

The Priority of Missions

Lesson for Sunday, January 29, 2023

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Class true or false:
 - According to John 3:16, God's love, as expressed on the cross of Christ, is for the **whole world**. (TRUE)
 - God's desire is for the message of salvation to be preached to all mankind the **world over**. (TRUE)
 - God is equally concerned in the salvation of **all people** (not a respecter of persons). (TRUE)
 - The task of "preaching the Gospel to every creature" has long been accomplished and should no longer be a priority. (FALSE)
 - Those people in the world who have never heard of God's salvation are in way dependent on those who have heard and have received eternal life. (TRUE)
 - You made the decision for yourself to be born and reared in a country where the Gospel is freely and often proclaimed. (FALSE)
 - God could have just as easily have allowed any of us to live our lives in a part of the world where Jesus Christ is unknown. (TRUE)
- ⇒ Someone has said: "The Gospel means good news. But news can be news only to those who have not already heard it, and news can be good news only to those who hear it in time to secure its benefits."
- ⇒ Next week we kick-off our monthly emphasis on missions. Missions is the actions of God through the local church to spread the Gospel message to all the earth, and to establish new churches who will do the same.
- ⇒ The Bible story is all about missions.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. Missions is a Biblical Theme
 - a. What verses can your class come up with that emphasize missions? Allow them to brainstorm and then cover the following references.
 - b. John 3:16. This has been referred to as the central text of the Bible and is also the central mission's text. The object of missions is the world and Jesus was a missionary from Heaven to Planet Earth.
 - c. John 3:17. Point out again the phrase, "the world."
 - d. 1 John 2:2; John 1:29 – over and over the target of God's salvation is the world.
 - e. These passages make it clear that the redemption of the whole world was God's great purpose from the beginning.
 - f. The enterprise of world missions is simply the putting into effect God's divine plan.
 - g. Where do we find actual missionary work in the Bible?
2. Missions in the Old Testament
 - a. Can your class think of any examples? Point out that in the OT, these examples are types. The church was not established and the Great Commission was not given until the New Testament, but there are pictures of missionary work throughout the Old.
 - b. Genesis 12:13 – The choosing of Abraham and his descendants. Through this man, called to leave his home and go into the world following God, "all the nations of the world would be blessed."
 - c. Genesis 37 – Joseph. He was sent by God to heathen Egypt to accomplish a divine purpose.
 - d. Hebrews 11:24-28 talks about Moses.
 - i. Moses was trained by God for a great and difficult task.
 - ii. It called for the renouncing of wealth, social position, and worldly pleasure.

- iii. It called for giving of himself in unselfish service to those who tried his patience and resisted his devotion.
 - e. Jonah was sent as a missionary to Nineveh with the message of salvation to the rebellious people who were there.
 - f. Daniel was taken captive from his homeland and brought up in a foreign culture. He witnessed for God in the courts of four successive heathen monarchs and led them to proclaim that the True God was the Most High!
- 3. Missions in the New Testament
 - a. The missionary concepts seen in the “bud” of the OT come into full bloom in the New.
 - b. The Gospels:
 - i. Furnish the missionary with his message.
 - ii. Present the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus as the grounds for redemption.
 - iii. Presents the life story of Jesus – God’s great world missionary from Heaven.
 - iv. The word “Gospel” means Good News. The very essence of Good News is that it must be proclaimed.
 - v. 79 times John refers to the cosmos (world).
 - vi. The Gospels contain the Great Commission – our marching orders to take the Gospel to the end of the world.
 - c. The Book of Acts:
 - i. An inspired record of the missionary work of the early church during its first generation of existence.
 - ii. Acts 1:8 – The key verse for the whole book. Jesus declares the mission in the first chapter, and the rest of the book is those early Christians obeying their marching orders.
 - iii. The Apostle Paul – former persecutor of the church becomes wonderfully converted and commissioned by God as the great missionary to the Gentiles.
 - d. The Epistles: Originally written as letters from missionaries to the churches they had planted.
 - e. Revelation: Written by a missionary in exile about the final accomplishment of God’s eternal missionary purpose (Rev. 11:15).

CONCLUSION: You can’t be a Bible person and ignore missions.

What is the “to do” for this lesson? Be here the next four Sundays. Here is a preview:

- ⇒ February 5 – Grant and Rebecca Skelton, Hong Kong
- ⇒ February 12 – Mike and Shaleena Quinlan, Greece
- ⇒ February 19 – Jon and Olivia Solomon, Chile
- ⇒ February 26 – Larry and Tammy Allred, Mexico

Pray for our month!