is clear that this is God’s plan. Shouldn’t God’s plan be our plan?
 - i. Sadly, too many churches and individual Christians have made the faith about something else to the neglect of the main thing.
 - ii. For many, we have made the Christian faith completely personal and have forgotten our outward responsibility.
2. Missions in the Old Testament
 - a. Last week we spent our time in the New Testament. Most of those texts were familiar to us. But where do we find missions in the Old Testament?
 - b. Group Work: Divide the class into groups and have them brainstorm this question. See how many illustrations from the Old Testament they can think of.
 - c. After allowing for some discussion, share the following examples.
 - d. Genesis 3:15 – The first prophecy concerning Christ the Savior of the world.

- i. Salvation is of God – initiated by Him.
 - ii. Salvation will affect mankind as a whole – for all nations.
 - iii. How would God ultimately fulfill this prophecy? Through the greatest missionary of all of history: Jesus Christ.
- e. Genesis 12:13 – The choosing of Abraham and his descendants. “By thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”
- f. Genesis 37 – Joseph. Sent by God to heathen Egypt to accomplish His divine purpose.
- g. Hebrews 11:24-28 – Moses. Trained and disciplined by God for a great and difficult undertaking.
 - i. It called for the renouncing of wealth, social position, and worldly pleasure.
 - ii. It called for giving himself in unselfish service to those who would try his patience and resist his devotion.
- h. Rahab of Jericho and Ruth of Moab – Both were Gentiles and outside of God’s chosen people. Yet because of God’s grace, both are included in the ancestral line of Jesus.
- i. The Psalms are full of mission’s references (22:27; 47:2 & 8; 67:2-7; 72:8, 11, 17)
- j. Jonah – Sent by God to deliver the message of salvation to the people of Nineveh.
- k. Daniel – Taken captive from his homeland and brought up in a foreign country, he witnessed for God in the courts of four successive heathen monarchs and led them to proclaim that his God was the Most High God.
- l. The entire Old Testament is a missionary story!

APPLICATION:

- Which of these examples were you familiar with?
- Review: What are ways that we can participate in missions?
 - Tithe. When you give, 10% of your offering goes to missions. This allows the church to support over 60 missionary families all over the world.
 - Pray. You ought to make prayer for missionary families a regular part of your prayer life. They need them!
 - Go. Have you told God you would go? Would you go if He asked you to?
 - Think like a missionary this week. Florence is a mission field!
- TO DO:
 - Ask God to make you more aware of and burdened for the lost world around you.
 - Pray for increased laborers who will actually involve themselves in the work of missions.
 - Ask God for a willingness to be involved and used by Him.