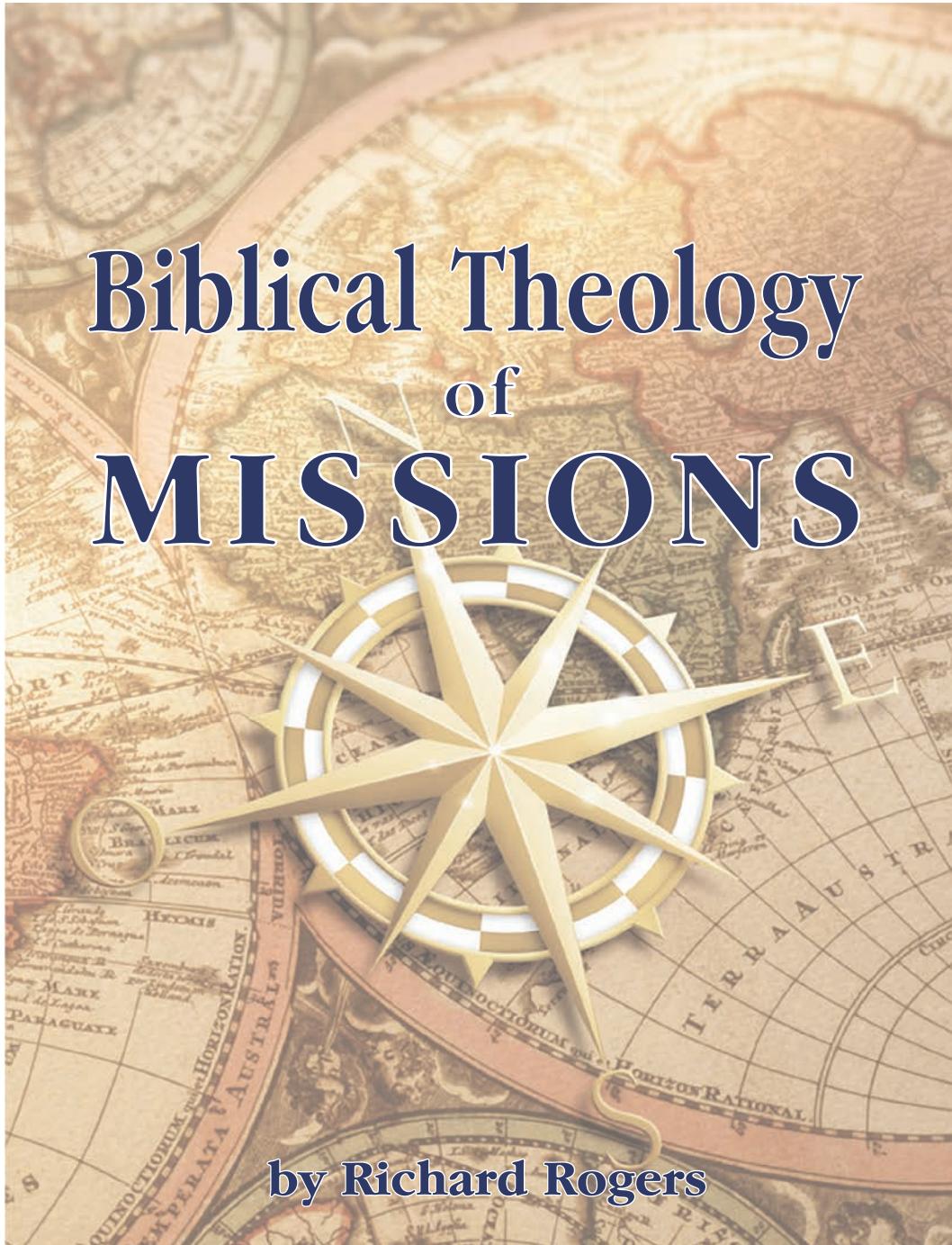


Study Guide

Biblical Theology of **MISSIONS**

by Richard Rogers



SUNSET
International Bible Institute



THE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSIONS



**INTRODUCTORY
NEW TESTAMENT
STUDIES**

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Theology of Missions

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without the written permission of the publisher except in the case of brief
quotations within critical articles and reviews, including translation.

DISCLAIMER

The textbook used with this course was selected because we consider
it to be the best commentary available written by a conservative
author. *Missions; Biblical Foundations & Contemporary Strategies*,
written by Gailyn Van Rheenen will be an important part of the
course itself. This book will re-enforce the teaching you will receive
from viewing the recorded lessons by Richard Rogers. As with all
books there may be some things with which you and I would not
agree. The principle, “use whatever is good and discard what is not
good” applies to every textbook used with our courses. Please be wise
enough to discard any and all teaching that is not biblical.

Instructions and Requirements for Certificate of Biblical Studies

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVDs or the CDs. Listen to or view the lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide.

Tests: There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Preview each lesson by reading these questions first. There will be only two tests to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6), and the final test will be done at the end of the study and will cover lessons seven (7) through twelve (12). **(90% of Total Grade)**

Memory Work: You will have only thirteen (13) verses to memorize. You are asked to either write your verses on the Self-Exams or quote them to someone at the end of each lesson where memory work is required. There are many facts to be memorized in this course. Most of these will be required on your tests. **(10% of Total Grade)**

Due with Test One: (6 verses)

Psalms 24:1; Acts 2:36-38; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1.

Due with Test Two: (7 verses)

Matthew 28:18-20; Galatians 1:11-12; Romans 1:16-17.

Assignments:

The self exams for each lesson are to be read previous to listening or viewing the material on the tapes.

All the memory verses assigned must be completed and either written or quoted before each assigned test is taken.

All Self-Exams are to be completed at the end of each lesson.

Instructions and Requirements for Bachelor of Biblical Studies

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the DVDs or the CDs. Listen to or view the lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide.

Reading: One book will be required. "*Missions; Biblical Foundations & Contemporary Strategies*" by Gailyn Van Rheenen. This book must be read in its entirety by the time this course is completed. **Write a one half page report on each chapter**, listing what you think are the positives and negatives for mission work. This must be turned in with your final test. (**15% of your grade**)
The *Book of Acts* must be read two (2) times before the end of this course. One reading from a modern version (example: NIV, NKJV, or NASV) and one reading from an older version (examples: King James or American Standard). (**5% of your grade**)

Memory Work: You have twenty-seven (27) verses to memorize in this study. These verses are designed to help as you go through this study to raise your awareness of the need for missions. Write out your memory verses, correct them with a different colored ink, and turn them in to your test administrator or **quote them to your administrator. (10% of your grade)**

Due with the Mid-term: (11 verses)

Psalms 24: 1; Acts 2:36; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1; Matthew 28:18-20;
Galatians 1:11-12; Romans 1:16-17

Due with the Final Exam: (16 verses)

John 3:3-5; 4:20-24; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 1 Timothy 2:5; Acts 1:8; 4:2, 12,
19-20; 24:15;

Tests: There will be two tests: A mid-term following lesson six, and a final at the end of the course. These two tests will be worth 70% of your total grade. If you fail a test and must do a retake, the highest grade you may receive on the re-take is a 70. You must obtain a 70% or better on each test.

All of the Self-Exam questions in the Study Guide (found at the end of each lesson) must be completed. All other assignments must be completed to pass this course. Unfinished or left out work will receive an incomplete on the transcript and no certificate will be issued until incomplete work is turned in.

Grade Values:

Mid-term and Final Tests:	70%
Memory verses:	10%
Reading of Acts:	5%
Reading and Report of Textbook:	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Contents

LESSON ONE:	Theological Presuppositions.	1
LESSON TWO:	Theological Imperatives.	8
LESSON THREE:	The Great Commission	15
LESSON FOUR:	The Nature of the Gospel (Part One).	21
LESSON FIVE:	The Nature of the Gospel (Part Two).	25
LESSON SIX:	The Nature of the Gospel (Part Three).	29
LESSON SEVEN:	The Nature of the Gospel (Part Four).	33
LESSON EIGHT:	The Uniqueness of the Christian Faith.	39
LESSON NINE:	Missions in the Book of Acts (Part One).	47
LESSON TEN:	Missions in the Book of Acts (Part Two).	53
LESSON ELEVEN:	Missions in the Ministry of Paul	59
LESSON TWELVE:	Missions Through Small Groups.	65

LESSON ONE

THEOLOGICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the study of the Biblical Theology of Missions. The **divine mandate** is based upon the commission of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). The stated intent of the divine mandate is making disciples. It is not simply that He wants His word known, or just that man is saved. He wants disciples, i.e., followers, imitators, and examples for Christ.

This mandate has been under the scrutiny of both friends and foes of God throughout the years. Recently, it has fallen in some places into ill repute. Some have said that that age of missions has ended, and that the best we can do today is in a humanitarian way. As great as these needs are they must never take our minds away from the missionary mandate. Because of these and other factors, the number of men and women who are presently being trained as missionaries is diminishing. Missionaries are going through an identity crisis. When they return home they are finding fewer churches and individuals who are willing to sacrifice to keep them on the field.

It is this situation that has called this study into being. We must study this area in order to do what God wants done.

We must have a reverence for Jesus and the written Word. Only the Scriptures are the reliable, authoritative testimony of God today.

1. We exalt Jesus as the Son of God.
2. We respect the church.
3. We uphold the preached word.

LESSON AIM: To learn that God has given three presuppositions to His mission, the Sovereignty of God, the Lordship of Christ and the Ministry of the Spirit.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. Learn that the Sovereignty of God involves three outstanding attributes, and seen in three divine activities.
 2. Understand how the Lordship of Christ affects the Individual, the Church, and the World.
 3. Discover how the ministry of the Spirit affects missions.
-

Our study will be a long study, but outlined to study only what is essential for us to know what to do to accomplish the work.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

(Read Isaiah 66:1; Psalms 24:1; James 1:27; Psalms 145:16; Acts 17:28; Ephesians 1:9-10; Isaiah 46:10; Daniel 4:35).

A. Based on Three Outstanding Attributes

1. HIS ALMIGHTY POWER – Isaiah 40:12-31. Expressed in Genesis one.
2. HIS PERFECT WISDOM – Romans 11:33-36.
3. HIS INTRINSIC GOODNESS – Psalms 145:8-20.

B. Seen in Three Divine Activities

1. CREATION – Revelation 4:11. “*You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.*”
2. REDEMPTION – Ephesians 1:5-9. “*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace . . .*”
3. JUDGMENT – Romans 9:18-23.

NOTE: From first to last the Christian mission is God’s Mission, not man’s.

- 1) It originated in the heart of God.
- 2) It is based on the love of God.
- 3) It is determined by the will of God.
- 4) Its mandate was enunciated by the Son of God.
- 5) Its rationale is explained in the Word of God.
- 6) Its ultimate success depends on the power of God.

C. God’s Dealing with the Missionary. God’s Choice of the Man (John 15:16;

1 Corinthians 9:16-17. Cf. Jeremiah 1 and Isaiah 6).

1. The **kind** of ministry – Ephesians 4:7-16 (Cf. Galatians 2:8).
2. The **sphere** of ministry – Acts 16:5,7,9; 18:21; 21:13; Romans 15:29.
3. The **duration** of ministry – John 21:22; Acts 21:8; Acts 12 (James and Peter).
4. The **success** of ministry – John 4:35-38; 1 Corinthians 3:6-9; John 3:25-27.

D. God’s Dealing with the Sinner

1. The fate of the sinner is decided by the judicial act of God in sending His Son.
2. Only those drawn to God by being taught of God will be saved – John 6:44-45.

E. God's Ordering of World Events

1. The times and the seasons are in God's control (See: Acts 1:6-8; Ecclesiastes 3; Acts 17).
2. The opening and closing of doors of opportunities are the work of God (Revelation 3:7 – “*What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.*”)
3. We are commanded to the task whether the circumstances are favorable or not (Ecclesiastes 11:4-6; 2 Timothy 4:1-8).
4. World evangelization cannot wait for **fair skies and calm seas!**
Consider: World evangelization:
 - a. 1 Samuel 21:8 – Requires haste. “*... because the king's business was urgent.*”
 - b. John 16:33 – Brings tribulation. “*In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*”
 - c. Acts 20:23 – Brings bonds/affliction. “*I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.*”
 - d. 1 Corinthians 16:9 – Open door and many adversaries. “*... because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.*”

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Acts 2:36; Philippians 2:9-11 (verse 11 contains our creed, “Jesus Christ is Lord!”); Ephesians 1:20-23.

A. His Lordship over the Individual

There is nothing in the Bible to suggest that a person can accept Christ as Savior at one stage in life, and five or ten years later accept Him as Lord. Jesus Christ cannot be divided. He is both Savior and Lord in one person. The jailer was told “*Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved*” (Acts 16:31). And baptism, which immediately followed, sealed his total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. His claim on our persons – “*You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body*” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). (See also: Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Titus 2:14). Therefore, our aim is to please Him (2 Timothy 2:3-4; Colossians 3:20; Ephesians 5:24; Matthew. 10:37-39; Romans 14:7-8).
2. His claim on our possessions – “*But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...*” (Deuteronomy 8:18). (See also: Ecclesiastes. 5:19; 1 Timothy 6:17; 1 Peter 4:10; Acts 4:32; Luke 6:30; Matthew 6:33; Luke 18:30). Yet consider the “rejoicing tithe” in Deuteronomy 14.
3. His claim on our vocation – “*Come, follow me,*” Jesus said, “*and I will make you fishers of men*” (Matthew 4:19). (See also: Ephesians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Exodus 35:30-36:1).

4. His claim on our talents – Compare the choosing of the twelve. “*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last* (John 15:16). No modern aptitude test would have qualified them.
- B. His Lordship over the Church** – Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:23; 1:20-23.
1. He appoints its ministers – “*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers*” (Ephesians 4:7-11). (See also: Acts 20:38; John 21).
 2. He invests it with authority – Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:17; Matthew 16:19; John 20:22-23; 16:23-24; Book of Acts (esp. 8:12; 3:6; 16:18).
 3. He receives its worship – “*. . . for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth*” (John 4:23-24). (See: Revelation 4:11; 5:13-14; 22:8-9).
 4. He evaluates its ministry – “*. . . his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work*” (1 Corinthians 3:13). (See: 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ephesians 5:27; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 2-3).
- C. His Lordship over the World** – 1 Timothy 6:15; Hebrews 1:3; Ephesians 1:21.
1. Angels – “*Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?*” (Hebrews 1:14).
 2. Nations – “*The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men*” (Daniel 2:24, 4:17).
 3. Families – “*Sing to God, sing praise to his name, extol him who rides on the clouds – his name is the LORD – and rejoice before him. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land*” (Psalm 68:4-6, 127:3-5).

THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT (Mentioned in Acts Over 50 Times.)

A. The Holy Spirit Creates the Missionary Spirit

1. Spirit of sacrifice – Acts 4:29-31 (Cf. 17-21).

NOTE: More sacrifice is required in leaving conveniences today than in 1800's.

2. Spirit of courage – Acts 4:13; 15:26, 21:13.
3. Spirit of love – John 3:16 (God); Galatians 2:20 (Jesus); John 13:34-35 (Disciples). Study 1 Corinthians 13. As Jesus was the embodiment of God’s love, missionaries are the embodiment of Christ’s love.
 - a. They fight famines, floods, pestilence, and plagues.

- b. They are the first to rescue unwanted babies, educate girls, and liberate women.
- c. They encounter indifference, suspicion, hostility, persecution, and prison.
- d. Their homes are looted, their buildings are burned, there are church buildings destroyed, their lives are threatened.
- e. They often return broken in health, die prematurely of tropical diseases.
- 4. Spirit of zeal – Acts 21:13; Romans 9:2-3. (cf. Galatians 1:14; Philippians 3:6).
- 5. Spirit of conviction – 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Romans 3:19-20, 10:9-15, 1:14-17; 1 Corinthians 9:22, 16.

NOTE: Belief in the lostness of man is fading. No wonder missions is not the urgent matter it needs to be.

B. The Spirit Promotes Missionary Activity

- 1. He initiates the work of the missionary – Acts 6:3; 20:28; 15:28; 13:2; 14:26-27.
- 2. He directs the steps of the missionary – Psalm 37:23; Acts 1:8; 15:7; 16:6-10; Proverbs 3:5-6.

C. The Spirit Produces Missionary Results

- 1. He provides a convicting gospel – John 16:8-11.
- 2. He provides a confirming gospel – Acts 9:31.

CONCLUSION:

There are three theological presuppositions:

- 1. The Sovereignty of God.
- 2. The Lordship of Christ.
- 3. The Ministry of the Spirit.

The Spirit is with us today. He enables us to do His work, while providing comfort to our souls. In the next lesson we will examine the imperatives of missions.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE

1. Give the three presuppositions and discuss each one.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

2. In what three areas does Jesus claim Lordship?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

3. What five characteristics does the Spirit create in us?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____

4. By what objective means can we know the Spirit promotes missionary activity and produces results? _____

5. Discuss the importance of being conscientious toward the needs of missionaries when they visit us. _____

6. Discuss how mission is God's from the first to the last.

7. Do we, as the church, need to re-examine our mission? Explain your answer.

For Class Discussion:

1. Can we afford to wait for fair weather before we send or be sent into the world?
2. Discuss the need to become more involved in world evangelism, and what sacrifices we can make to accomplish that goal.
3. Discuss why there is a growing apathy toward the lostness of the world.

LESSON TWO

THEOLOGICAL IMPERATIVES

INTRODUCTION

We engage in missions, not because we wish to, but because we have to. The apostles were preaching in the city of Jerusalem in the midst of persecution. They were arrested for preaching. They were carried before the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of the land. There, they were tried and found guilty of preaching a heretical message. In Acts 4:19 they were charged and commanded to cease preaching in the name of Jesus. The apostles said, “*Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking . . .*” The original language of this passage is even stronger. They literally said, “We cannot not speak.” Jesus commanded them to preach. The apostle Paul expressed the missionary spirit in 1 Corinthians 9:16.

LESSON AIM: To understand the basis of mission and the need for missions.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Re-examine the missionary mandate as to what it involves and on what it is based.
 2. Examine how to identify those who are lost and why the lost are lost.
 3. Study and learn the character of the missionary task seen in four specific areas.
-

THE MISSIONARY MANDATE

A. Based On the Character of God. Scripture is not concerned with proving the existence of God. That is taken for granted. What the Bible reveals and argues for is the character of God.

1. GOD IS LOVE – 1 John 4:16; Jeremiah. 31:3; The book of Jonah.
2. GOD IS LIGHT – 1 John 1:5. Light is symbolic of three things. The gospel preacher’s task is to bring love and light to the world through preaching the good news of freedom from darkness.
 - a. **Physically:** light stands for splendor and glory – 2 Corinthians 4:6; Revelation 21:23.
 - b. **Intellectually:** light stands for truth – Psalms 43:3.
 - c. **Morally:** light stands for holiness – Romans 13:11-14.
 - 1) Beauty of holiness (Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:2; Psalm 47:8; Matthew 6:33; Psalm 45:6; 145:17.

- 2) Wrath of holiness (Romans 1:18ff; John 3:36; 2 Corinthians 5:11).

B. Based on the Command of Christ

1. The invitation to come – Matthew 11:28-30; Isaiah 55:7.
2. The command to follow – Matthew 16:24-25; Luke 14:25-33.

NOTE: Study the contrast between Eastern and Western concepts of discipleship.

The Western concept emphasizes teaching in the classroom. The Eastern concept emphasizes the relationship of the disciple with his teacher. The disciple lives with his teacher and serves his teacher (cf. Mark 3:14).

3. It is assumed in the Bible we will follow the mandate to go – Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15; Matthew 9:38; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:”*

NOTE: The missionary concept includes four ideas:

- 1) The one who sends – that is God.
- 2) The one who is sent – that is the missionary.
- 3) Those to whom he is sent – that is the lost.
- 4) The message he is commanded to proclaim – God’s saving grace.

C. The Condition Of Mankind – Matthew 4:23

1. Man’s spiritual needs – Mark 8:36-37; Ephesians 4:18; Romans 5:10; John 3:36; 2 Corinthians 4:4.
2. Man’s intellectual needs – Language skills, Job skills, Agricultural expertise, etc.
3. Man’s physical needs – Matthew 4:4 (“alone”), 12:4. Not by bread alone, but bread is one of man’s physical needs

THE FATE OF THE HEATHEN

A. All Men Are Lost Because of Sin

1. All have sinned and stand short (Romans 3:23). *“. . . for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God . . .”*
2. All are children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3). *“. . . among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest . . .”*
3. All are under condemnation (Romans 3:19-20).
4. All have a rendezvous with death and judgment (Hebrews 9:27). *“Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment. . .”*
5. All are lost and need to be saved (John 3:3; Acts 11:13-14).
6. The condition of the lost – they are:
 - a. Dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). *“And you did he make*

- alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins . . .”*
- b. Alienated from the life of God (Ephesians 2:12). “*That ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*”
 - c. Ignorant of the truth of God (Romans 1:25). “. . . for that they exchanged **the truth of God for a lie**, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator . . .”
 - d. Hostile to the law of God (Romans 8:7). “. . . because the mind of the flesh is **enmity against God**; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be.”
 - e. Disobedient to the will of God (Titus 3:3). “*For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.*”
 - f. Exposed to the wrath of God (John 3:36). “. . .but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for **God's wrath remains on him.**”
 - g. Naturalized in the unnatural and love darkness rather than light (John 3:19). “*And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil.*”
7. Three pictures of the lostness of the lost (Luke 15).
- a. The coin – helplessly lost.
 - b. The sheep – heedlessly lost.
 - c. The sons – willfully lost.

B. All Men Are Eternally Lost Because of Sin

- 1. Bible clearly teaches that there are two eternally destinies open to man.
 - a. Everlasting happiness in the presence of God and the holy angels (Luke 15:10; Matthew 25:34; 1 Thessalonians 4:17).
 - b. Everlasting misery in the company of the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).
- 2. Bible speaks of **two gates** – one strait, the other wide; **two ways** – one narrow, the other broad; **two destinies** – one life, the other destruction (Matthew 7:13-14).
- 3. In the Resurrection, there will be a separation between the just and the unjust – two eternal destinies (Acts 24:15).
- 4. The word “**gehenna**” (hell) occurs twelve times in the New Testament: eleven times from the lips of Jesus.
- 5. Jesus taught the love of God as no one else has ever done. He also spoke of sin, wrath, death, and judgment (John 3).
- 6. Christianity has two symbols: the cross and the throne. One speaks of love; the other of judgment. God does not force His love on anyone.
- 7. The man who rejects God’s love exposes himself to His wrath (Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:3-5; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

8. Even if Christ's words about hell are symbolic, they are symbolic of something; and whatever it is, it must be unspeakably awful to require such symbols to express it.

C. The Possibility of A Second Chance After Death

1. Jesus says, "NO!"(Luke 16:19-31). The story of the rich man and the poor beggar, Lazarus.
2. Hebrew writer says, "NO!"(Hebrews 9:27-28). "*Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*"

D. The Heathen Are Lost. (i.e., those who have never heard the gospel).

1. They were not "heathen" to begin with (Romans 1:21-23).
2. In their progressive apostasy, they did not lose all knowledge of God (Romans 1:18-20).
3. The revelation of God through creation is supplemented by another revelation through nature or providence (Acts 14:17).
4. There is still another form of revelation given to the heathen: the human conscience (Romans 2:14-15).
5. Man will be judged not because he has not heard the gospel but by the knowledge of God and His law that he possesses (Romans 2:12-16).
6. Man is not lost because he has not heard the gospel. He is lost because he is in sin! The gospel is that which tells him of the One that can save him from his lostness.

THE MISSIONARY TASK

A. The Missionary Task Is A *Spiritual* Task

1. Essentially and ultimately the missionary task is committed unto the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Salvation originated in the eternal counsel of God, as salvation was procured historically in the person and work of Christ, the eternal Son of God.
 - b. The administration and actualization of salvation have been committed to the Holy Spirit.
2. This is apparent in the book of Acts, as we shall see more fully later.
 - a. His instrument is the Word of God.
 - b. His agents are the church of Christ and individual members who are called out for specific mission services.
3. The fact that missions essentially is a ministry of the Holy Spirit is both a comfort and a challenge to us.
 - a. It is a comfort in that we may trust Him fully to accomplish His work.

- b. A challenge in that only Spirit-filled people, Spirit-sanctioned means, and Spirit-approved methods can be used effectively in mission ministries.

B. The Missionary Task Is A *Biblical* Task

- 1. A sound Bible teacher will also be a missions teacher, for missions, as we have already seen, is imbedded in the total thrust of the Word of God (Romans 10:17).
 - a. A genuine revival of biblical missions can come only from a genuine revival of biblical theology.
 - b. Missions not founded upon sound biblical interpretation will be sporadic and erratic – it will ultimately fail.
- 2. What is true for the task is also true for the teacher. We are not sent to better the conditions of the world. We are sent to give the apostolic witness to Jesus to effect the salvation of as many as possible.
 - a. We receive our assignment from our Captain in His changeless Word.
 - b. We find both our message and our assignment in God's Word because the missionary task is a biblical task.

C. The Missionary Task Is A Task Of *Faith*

- 1. Faith, based upon evidence, is the spiritual eye that beholds God.
 - a. Faith that perceives in Christ the Savior and Lord;
 - b. Faith that understands the Bible to be the Word of God;
 - c. Faith that accepts the missionary task as the purpose and will of God;
 - d. Faith that discovers missions as the natural result of the work of Christ;
 - e. Faith that finds missions is an inherent element of the call unto salvation and the obedience to the gospel of Christ.
- 2. Men of faith are not grown in a theological hotbed or an ecclesiastical organization, but neither do they come up in a vacuum.
 - a. They prosper only in the presence of God, in a walk with God, and in the battles of life. Men of this quality are rare, yet they are desperately needed.
 - b. Only men of genuine faith can do real faith work and will leave their mark in a world of unbelief.
 - c. World-overcoming faith, is a quality demanded of the modern missionary, at home and abroad. Only faith will lead to triumphant success in Christ.

D. The Missionary Task Is A *Human* Task

- 1. God has chosen **human** instruments to accomplish His task in **human** hearts within a **human** society surrounded by **human** environment.
- 2. Man is an interacting being. He most readily follows the leader of in-groups and submits to the authority of his own groups. Most men will only be

reached within the borders of their own culture. There are exceptions of course.

3. Culture adaptation is more than learning the language of the people among whom we labor. We need to know how they react emotionally when they are deeply touched or offended.
4. The human aspect of the missionary task is best demonstrated by our Lord and Savior Himself (Philippians 2:5-11). Compare Paul's statement of the need for identifying with the people we intend to reach (1 Corinthians 9:16-23).

CONCLUSION:

Our prayer is "Lord, make us intensely human that we might be used greatly!" Teach the gospel to someone today.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO

1. What is the missionary mandate based upon?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

2. What is the difference in the Western concept and the Eastern concept of discipleship?

3. Give at least four references from the scriptures that teach us that we are eternally lost without Christ.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

4. How is it possible that someone who has never had a chance to hear the gospel will be lost? _____

5. Discuss how the missionary mandate is spiritual? _____

6. What kind of faith is needed for the missionary task? _____

7. How is the human aspect of the missionary task best demonstrated? _____

8. Discuss the importance of cultural adaptation. _____

9. What is the key ingredient to Paul becoming all things to all men in 1 Corinthians 9:16-23? _____

10. What is the missionary spirit expressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:16? _____

LESSON THREE

THE GREAT COMMISSION

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson we will discuss several relationships the Great Commission sustains in our work of missions. The Great Commission is at the heart of any mission theology. We want to discover what is the real significance of Jesus' teaching and the teaching of the apostles in our task of taking the gospel to all the world.

LESSON AIM: To examine the relationship of the Great Commission to the church and its missions.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Examine the value and the nature of the Great Commission to the Christian religion.
 2. Discover that there are two imperatives that give the Great Commission direction.
 3. Learn six things that describe the great purpose of the Commission.
 4. Learn that the final outcome of the commission is a fully-made disciple revealed in seven identifiable life characteristics.
-

THE RELATIONSHIP TO MISSIONARY CHRISTIANITY

A. The Great Commission Is Not an Isolated Command Arbitrarily Imposed upon Christianity

1. It is a logical summation and natural outflow of:
 - a. The character of God as He is revealed in the Scriptures.
 - b. Of the missionary purpose.
 - c. The thrust of God as unfolded in the Old Testament.
 - d. In the historically incarnated person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The fulfilling of this commission is the work of the Holy Spirit from the day of Pentecost onward in and through the church of Jesus Christ as made known in the book of Acts and the epistles.

B. The Great Commission Does Not Make Christianity a Missionary Religion

1. The apostles became missionaries not because of a commission but because Christianity is what it is and because of the indwelling Holy Spirit who is

- an out-going and witnessing Spirit (John 15:26, 16:8-15).
2. The Commission, and the work it urges, prospers wherever Christianity is truly known, thoroughly believed, genuinely experienced, and implicitly obeyed.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GREAT COMMISSION TEACHING

A. The Value of the Great Commission

1. While it does not create new duties for Christianity, it sharply focuses the missionary thrust and responsibility of Christianity beyond reasonable doubt.
2. Its singularity as a command of the risen Lord marks it as unique among His words.
 - a. This makes it more than just another assignment among many.
 - b. Its restatement in some form by all the gospel writers also makes it unique.

B. The Composite Nature of the Commission

1. Matthew 28:18-20 – the authority, all-inclusive goal and the time-extension of the work.
2. Mark 16:15, 16 – the urgency, method and geographical scope of the work.
3. Luke 24:24-49 – the Christo-centric message and universality of the work.
4. John 20:20-23 – the spiritual equipment and the spiritual nature of the work.

C. The Scope and Pattern of the Commission

1. An analysis of the Great Commission will reveal two imperatives that give it direction.
 - a. In Matthew 28:18 it is “make disciples.”
 - b. In Mark 16:15 it is “preach the gospel.”
2. There are no imperative verbs in either Luke or John. However, there is a scriptural (“thus it is written”) and spiritual (“receive the Spirit”) force in back of these words. The dynamic of the Word and the Spirit takes the place of the imperative.
3. The all-inclusive goal of the commission is to “make disciples” of all nations.

NOTE: A disciple is a “sold out” person. Jesus is supreme to him. Everything in life is centered in Jesus.

D. In Order to Accomplish this Purpose, We must Do Several Things

1. We must engage in an intensive and extensive **proclamation of the gospel**. We must communicate meaningfully and persuasively the good news of salvation.

2. We must lead people into an **experience of the grace of God** made available through the finished work of Christ upon the cross, i.e., show it.
3. We must **separate people from their old attachments** to this sinful world and build them into the new family of God, the Church, through the practice of baptism preceded by and followed by teaching (Matthew 28:19, 20).
4. We must teach them the value and greatness of the **gift and gifts of the Holy Spirit** and lead them out in a walk and ministry in obedience to and in dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
5. We must **indoctrinate them in the precepts of the Master** and by the *renewing of their minds* mold them into true Christian disciples.

E. The Theological Significance of the Commission

1. The sovereignty of the Lord – “*All authority. . . has been given to Me.*” (Matthew. 28:18; cf. Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 3:7).
2. The imperative of the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-47).
3. The universality of the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-47; Acts 1:8).
4. The nature of the gospel (Luke 24:46-47; John 20:23; Acts 26:15-23; cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-3).
5. The human instrumentality in the proclamation of the gospel (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8; 26:16).
6. The need of spiritual equipment to minister successfully in the gospel (Matthew 28:20; Luke 24:48; John 20:22; Acts 1:8).

E. The Great Purpose of the Commission

1. It identifies the believer.
It constitutes an identification of the believers with Christ in accomplishing the divine purpose as unfolded in the missionary thrust of the Old Testament incarnated in their Lord and Savior.
2. It authoritatively states the Christian duty of world evangelization.
3. It defines and delineates the missionary task. It is our compass, charter, and plan.
4. It states *one central concern* of Christ – concern of World Evangelization.
5. It declares *one central purpose* – purpose of gathering a people for the name of the Lord from among the nations to constitute the body of Christ, His bride.
6. It prescribes one *central strategy*– the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ by Spirit-equipped witnesses making disciples among all nations.

F. The Final Outcome of the Commission

A fully-made disciple – a believing person:

1. Living a life of conscious and constant *identification* with Christ

- a. In life, death, and resurrection (baptism).
- b. In words, behavior, attitudes, motives, and purposes (the new walk).
- 2. Fully realizing Christ's absolute *ownership* of His life.
- 3. Joyfully embracing the "*saviorhood*" of Christ.
- 4. Delighting in the *lordship* of Christ.
- 5. Living by the abiding, indwelling *resources* of Christ.
- 6. According to the imprinted *pattern* and purpose of Christ.
- 7. Existing for the chief end of *glorifying* his Lord and Savior.

CONCLUSION:

The Great Commission, as recorded by all four evangelists, presents a comprehensive and detailed pattern of our missionary task. The Great Commission does not spell out all the duties of the church in this world or the total mission of the church. It concerns itself primarily with the outreach of the church into the world of the unchurched people, whoever and wherever they may be.

Remember what Jesus said, "*Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.*" That's why He came. That's why we came into Christ.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:

1. The Great Commission is the logical summation and natural flow of what four things?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

2. Discuss how the Great Commission does not make Christianity a missionary religion.

3. What makes the Great Commission unique? _____

4. Give the composite nature of the Commission in each of the gospels.
 - 1) Matthew 28:18-20 _____

 - 2) Mark 16:15-16 _____

 - 3) Luke 24:24-49 _____

 - 4) John 20:20-23 _____

5. Give the two imperatives of the Great Commission that give it direction.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

6. What is the all-inclusive goal of the Great Commission? _____

7. Discuss how the Great Commission is a means of identifying the believer.

8. Give the seven areas that define the final outcome of the commission.
 - 1) _____

- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____

9. Discuss the one central concern of Christ in the commission.

10. Discuss how we often become distracted and misdirected from our commission.

LESSON FOUR

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

(Part One)

INTRODUCTION

The Christian missionary has but one message – the gospel. He has but one task – the communicating of the gospel to every creature in the world, so that the one who would be saved can be. Since the only avenue to God is through Jesus Christ and the gospel of Christ the, obligation of every Christian is to transmit that saving good news to all of creation.

LESSON AIM: To explore the nature of the Gospel as to its origin, its content and its outreach.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See that the Gospel is of Divine origin being from the will of God, planned in His love, and promised in the Scriptures.
 2. Be aware that the center and content of the Gospel is Messianic.
 3. See that the thrust of the Gospel is reaching out to lost mankind – man is the Gospel's object.
-

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

A. The Divine Origin

1. The gospel is not from man – Galatians 1:11-12 (Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:3; 11:23).
 - a. The gospel was not man-made. “. . . *the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.*”
 - b. The gospel was not man-revealed. “*For I did not receive it from any man . . .*”
 - c. The gospel was not man-taught. “. . . *nor was I taught it . . .*”
 - d. The gospel was received from God. “. . . *but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*”
2. God willed it in His Sovereignty – 1 Peter 1:19-20; Ephesians 1:3-5.
3. God planned it in His Love – 1 John 4:8 w/John 3:16.
4. God promised it in the Scriptures – Galatians 3:8; Romans 1:2.

5. God provided it in Christ – John 1:17; Romans 3:21-25.

- B. The Messianic Content or Center.** The Gospel has many facts, but only one theme: Christ (1 Corinthians 2:2). Compare Acts 2:24; 4:2-3; 5:27-28; 8:5, 35: 9:20; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 5:18-20.
1. Count Zinzendorf of Austria commented: “The heathen already know of the existence of God. What they need to hear about is the love of Christ.” The crucial question is: “What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is he?”
 2. His Person – The New Testament teaches, and the early church believed, that Jesus Christ is a unique person having two natures, one human and the other divine (Cf. Romans 1:3-4; Philippians 2:6-7).
 - a. The Christian creed is simple: **Jesus Christ Is Lord!**
 - 1) Jesus is His human name and expresses His humanity.
 - 2) Christ is His divine name and express His Deity.
 - 3) Lord is His title and reflects His divine right and expresses the fact that He is Master.
 - b. The incarnation was the greatest event in the history of the world. It remains to this day the greatest mystery of the Christian faith (1 Timothy 3:16). *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; He who was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the spirit, Seen of angels, Preached among the nations, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.”*
 - c. God, the eternal, immortal, invisible One, wrapped Himself in the mantle of our humanity and appeared on earth in the humble guise of human flesh.
 - d. God, the Almighty One, became the Babe of Bethlehem and fled to Egypt to escape the wrath of an earthly potentate.
 - e. God, the Timeless One, broke into time and for thirty-three years was subject to the laws and limitations of time and space.
 - f. God, the Architect of the universe, became the Carpenter of Nazareth and mended broken furniture for the people next door.
 - g. God, the Creator, Sustainer, and Possessor of all things, became a penniless preacher, dependent for His daily bread on the charity of others.
 - h. At the same time He is “King of kings and Lord of lords.” The deity of Christ is fundamental to the Christian faith.
 - I. Deny the deity of Christ and with it lose the way of salvation, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting.
 - j. Jesus Christ is both Son of God and Son of Man. Both facts are essential parts of the Gospel.

C. The Human Outreach. While Christ is the theme of the gospel, man is its

object.

1. Man is the sole candidate for salvation. Man alone was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).
2. The greatest sinner who ever lived is not beyond redemption. Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13).
3. Man in his sin is the object of God's pity and compassion. The two great truths of the gospel are – (1) God loves the world and (2) Christ died for all.
4. The cross is God's way of saying to a prodigal world, "I love you! Come home!" Study again the story of the lost son in Luke 15:11-32.

CONCLUSION:

God's love for us is the heart of the gospel. The theme of the gospel is Jesus and Him crucified. This is at the heart of every message to be found preached by the apostles in the book of Acts. It is the heart of every message to the church to mature them in every one of the epistles written. The reason Jesus lived and died is for people. It is people that are at the heart of God. This is missionary. May God give us the strength and the love to bring people to Jesus.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR:

1. Give two scriptures which states the origin of the gospel and give the four actions of God that brought the gospel into being.

Two scriptures: _____

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

2. What is the two-fold nature of Christ? _____

3. What does Christ become to us because of His two-fold nature? _____

4. Discuss the importance of teaching the two-fold nature of Christ to the world.

5. Who is the object of God's gospel? _____

6. Discuss the one ingredient needed for us to take the gospel into a lost world.

7. Discuss how we can have a tendency to be like the elder brother of Luke 15.

LESSON FIVE

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

(Part Two)

INTRODUCTION:

Welcome back to our study of the Biblical Theology of Missions. We are in the midst of a study of the nature of the Christian gospel. In the last lesson we saw that the Christian gospel is Divine in its origin. Secondly, we noticed the Christo-centric nature of the gospel. It is Jesus and Him crucified. The object is the human outreach. It is Christ reaching out to sinners.

LESSON AIM: To explore the nature of the Gospel as to its dynamic operation and its universal appeal.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Examine the dynamic power of the Gospel and its relationship to lost mankind.
 2. Learn that the appeal of the Gospel is universal and offers salvation to all who would respond by faith.
-

THE DYNAMIC OPERATION OF THE GOSPEL

A. The Gospel Is the Power of God for Salvation (**Romans 1:16-17**)

1. The word “power” (Gk. *dunamis*) refers to the dynamic God uses to bring salvation to all men who have faith.
2. The single requirement is to believe.
 - a. To believe is more than mental ascent. “*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder*” (James 2:19).
 - b. It has various usages, but in one African translation (where it is used to refer to faith in Christ) it means “***to put your full weight down upon Christ.***”
 - c. This requires doing all Jesus commands us to do.
3. Compare John 5:24, 10:10, 4:10, 6:48; Romans 8:2.
 - a. John 5:24 – “*I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has*

crossed over from death to life.”

- b. John 10:10 – “*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*”

B. Modern Man Cannot Free Himself

- 1. Modern man is well aware that he is in a predicament from which he cannot free himself.
- 2. He doesn’t seem to know the reason for his problem.
- 3. He blames it on the system, the establishment, his environment, anything – everything – but himself.

C. Man Needs To Be Converted

- 1. “Born anew... of the water and the Spirit” is the way Jesus put it (John 3:3, 5). *“In reply Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.’ ”*
- 2. Then man becomes a “... new creation; the old has passed away, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

NOTE: This does not mean that the gospel answers all of man’s questions. But it does solve the problem of sin – including its penalty and power. It also dispels man’s greatest fear – death (cf. Romans 6-8).

D. It Also Dispels Man’s Greatest Fear – The Fear of Death

THE UNIVERSAL APPEAL – IT’S FOR ALL

A. The World Of Jesus’ Day Was Rigidly Divided

- 1. The Jews divided the world into two camps: Them and the gentiles.
- 2. The Greeks divided the world into two camps: Them and the barbarians.
- 3. The Romans divided the world into two groups: Them and non-citizens.
- 4. It is still divided today.

B. The Great Word Of The Gospel Is “Whosoever”

- 1. Used by Jesus in John 3:16. *“For God so loved the world that WHOSOEVER believes . . .”*
- 2. Used by Paul in Romans 10:13. *“. . . for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*
- 3. Revelation 22:17 – *“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.”*

C. The Gospel Insists On Two Things

1. That God loved the world (John 3:16).
2. That Jesus died for all men (2 Corinthians 5:15; 1 Timothy 4:10). “*For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe.*”
- a. In God’s sight there is no difference between Jew and Greek, or any other race or nationality, for “*the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him*” (Romans 10:12).
- b. Jesus acknowledged that salvation was from the Jews (John 4:22; cf. Romans 15:27), but not exclusively for the Jews.
- c. Though He sent His men only to the Jews (Matthew 10:5-6), He insisted that the field is the world (Matthew 13:38); and when He gave His disciples their marching orders for the entire age, He instructed them to go into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature and to make disciples of all nations.

D. Four Great Facts Are Implied in the Universal Appeal of the Gospel

1. The effect of sin is universal (Romans 3:23).
2. The offer of salvation is universal (Acts 2:21; 1 Timothy 2:24; 2 Peter 3:9).
3. The command to repent is universal (Acts 17:30).
4. The invitation to believe is universal (Romans 10:9-11).

CONCLUSION:

God wants you to be saved no matter who you are. If you are saved, God wants you saving. He wants you living the gospel, teaching the gospel, and preaching the gospel. The next person you and I meet is the next person we need to talk to about Jesus. The last person we meet is the last person we need to talk to about Jesus. May God help us to be His missionary for the Gospel of Christ.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:

1. What does the word “power” refer to in Romans 1:16? _____

2. Give the African translation of the word “faith.” _____

3. Discuss what is involved with the single requirement of faith.

4. What three things are included in Christ solving out sin problem?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

5. What is the great word of the gospel that gives it universal appeal? _____

6. Give the four facts implied in the universal appeal of the gospel.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

7. Discuss how modern man sees himself in a predicament. How does he manifest his own feeble attempts to free himself.

LESSON SIX

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

(Part Three)

INTRODUCTION:

We are studying the nature of the Christian gospel as it relates to the task of preaching the gospel to every creature. We've studied the origin of the gospel. It came by revelation (Galatians 1:12). The second thing we studied was the Christo-centric nature of the gospel (1 Corinthians 2:2). We saw that every sermon in the book of Acts contained the theme of death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The object of that gospel is the human outreach. Then we looked at the dynamic operation of the gospel (Romans 1:16). In the fifth place, we saw the universal appeal. All men have sinned. Now we will see yet another part of the nature of the gospel.

LESSON AIM: To see that sin has both personal and communal consequences as God holds both the individual and community responsible for obedience to His commands.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that sin and guilt are primarily personal and individual as is faith and salvation.
 2. Learn that the Gospel is so revolutionary that it is easy for modern man to simply ignore it.
 3. Discover that at the heart of the gospel is the concept of self-denial.
-

THE PERSONAL APPLICATION

A. Sin Has Social Implications

1. It is true that men live together in communities, and sin does have social implications.
2. Cities and nations have come under the judgment of God because sin became so rampant that everyone was involved.
 - a. Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18 – 19).
 - b. The inhabitants of Canaan (Genesis 15:16, et. al.).
 - c. Other nations such as Assyria, Babylon and even Israel.
3. This is the background of much that the prophets had to say in the Old Testament.

B. Sin and Guilt Are Primarily Personal and Individual

- C. **Faith and Salvation Are Also Personal and Individual.** Each man must decide whether to accept or reject Jesus Christ.
1. Acts 20:31 – Each individual person is warned of the coming judgment.
 2. Ephesians 4:7 – Each individual is given gifts to exercise for the cause of Christ.
 3. Colossians 1: 28 – “*Admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom.*”
 4. Philippians 2:10-11, “*Every knee will bow . . . and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.*”
 5. 2 Corinthians 5:10 – “*. . . that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*”
 6. 1 Corinthians 3:13 – “*. . . each man’s work shall be made manifest . . .*”

THE REVOLUTIONARY IMPLICATIONS – ACTS 17:6

A. There Are Two Aspects to the Gospel

1. The good news that God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself and not counting their sins against them anymore – “*. . . that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation*” (2 Corinthians 5:19).
2. In its fullness the gospel embraces everything Jesus taught – “*. . . and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*” (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).

B. At the Heart of the Gospel Is the Concept of Self-denial (Luke 14:25- 33; Philippians 2:4-8; John 12:24). “*If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple*” (Luke 14:26).

1. The word “hate” in Luke 14 simply means “to love less.”
 - a. Discipleship demands an **Unrivaled love**.
 - b. Discipleship demands an **Unceasing dying**.
 - c. Discipleship requires an **Unqualified renunciation**.
2. Self-denial is the exact opposite of the self-indulgence so characteristic of western civilization.
3. Many of Jesus’ sayings are so revolutionary that few Christians have bothered to take them seriously.
 - a. Matthew 10:37,39 – “*Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.*”

- b. Luke 9:23 – “*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*”
 - c. See also: Matthew 5:5; Acts 20:35; Luke 7:27-30; 12:32-33).
4. Few Christians in affluent America have paid any attention to the sayings of Jesus.
- a. Luke 12:15 – “*Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.*”
 - b. Matthew 6:19-21 – “*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.*”
 - c. Luke 14:12-14 – “*When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid.*”
- (See also John 13:14; Matthew 23:11; Matthew 15:8-9; Luke 6:46).

CONCLUSION:

When we are persecuted because of Christ, we can leap for joy because we have a reward in heaven. We have joined the company of all the great prophets and preachers of God. The gospel is revolutionary. If we tone it down so that it's no longer offensive to man, it will no longer be good news. Wicked people will hate the gospel and the gospel preacher, but it's all that will save mankind. It is exclusively the word and will of God. Find someone today and tell them what it cost to be a Christian. Tell them the promises and blessings when they do.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX

1. What implications does sin involve? Discuss your answer. _____

2. What do sin, guilt, faith, and salvation all have in common? _____

3. What decision must each person in the world make? _____

4. Discuss what Jesus says is at the heart of the gospel.

5. What are the two aspects of the gospel that make it revolutionary?

- 1) _____
2) _____

6. Discuss the following as it relates to our lives in Christ.

1) Unrivaled love._____

2) Unceasing dying._____

3) Unqualified renunciation._____

LESSON SEVEN

THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

(Part Four)

INTRODUCTION

In our study of the nature of the gospel we have seen seven things thus far which point out its uniqueness. These seven characteristics of the gospel are important for anyone who would place their trust in the saving word of God and His son. As you read through the list again please remember we are dealing with eternity and eternal destinies.

1. It's Divine Origin. The Gospel is not from men
 - a. The gospel was not man-made.
 - b. The gospel was not man-revealed.
 - c. The gospel was not man-taught.
 - d. The gospel was received from God by revelation.
2. It's Messianic Content. The Gospel has but one theme: Christ.
3. The Human Outreach. Man is the object of the Gospel – the sole candidate for salvation.
4. The Dynamic Operation. The Gospel is the dynamic power of God exercised for the salvation of lost mankind.
5. It is Universal. The Gospel was from the Jews, but not exclusively for the Jews but encompassed all mankind.
6. It is Personal and Individual. Not nationalistic but for individuals.
7. It is Revolutionary. In its concepts and commands.

In this last lesson of the nature of the gospel, we have two points to consider.

LESSON AIM: To understand the uniqueness of the claims of the gospel, and how its claims impact our lives.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn of the exclusive claims concerning the gospel and the religion which is produced through that gospel.
 2. See that the truth unites all who accept it but alienates all who reject it.
-

THE EXCLUSIVE CLAIMS

- A. Christianity Claims to Be the One and Only True Religion**
- B. The God of the Bible Is the Only True and Living God**
 (1 Thessalonians 1:9; and all other gods are dumb idols 1 Corinthians 12:2).
“Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led” (1 Corinthians 12:2, KJV).
- C. There Is Only One Mediator Between God and Man, the Man Jesus Christ**
 (1 Timothy 2:5-6). *“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.”*
- D. Jesus Claimed To Be The Son Of God In A Unique Sense.** His words were understood, though rejected, by His enemies (John 5:17-19; 10:31-33; 19:7).
- E. Other Unique Claims Jesus Made Of Himself**
 1. To know the mind of God – *“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him”* (Matthew 11:27).
 2. To speak the words of God – *“For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it”* (John 12:49).
 3. To do the works of God – *“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does”* (John 5:19).
 4. To be the bread of life – *“I am the bread of life”* (John 6:48).
 5. To be the light of the world – *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life”* (John 8:12).
 6. To be the way, truth, life – *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”* (John 14:6).
 7. To be older than Abraham – *“I tell you the truth, ’Jesus answered, ‘before Abraham was born, I am!’”* (John 8:58).
 8. To be wiser than Solomon – *“The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here”* (Matthew 12:42).
 9. To possess all authority in Heaven and on earth – *“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me’”* (Matthew 28:18).
 10. To forgive sins – *“But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority*

on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10).

11. To bestow eternal life – “*For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him*” (John 17:2).
12. To execute judgment – “*And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man*” (John 5:27).

F. The Apostles Understood His Claims.

1. **No other name** – “*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12).
2. **No other foundation** – “*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ*” (1 Corinthians 3:11).
3. **No other mediator** – “*For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*” (1 Timothy 2:5).
4. **No other gospel** – “*But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!*” (Galatians 1:6-9).

NOTE: The missionary is not in a popularity contest. Nor is he/she interested in “proving a point” or “thrusting his belief on others.” Having found new life in Christ, they have a passionate desire to share the Good News with the whole world. *Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where the only Bread can be found.*

THE DECISIVE RESULTS

There is a tragic side to the good news.

“*Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.’ ”* (Matthew 10:34-36; See also Micah 7:6)

A. Jesus Warned His Disciples – (Contrast with Christmas Card Christianity).

1. He did not come to bring peace to the earth.
2. The gospel will cause disruptions in relationships.
3. Compare Acts 14:22 – “*We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.*”
4. We will suffer persecution – “*In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted*” (2 Timothy 3:12).

NOTE: Missionaries have been severely criticized (Especially by anthropologists) for taking converts out of their natural habitat and alienating them from their friends and relatives, making life unnecessarily hard for them, to say nothing of disrupting the social life of the community. It is not always peaceful to be a Christian.

This in a few cases may be the result of unwise approach. But most of the time it is neither the missionary nor the convert that is to blame. The gospel is the decisive factor. It is because of the uniqueness of the demands of the gospel.

B. The Truth Unites All Who Accept it but Alienates All That Reject it

1. Those who reject it end up persecuting those who accept it.
2. The community demands conformity and is prepared to punish those who get too far out of line.
3. In Islam, the “Law of Apostasy” permits the community to kill any member who defects from the faith. At the least, he loses his job and even his family. It is not the Christian convert who rejects his Muslim friends and family, it is the Muslim family that repudiates him. The same is true of other religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, et al.

NOTE: The gospel is designed to divide the saved sinners from the lost sinners. Its purpose is to reconcile all sinners to God through Jesus Christ! There is no other way for this to be accomplished. *“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile”* (Romans 1:16).

CONCLUSION:

Let's take this saving gospel into the entire world so that men will be saved and those that won't will be eternally damned by their own rejection of the gospel.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:

1. What are the unique claims of the following?
 - 1) Christianity? _____
 - 2) The God of the Bible? _____
 - 3) Jesus of Nazareth? _____

2. What should be at the heart of every disciple? _____

3. What four things did the apostles understand about the claims of Christ?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

4. Discuss how the claims of Christ are unique compared to the world's religions.

5. What is the tragic side of the good news? _____

6. Discuss our response to a world that demands conformity.

7. Is the gospel designed to bring death or to bring life? _____

LESSON EIGHT

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

INTRODUCTION

The notion that one religion is true and the others are – to a lesser or greater degree – false, is hardly in keeping with the insights of anthropology. According to the gospel of anthropology, religion is a purely social phenomenon, an integral part of culture. It is safe to say that the most offensive aspect of twentieth-century Christianity is its exclusiveness. Most of the great ethnic religions of the world hold certain doctrines in common. Most of them believe in the existence of a Supreme Being. They possess sacred scriptures. They have a well-defined system of salvation. They believe in life after death. They have a system of ethics. They have human founders for whom they make certain claims. They have a priestly caste and religious orders. But, except for Islam, they are not exclusive.

LESSON AIM: To point out certain features of Christianity which, taken together, render it unique.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Examine six characteristics of Jehovah God which point out His uniqueness.
 2. Investigate six things which express the uniqueness of Christ.
 3. Learn of five truths about the salvation provided by this unique God.
 4. Discover several elements which set the Scriptures of God apart from all other so-called sacred writings.
-

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

A. He Is an Eternal Being

1. He is self-existent and therefore eternal (Exodus 3:14; Deuteronomy 32:40).
2. All else exists because He willed its existence (Colossians 1:16-17).
3. He alone exists necessarily from eternity to eternity (John 1:1).

B. He Is a Personal Being

1. He is eternally separate and distinct from all other beings.
2. He possesses the power of self-determination.
3. He can love (John 3:16) and be loved (Matthew 22:37).

C. He Is an Infinite Being

1. His attributes are infinite.
 - a. He is *all* good (Exodus 34:6).
 - b. He is *all* wise (Romans 11:33)
 - c. He is *all* powerful (Isaiah 40:18-26).
2. He fills heaven (Isaiah 66:1) and earth as well (Psalm 139:7-10).

NOTE: He is not merely more wise, more just, and more good than any other being; He is infinitely wise, infinitely just, and infinitely good. He is both imminent (Acts 17:27-28) and transcendent (Isaiah 55:8-9) at the same time. His only limitations are those imposed on Him by His very nature.

D. He Is a Moral Being

1. The Greek gods were more immoral than their followers. This is not so with Jehovah.
2. He loves righteousness and hates iniquity (Hebrews 11:9).
3. He is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works (Psalms 145:17).
4. He is both light (1 John 1:5) and love (1 John 4:8). His love is a holy love. His holiness glows with love and His love burns with holiness.
5. He is a holy God (Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 6:3) and demands holiness of all His people (Leviticus 19:2; Hebrews 12:14).

E. He Exists in Three Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

1. They are three persons but only one God (Matthew 28:19).
2. All three persons are eternally coequal in wisdom, love, and power. Each has all the powers and prerogatives of the other two.
3. All three persons have been and are engaged in the works of creation, redemption, and judgment.

F. He Has Revealed Himself to Man

1. He is not far off.
2. He does not hide Himself.
3. He delights in the sons of men (Proverbs 8:31).
4. He has revealed Himself in the creation (Romans 1:19-20).
 - a. In the conscience (Romans 2:14-15).
 - b. Through His written word (Hebrews 1:1; cf. John 1:14).

NOTE: No other religion has a God who possesses all these characteristics. The Christian God, therefore, is unique.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

The uniqueness of Christ finds expression in the following six things.

A. His Virgin Birth

Explicitly taught in two of the four gospels – Matthew and Luke.

1. He was neither a giant or mental prodigy (Luke 2:52). The writer who gives the most details concerning the virgin birth is Luke, a physician.
2. The virgin birth was not added simply to embellish the story. It is an essential part of the miracle of the incarnation (Luke 1:35).

B. His Sinless Character

1. He knew no sin – 2 Corinthians 5:21.
2. He did not revile – 1 Peter 2:22.
3. His friends testified of this – 1 John 3:5.
4. His enemies testified of this – Luke 23:41; John 8: 46; 19:4-6.

C. His Atoning Death

1. Without sin Himself, He died for the sins of others (Romans 5:8).
2. He died not as a prophet, or a reformer, or even as a martyr.
3. He died as a Savior, *the only Savior of the world* (1 Peter 3:18).
4. He gave His life and shed His blood for the remission of sins (Matthew 26:28).
5. In death as well as in life He occupied a solitary throne.

D. His Victorious Resurrection

1. The resurrection accounts given by the four evangelists bear all the earmarks of a true story. (Read Matthew 27:62 – 28:15.)
2. They (the accounts) are all the more remarkable because the disciples never expected to see Him alive again and refused to believe the reports of the resurrection until they had seen Him with their own eyes.
3. When they finally preached “Jesus and the resurrection,” “they sealed their testimony with their own blood.”
 - a. To say they fabricated the story is sheer nonsense.
 - b. To say that they believed something that did not actually happen is also nonsense.

E. His Ascension into Heaven

1. The resurrection and the ascension of Christ are treated in Paul’s letters as two phases of one climactic event.
 - a. God raised Him from the dead.
 - b. God exalted Him to His own right hand, far above all principality and power and might and dominion (Ephesians 1:20-21; Philippians 2:9-10).
2. Christ is now:
 - a. *The Prince of Life* (Acts 3:13).
 - b. *The Lord of Glory* (1 Corinthians 2:8).
 - c. *Head of the Church* (Colossians 1:18).
 - d. *He sits at God’s right hand, able to save* (Hebrews 7:25).
 - e. *He has all power in heaven and on earth* (Matthew 28:18).

3. His second coming
 - a. To gather the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).
 - b. To judge the wicked (Matthew 25:31-46).

NOTE: The birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ are all of one piece. They are like His seamless robe, woven from the top throughout. Remove any one of them and the whole fabric is destroyed. The influence of His character, the content of His teaching, and the nature of His death all show Jesus to be unique!

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

- A. **Salvation Is the Gift of God, Not the Work of Man** (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Isaiah 55:1).
- B. **Salvation Is Rooted in Morality**
 1. God is a holy God.
 2. He justifies the sinner (Romans 3:26). Notice some great laws of redemption.
 - a. “*The soul that sins shall die*” (Ezekiel 18:20).
 - b. “*Without the shedding of blood there is no remission*” (Hebrews 9:22).
 - c. “*It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins*” (Hebrews 10:4).
 - d. “*He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption*” (Hebrews 9:12).
- C. **Salvation Is Always Deliverance from Sin – Both its Penalty and its Power**
 1. Penalty – Romans 3:21-26; 4:1-8; 5:1; 8:1-39.
 2. Power – Galatians 5:16-17, 18, 25; Romans 6:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- D. **Salvation Includes the Whole Man – Body, Soul, and Spirit – (1 Thessalonians 5:23)**
 1. The mind – Romans 12:2; Philippians 2:5; 2 Corinthians 10:5.
 2. The heart – Romans 5:5; Colossians 3:15; Hebrews 10:22.
 3. The will – Romans 7:9-25.
- E. **Salvation Is a Present Possession as Well as a Future Prospect**
 1. Christianity is the *only* religion that offers a here-and-now salvation.
 2. Buddhism and Hinduism teach the doctrine of *samsara* – reincarnation.
 3. Islam promises a sensual life in the after-life.
 4. Compare 1 John 2:12; 5:13; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:44; Philippians 3:21.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Several important elements set the Scriptures of God apart from all other so-called sacred writings.

A. The Human Element

1. There are sixty-six books by over forty authors. Though they wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16), each was permitted to retain his own vocabulary and style.
2. In spite of a vast array of writers stretching over a period of fifteen hundred years, there is in the Scriptures an amazing degree of unity.

B. The Historical Element

1. A large portion of both Testaments is taken up by history.
2. Frequent references are made to the great nations of antiquity: Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome.
3. The book of Acts is made up entirely of history: Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Herod Agrippa, Pontius Pilate, Caesar Augustus, Caiaphas, Gallio, and others are well-known figures in Roman history.
4. No other sacred scripture contain so many specific references to historical persons, places, and events.

C. The Messianic Element

Notice a few of the ways the Old Testament speaks of the coming messiah.

1. *Seed of Woman* – Genesis 3:15.
2. *Seed of Abraham* – Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:16.
3. *Tribe of Judah* – Genesis 49:10.
4. *House of David* – 2 Samuel 7:16.
5. *Born of a Virgin* – Isaiah 7:14.

D. The Dynamic Element

1. The Bible is a living book (Hebrews 4:12).
2. The Bible is a life-giving book (John 6:63; 3:5).

CONCLUSION:

You and I need to understand that we are not one among many in the marketplace for people's faith. We come with the only Christ, the only way, the only hope, and the only body of saved people in the entire world. It is our work. It is our task.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:

1. List the five unique characteristics of God.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____

2. Discuss how salvation is the gift of God._____

3. List the six expressions of the uniqueness of Christ.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

4. What two phases does Paul list as one climatic event in history regarding the ascension of Christ?

1) _____
2) _____

5. What will be the purpose of the Second Coming of Christ?

1) _____
2) _____

6. What makes salvation in Christ unique from “salvation” taught in world religions?_____

7. What are the four elements of the Bible that set it apart from all other so-called “holy books” of the world?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

8. Discuss the necessity for the Christ to be born of a virgin, and live a sinless life.

9. Discuss how the uniqueness of the gospel differs from religions of the world.

LESSON NINE

MISSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

(Part One)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to our study of the Theology of Missions. We are studying the Bible to see what it has to say about our preaching the gospel to all the world. The Book of Acts has been recognized for centuries as being the missionary book. It shows how the Gospel went from Jerusalem to Judea, to Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. It is called the Acts of the Apostles. This is a good title because the disciples were changed from being only disciples to being Apostles — emissaries of Christ. Within this book is also the reason why they changed, and the power by which they were able to take the Gospel into all the world.

LESSON AIM: To examine the reasons for the obvious transformation of the disciples to become apostles.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Study the events which contributed to the transformation of the disciples and four ways this change was manifested.
 2. Examine the witness of the disciples in relation to the content, nature and dynamic of that witness.
-

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE DISCIPLES

A. Events That Contributed To Their Change Recorded In Acts

1. The Resurrection – 2:29-36; 3:15; 10:39-41 (cf. John 20:20; Philippians 3:10-11, 12-14).
2. The Ascension – 1:9-11; 2:23; (cf. Hebrews 1:3; Ephesians 1:20-21). They saw Him visibly go into heaven and heard the promise that He would come again. They believed in the enthroned Christ.
3. The Pentecost – 2:1-4 (Power from the Spirit). The Spirit's coming and empowering on this special day.

B. The Change In The Disciples Was Manifested In Four Ways

1. A new insight into Scripture – They had a new perception of Scripture (Acts 2:17ff). Peter was able to explain Old Testament Scripture which before they did not understand such as Joel 2 and Psalms 16 (cf. Luke 24:25-27).
2. A new initiative in action – Acts 1:12-26; 4:32 – 5:11; 6:1-7.

- a. They had been fearful and confused.
- b. Now they had a new boldness and courage.
- 3. A new power in service. Compare Matthew 17:14-21 with the following:
 - a. Acts 3:1-10 – Peter and John healed sick.
 - b. Acts 16:16-18 – Paul cast out demons.
 - c. Acts 5:1-10 – They agreed with and participated with the Spirit as the covetous couple of Ananias and Sapphira were slain.
 - d. Acts 13:10-12 – Paul struck the opposer blind on the Isle of Malta.
 - e. Acts 9:36-42 – Peter by faith, raised Tabatha (Dorcas) back to life.
- 4. A new courage in witnessing – Compare John 20:19 with Acts 4:19-20, 29-30; 5:29, 42; 17:22-31.

NOTE: They were changed from fearful disciples to fearless apostles.

THE CONTENT OF THEIR WITNESS – JESUS!

One Single Theme; “*God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of that fact.*” This was not a matter of speculation for the apostles. They preached:

A. The Identity of His Person – Seen in:

- 1. The prophecies of the Old Testament – Acts 3:18; 17:23; 13:27-29.
- 2. The mighty works in his ministry – Acts 2:22-23; 10:37-38 (cf. John 10:24-26; 15:24; Luke 24:19; John 3:2; Matthew 11:2-6).

B. The Nature of His Death

- 1. Died in 30 A. D. (History).
- 2. Died for our sins (Revelation).
- 3. Pilate saw His death as a victory for him (Pilate).
- 4. The disciples first thought it to be tragedy – Matthew 16:22; Luke 24:21; John 21:3.
- 5. Later learned it to be triumph – Acts 2:29-36, 10:39-43 (1 Peter 1:18-20, 2:24, 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:21ff).

C. The Fact of His Resurrection. Without the resurrection, Jesus’ death would be just like that of Socrates or any other man (1 Corinthians 15:7).

- 1. The essence of their witness.
 - a. To the Jews in Jerusalem – Acts 4:2, “*They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.*”
 - b. To the Gentiles in Caesarea – Acts 10:40, “*. . . but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.*”
 - c. To the philosophers in Athens – Acts 17:31, “*He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.*”
 - d. In defense before Felix – Acts 24:15, 21, “*It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.*”

- e. In defense before Felix – Acts 24:15, “*. . . and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*”
- f. In defense before Agrippa – Acts 26:8, 23, “*Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?*”
- 2. The resurrection meant the following.
 - a. The resurrection was the dynamic fact in their existence – Read Ephesians 1:15-20.
 - b. The resurrection meant they were new creatures – “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation*” (2 Corinthians 5:17).
 - c. The resurrection meant they have new purpose in life – “*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain*” (Philippians 1:21).
 - d. The resurrection meant they have a new concern for others – “*For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers . . .*” (Romans 9:3).
 - e. Because of the resurrection they have a new obsession in life – “*I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead*” (Philippians 3:10-11).
 - f. They were prepared to die – “*I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus*” (Acts 21:13).

D. The Hope Of His Return (John 14-16).

- 1. Acts 1:11 – As He went; He is coming. “*This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*”
- 2. Acts 17:30-31 – He will judge at His coming. “*For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.*”
(See also 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10).

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THEIR WITNESS – Acts 4:33

- A. It was verbal** – Acts 4:20; 8:4, 25, 11:11-14, 15:7, 40, 9:20. (Compare Romans 10:14, 17; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Corinthians 9:6).
 - 1. Testimony about Jesus is not simply done in life’s action – it is also done in verbalizing.
 - 2. All that Jesus began both to do and to teach (Acts 1:1).
- B. It was visible** – Acts 2:7; 3:10; 4:16; 5:28; (8:6 – “*When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did they all paid close attention to what he said*” – Both verbal and visible in this verse).
 - 1. Visible by their lifestyle.

2. Visible by their courage before their persecutors (Galatians 6:17).
3. Visible by the stipes on their backs.

C. **It was vital** – Acts 5:41; 16:19-34; 17:6.

THE DYNAMIC OF THEIR WITNESS – Acts 4:33; 6:8-10; 7:54-58

Three factors are involved.

- A. **The Historic Event Of The Resurrection** restored and strengthened faith.
- B. **The Coming Of The Spirit On Pentecost** provided power for witness (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:3).
- C. **The Indwelling Presence Of The Living Christ** provided reality in their lives.
 1. The rulers realized the apostles had been with Jesus – Acts 4:13.
 2. They could not but speak what they had seen and heard – Acts 4:20.

CONCLUSION:

By reading the Book of Acts we can see the transforming of the disciples into apostles. We, too, can be transformed by the same power through their witness.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE

1. What were the three historical events that contributed to the change in the disciples?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

2. What three things are needed as a part of the nature of our testimony that was a vital part of the apostles' witness?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

3. List the four points that made up the content of their witness.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

4. In what four ways was the change in the disciples manifested?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

5. What are the three factors involved in the dynamic of their witness?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

6. Discuss how we are able to be changed and transformed today as they were.

LESSON TEN

MISSIONS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

(Part Two)

INTRODUCTION

In a nutshell we are studying our responsibility to evangelize the entire world. We've seen that that was the heart of God from the beginning of creation, the coming of Christ, the cross, and the resurrection. In all this, He had in mind the saving of a few.

This is our second lesson in our study of the book of Acts. In our last lesson we saw the change that took place in the disciples, how they went from being fearful in the upper room to being fearless apostles before the entire world. They became fearless because they had seen His ascension. They had received the Spirit on Pentecost, a new faith, and a new courage.

The content of their message was simply Jesus, that He was Lord in His life, death, and in His resurrection. He presently reigns at the right hand of God. He will come again as Lord of heaven and earth.

The nature of their witness was threefold:

- 1) It was verbal.
- 2) It was visible.
- 3) It was vital, or dynamic.

Their message changed the lives of those who heard it because of three factors:

- 1) The resurrection of Christ.
 - 2) The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.
 - 3) The indwelling of the Spirit in their lives.
-

LESSON AIM: We will examine the three final, but vital characteristics of the apostles' witness from the Book of Acts.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that the extent of their witness involved the entire church, extended to the ends of the earth and included all classes of men.
 2. Learn that their technique for speaking the gospel varied.
 3. See that the results of their witness were immediate, impressive and permanent.
-

THE EXTENT OF THEIR WITNESS

- A. It Involved the Entire Church – Acts 8:4; 19:19-20.** Based on two assumptions.
 - 1. The chief task of the church is world evangelization. “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel...*” (Mark 16:15).
 - 2. The responsibility for carrying out this task rests with the entire Christian community – not just “hired” ministers.

- B. It Extended to the Ends of the Earth**
 - 1. Samaria – Philip (Acts 8).
 - 2. Judea – Peter (Acts 9).
 - 3. Ends of the earth – Paul (Romans 15:19, 24).

- C. It Included All Classes of Men**
 - 1. Jews only at first – Acts 11:19.
 - 2. Ethiopian broke the ice – Acts 8:26-40.
 - 3. Cornelius broke the barrier – Acts 10:1-11:18.
 - 4. Gentiles accepted universally – Acts 15.
 - 5. Philippi – a microcosm of the universal church – Notice the “Charter Members” in the church at Philippi.
 - a. A wealthy businesswoman.
 - b. A Roman jailor.
 - c. A previously demon-possessed slave girl.

NOTE: Notice the following quote from Celsus, a Roman official: “*The people (Christians) are worthless, contemptible people, idiots, slaves, poor women and children*” (Origen iii. 49-55).

THE TECHNIQUES OF THEIR WITNESS

There was a definite plan of action designed to produce desirable results.

- A. The Whole Church “Talked” The Good News**
 - 1. Study the “communication” words in Acts.
 - 2. The most common word in the New Testament in connection with the gospel is the word “speak.”
 - 3. Everyone can talk the gospel.

- B. They Called For A Response**
 - 1. They demanded faith – Acts 4:4; 10:43; 13:39; 16:31.
 - 2. They required repentance – Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; 26:20.
 - 3. They commanded immersion (Baptism) – Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 13, 38; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16.

C. They Promised Forgiveness

1. Nobody beyond forgiveness – Acts 2:38; 10:34-48; cf. 1 Timothy 1:15.
2. No sin beyond forgiveness – Romans 5:20.
3. It is a present possession as well as simply a future expectation.

D. They Warned Of Judgment – Acts 3:23; 13:41; 17:31; 24:25

E. They Practiced Baptism (Immersion in water)

1. Acts 2:40 – Jews. “*Those who accepted his message were **baptized**, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*”
2. Acts 8:12 – Samaritans. “*But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were **baptized**, both men and women.*”
3. Acts 8:36-38 – Ethiopian Official. “*As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be **baptized**?’*”
4. Acts 9:18 – Saul, a Pharisee and Persecutor. “*And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be **baptized** and wash your sins away, calling on his name.*”
5. Acts 10:47-48 – Gentiles, Cornelius and his house. “*So he ordered that they be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ.*”
6. Acts 16:15 – Jewish businesswomen. “*When she and the members of her household were **baptized**, she invited us to her home.*”
7. Acts 16:33 – Hardened jailor. “*At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were **baptized**.*”
8. Acts 18:8 – Immoral Corinthians. “*. . . and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were **baptized**.*”
9. Acts 19:4-5 – Incomplete disciples were baptized. This time into Christ.

F. They Established Local Churches

1. The place was not important – John 4:20-24. 21 “*Jesus declared, ‘Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.’*”
 - a. The Temple in Jerusalem– Acts 3:1; 21:26.
 - b. Synagogues in the cities where the gospel was preached – Acts 19:9; 22:19.
 - c. Rented halls – Acts 19:9-10.
 - d. Homes – house churches – Acts 2:46; 11:12; 20:8.
2. The building had no particular significance – Acts 17:24-25.
3. Money was no problem – Acts 3:6.
4. Numbers were not essential to success – Acts 5:1-10
5. The factor that made the church a unique entity was **THE PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST** – Matthew 28:20.
 - a. He was the **center of their fellowship** – John 14-16.

- b. He was the **theme of their teaching and preaching** – “*Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ*” (Acts 5:42).
- c. He was the **motive of their service** – “*I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward*” (Mark 9:41; Colossians 3:24).
- d. He was the **object of their worship** – Matthew 28:17; Revelation 5:11-14.

THE RESULTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THEIR WITNESS

- A. They Were Immediate** – Every contact brought nearly instant response. They were presented the story of the King and every person was given the opportunity to make a decision.
- B. They Were Impressive**
 1. Acts 2:41 – 3000 souls. “*Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*”
 2. Acts 4:4 – 5000 men. “*But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.*”
 3. Acts 5:28 – “*Filled Jerusalem.*” “*Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.*”
 4. They multiplied – Acts 11:21; 13:44; 16:5; 19:10, 26. **Isn’t it thrilling!**
 - a. “*... a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.*”
 - b. “*... almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.*”
 - c. “*So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.*”
 - d. “*This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.*”
- C. They Were Permanent** – The people were converted to Christ; not merely asked to “make a decision for Christ.” It was no cheap grace they accepted.
 1. The issues were clear. The choices were explicit!
 - a. God or mammon – Matthew 6:24. “*No one can serve two masters. ... You cannot serve both God and Money.*”
 - b. Christ or Belial – 2 Corinthians 6:15. “*What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?*”
 - c. Life or death – 2 Corinthians 6:16. “*For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”*”
 - d. Salvation or damnation – Mark 16:16. “*Whoever believes and is*

baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

2. The convicting power of the Holy Spirit was so strong that the work of grace was deep and lasting.
3. Moreover, the converts were taught to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. “*...he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.*” The vast majority did just that.

CONCLUSION:

The book of Acts presents a growing, glowing, demanding, steadfast, mature, disciplined movement to take the gospel throughout all the world. May God give us the strength to get up and get the gospel out to others.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN

1. What are the three points that describe the extent of the witness of the early church?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

2. What three prominent individuals in the New Testament are mentioned as the trailblazers of the gospel into the world?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

3. What is the word most commonly used in the New Testament in connection with the spreading of the gospel? _____

4. List the six areas that describe the technique of their witness.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

5. Can we afford to neglect any of these areas today? Discuss your answer.

6. How was the result of their witness immediate? _____

7. How was the result of their witness impressive? _____

8. How was the result of their witness permanent? _____

9. What one factor made the church an unique entity? _____

LESSON ELEVEN

MISSIONS IN THE MINISTRY OF PAUL

INTRODUCTION

We've just completed our study of missions from the book of Acts. I want to now isolate one person out of the book of Acts and study missions in His life. This would be the apostle Paul, or Saul of Tarsus. He serves as the outstanding example of our work of telling our neighbors and the whole world of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He had the heart of an evangelist, the discipline of a soldier, the devotion of a lover, the vision of a seer, the zeal of a reformer, and the passion of a prophet. By the grace of God Saul of Tarsus, the chief of sinners, became Paul, the greatest of all the apostles.

LESSON AIM: To examine the life of Paul, the most fruitful missionary of the church who ever lived, and learn how to imitate his life.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Look at several things Paul considered important in his mission of taking the gospel to the Gentile world.
 2. Learn and meditate upon six things that were important factors in Paul's mission efforts.
-

PAUL'S MISSIONARY STRATEGY

Strategy as used here does not mean a deliberate, well-formulated, duly executed plan of action based on human observation and experience, but we use the word to denote a **flexible modus operandi** developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and subject to His direction and control as we humbly search the Bible for His will.

NOTE: We live in a man-centered world. We don't think much can be accomplished without a great deal of ecclesiastical machinery – committees, conferences, workshops, and seminars. The early church depended less on human wisdom and expertise and more on divine initiative and guidance. ***More than anything else we need to get back to the missionary methods of the early church!!*** Notice several things about Paul's mission strategy.

A. He Maintained Close Contact with the Home Base

1. Antioch – Acts 14:26-28. “*On arriving there, they gathered the church*

together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.” Contrast this with modern methods of financing and reporting.

2. Jerusalem – Acts 15; 21:17-26.
3. Philippi. Notice the mission thrust in the book of Philippians (1:3-6; 2:25-30; 4:10-20).
 - a. This church supported Paul from beginning of his ministry to end of his ministry.
 - b. He let them know they were involved in his work (cf. 3 John 4-8).

B. He Confined His Efforts to Four Provinces: Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia

NOTE: It is no single church’s job to evangelize the entire world. We need to focus our work in a small enough area that we get something significantly done, but large enough to get something lastingly done.

1. Paul and Luke thought primarily of provinces:
 - a. Judea, Galilee, Samaria – Acts 9:31.
 - b. Syria and Cilicia – Acts 15:23.
 - c. Macedonia and Achaia – 2 Corinthians 9:2.
2. Paul’s active missionary career lasted twelve to fifteen years; yet in that comparatively short time he succeeded in planting strong, thriving, autonomous churches in all four provinces. **Cf. Romans 15:17-24.**
3. Today: Proliferation, not concentration, seems to be the name of the game. **We can easily spread ourselves so thin that there is little or no depth to our work.**

C. He Concentrated on the Large Cities

Not because of convenience and comfort but because they were strategic centers from which the gospel could and would radiate.

1. He stayed on famous Roman roads.
2. He paused at famous Roman cities.
 - a. Philippi – Roman colony.
 - b. Thessalonica – Commercial center.
 - c. Athens – Cultural center.
 - d. Ephesus – Religious center.
3. He did not preach in all the cities on the road – Acts 17:1.
4. Ephesus is probably the best example of his methodology – Acts 18:24 – 19:41, 20:17-38. (Note Acts 19:10; Colossians 1:7, 2:1).

D. He Made the Synagogue the Scene of His Chief Labors

1. He followed the principle “To the Jews first” (Romans 1:16).
2. He took advantage of the Jewish custom of the Synagogue to ask a visiting Rabbi to speak (Acts 13:15).
3. Only when expelled from the Synagogue did he go elsewhere (Acts 18:7, 19:9).

NOTE: We need to seek those who have an element of belief in God and Jesus Christ listening and asking questions in order that we might teach.

E. He Preferred to Preach to Responsive Peoples

1. Not all peoples were equally responsive to the gospel – Matthew 13.
2. Paul was interested in results – 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 4:2, 9:17. (Compare John 15:2).
3. This explains his agonizing decision to turn to the Gentiles – Acts 13:46, 18:6; Romans 9:2-3.

F. He Baptized Converts on the Confession of Their Faith – Acts 16:33.
Compare Acts 8:12, 36-38, 9:18, 22:16.

G. He Remained Long Enough in One Place to Establish a Church

1. He had two goals.
 - a. **Immediate** – The speedy evangelization of the world.
 - b. **Ultimate** – The establishing of strong, local churches.
2. The second could/can not be accomplished by short-term “campaigns.”
3. The churches established were not only self-governing and self-supporting, they were self-propagating as well. **They were mission-minded churches, concerned with the evangelization of the world.**
4. His method paid off handsomely. After only fifteen years he had no more un-evangelized cities to go to according to Romans 15:19-24. Notice also 1 Thessalonians 1:8.

NOTE: In most cases we have failed to establish **missionary** churches. We seem to build **dependent** churches, dependent on the wisdom of men and dependent upon the financial support of sister churches.

H. He Made Ample Use of Fellow-workers

1. He was no lone-eagle. He had no desire to go his own way or do his own thing. He believed wholeheartedly in teamwork.
2. Before his missionary trips, he was involved in teamwork with Barnabas in the city of Antioch – Acts 11:25-26. This team continued on the first journey.
3. Notice his second and third journey.
 - a. Argument and split with Barnabas over whether or not to take John Mark with them.

- b. Paul chose Silas as his mission partner.
- c. Timothy joined them at Lystra.
- d. Other fellow-workers – Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Tychicus, and Trophimus added to the fruitfulness of Paul’s outreach with the gospel (Acts 20:4).
- e. In his epistles we find other fellow-workers listed such as Epaphras, Demas, Epaphroditus, Archippus, Priscilla, Aquila, Apollos, Titus, and Phoebe are named as co-workers.
- f. In Romans 16:1-16 there are 27 people named of which 10 are women.
- 4. Notice his failure when alone – 2 Corinthians 2:12-13 (cf. Acts 17:15; 1 Thessalonians 3:1).
- 5. This methodology was not dictated primarily by a desire for companionship.
 - a. It was a part of his plan as a master builder (1 Corinthians 3:10).
 - b. It agreed with Old Testament dictums (Leviticus 26:8; Ecclesiastes 4:7-12).

NOTE: He was not a solitary evangelist, but rather the shepherding servant of a large circle of missionaries; and the number of his co-laborers increased with the progress of the work.

I. **He Became All Things to All Men** – 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

- 1. **Jewish Problem** : Circumcision.
 - a. Paul taught that if one depended on circumcision he had fallen from grace and was severed from Christ (Galatians 5:6; Romans 2:28-29).
 - b. Yet he circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3) but not Titus (Galatians 2:3-4).
KEY: For the good of the body.
- 2. **Gentile Problem**: Idolatry.
 - a. Paul knew that no idol was anything and that meat was made to be eaten (1 Corinthians 8).
 - b. Yet He refused to eat meat for the sake of his weaker brothers.
KEY: For the good of the body.

NOTE: The Christian missionary, especially the American, should be as “*wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove*” (Matthew 10:16), and as far as possible give no offense to the Jews or the Gentiles or the church of God (1 Corinthians 10:32).

FACTORS IN PAUL’S SUCCESS

- A. **His Deep Conviction Regarding His Call.** (He was an author, preacher, teacher, traveler, organizer, tentmaker, but most of all an **apostle**).
 - 1. One thing Paul never doubted or forgot was his relationship to Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Rome might immobilize him, neutralize him, victimize him, but even in chains he remained an ambassador for Christ (Ephesians 6:20). Compare Philippians 1:18-21.

B. His Complete Dedication to the Will of God

1. He desired to see Rome, but only if God prospered him (Romans 1:10).
2. He was pressed to stay at Ephesus, but refused saying, “I will come back if it is God’s will.”
3. Friends tried to persuade him not to go to Jerusalem. He replied, I will go and “The Lord’s will be done” (Acts 21:13). Compare Philippians 1:12.

C. His Complete Dependence on the Holy Spirit

1. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 – Was this his response to Athens’ small response?
2. He is the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2); Spirit of Truth (John 14:17); Spirit of Power (Acts 1:8).
3. He imparts life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:11; Romans 8:11).
4. He revealed the truth of God to heal minds darkened by sin and Satan (1 Corinthians 2:11-13; 2 Corinthians 4:4).
5. He communicates the power of God to the life dedicated to the service of God (Romans 15:15-20).

D. His Fearless Presentation of the Gospel

1. Acts 14:19 – In the face of persecution and death – Stoned, left for dead, got up and preached where stoned. Compare Acts 21:30ff.
2. Acts 17:32 – In the face of intellectual criticism Paul preached without fear and with bold confidence.

E. His Emphasis on the Autonomy of the Local Church

Compare Acts 14:23; 20:17-32; 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

F. His Wise Policy Regarding Money

1. He supported himself and his colleagues by working with his own hands.
2. He expected the churches founded by him to be self-supporting from the beginning.
3. He encouraged the Thessalonian church, poor though they were, to contribute to the needs of others.
4. Compare 1 Corinthians 9:14; Philippians 4:17-19; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; Acts 20:33; 2 Corinthians 8:2.

CONCLUSION:

The example of his life is great for us. We need to study this man from the book of Acts and his epistles. Follow his example. We’ll find power for our missions that we’ll find no where else. Preach the word of God!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN

1. Who is considered the greatest missionary the church has ever known?

2. What does the 21st century church seem to place more faith in? _____

3. What was Paul's purpose for maintaining close contact with home-base
churches? _____

4. In what four provinces did Paul concentrate his work?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5. Why did he go to the large cities, rather than the smaller villages? _____

6. When did he baptize his converts? _____

7. What were his two main goals?

1) _____

2) _____

8. What was his purpose for becoming all things to all men? _____

9. Discuss our need to be wise as a serpent and harmless as doves.

10. Discuss Paul's complete dependence on God to accomplish the work.

11. Discuss the importance of establishing autonomous churches.

12. Discuss the need for teamwork in evangelism and missions.

LESSON TWELVE

MISSIONS THROUGH SMALL GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our last study in discussing mission principles as they are found in the New Testament particularly. Our last study today deals with what is called the church in the home, what we call house churches or small groups. This is a very valid mission principle. The church will never rapidly grow and multiply if we are depending upon the Sunday morning celebration. Neither will it multiply by depending on the congregations, the Bible classes, the large groups we gather together. Until we get down to the small group where we can intimately relate to our friends, neighbors, to God, and one another the church will never reach that multiplying level.

LESSON AIM: To study the biblical principle and benefits of small groups.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Examine the fears that hinder.
 2. Examine the facts that help.
 3. Examine the factors that give hope.
 4. Examine the features that bring health.
-

FEARS THAT HINDER SMALL GROUPS

A. Small Groups May Divide the Church

1. Some fear that it could develop many little cliques going their own way and thus, cause divisions in the local church.
2. This danger lies in the heart and the attitude and not in the small group concept.

B. It May Cause Some to Go off into False Doctrine

C. It May Cause Some to Go off into Legalistic or Psychological Excesses

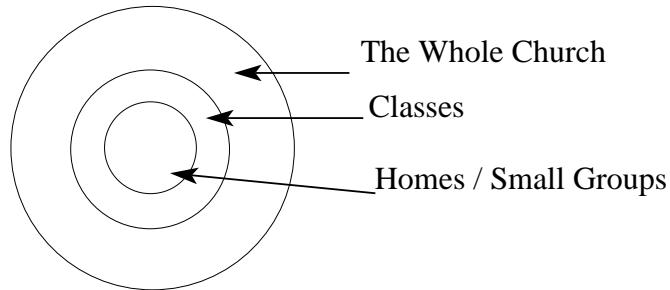
NOTE: Each of these represents a danger, but only ones to beware and not ones that will necessarily exist.

FACTS THAT HELP SMALL GROUPS

A. It Is the New Testament Pattern

1. The disciples continued daily and from house to house (Acts 2:42-47).
 - a. There was a corporate group – the whole church in the city.
 - b. There were large groups (congregations), but smaller than the corporate group.
 - c. There were small home groups.
 - d. Worship, study, and sharing is seen here in Acts 2.
2. Large groups and small groups are mentioned in Acts 5:41, 42.
3. There was a small prayer group in Acts 12:11,12. In the house of Mary, mother of John Mark.
4. Paul and his company started the church in Philippi from the house of Lydia in Acts 16:14-15.
5. The book of Acts closes with Paul establishing a teaching post in his house for two whole years in Rome (Acts 28:30,31).
6. Notice the number of house churches in Rome nearly a generation later (Romans 16:3-16).
7. There were small groups in Colosse (Colossians 4:15).
8. The church was in the house of Philemon (Philemon. 2).

NOTE: These were not separate congregations. These were small groups within the group, churches within the church. This is illustrated below:



B. Small Groups Meet the Needs of the Members

FACTORS THAT GIVE HOPE TO SMALL GROUPS

A. The Definition of Small Groups or House Churches

1. People who are bound together.
 - a. By their faith in Christ.
 - b. By their similarity in culture.
 - c. By their desire to work.
2. It is all to carry out the Great Commission of Christ to see that the gospel is preached to every creature. Therefore, there must be by necessity a meeting in every neighborhood or city block on a weekly basis.

B. The Purpose of Small Groups or House Churches

It is to provide a small and vital group fellowship with opportunities for mutual encouragement.

1. Sharing in prayer.
2. Meeting each other's needs.
3. Providing means for a new convert to become immediately involved in the work of the local church.
4. Building disciples capable of planning and carrying out the Great Commission of Christ.

C. The Principles of Small Groups or House Churches

1. Jesus will meet the need.
2. Jesus will be magnified.
3. Jesus will carry on the great work of His life.

NOTE: Of course we will beware of boasting, legalistic pressure, or dominating personalities. We will keep the target of evangelizing on our mind while avoiding Pharisaical attitude that makes us think we are more righteous than others. We will invite people to be a part of our group to come and share and in no way intimidate or pressure them. We will trust God and remember that this group is a part of a whole group, and not a group in and of itself.

FEATURES THAT GIVE HOPE TO SMALL GROUPS

A. They Talk About Jesus

1. He is seen as the real leader of this group.
2. He is alive. They read His gospels.
3. He acts and they see it.
4. He speaks and they hear it.
5. He leads and they follow.
6. He disciplines and they are corrected.
7. He teaches and they learn.
8. He loves and they respond.
9. He is working in their lives and they are better.
10. He sets their tongues loose and they speak.

B. They Care for and About Each Other

1. This is because they know each other.
2. This causes the group to remain in touch with each other through the week.
3. This enables us to come to know and accept the fact that God loves us.

C. They Pray with Each Other and for Each Other

D. They Share Their Faith

1. This allows us to be lights in the world (Philippians 2:12-15).

2. The saints mentioned in Revelation 12:11 – speaks of them sharing their testimony, their faith.
3. Small groups allow those who would otherwise never speak to feel free to do so.

NOTE: The key to telling others has never been to train the flesh by teaching to close sales and make presentations. The key ever since the 1st century has been to get the Christian so full of Jesus, so full of the Holy Spirit, that those who are around him are caught up in the spontaneous overflow.

E. They See God's Power

1. It is seen in the lives of ordinary people.
2. The hopeless find hope and help.
3. The troubled find peace with God and with others.

F. They Serve God's People

G. They Grow in God's Grace and in Christian Living

1. They grow because finally *their gifts can be exercised*. In 1 Corinthians 12:26-30, Romans 12:3-8 and Ephesians 4:1-16, you will find the concept of giftedness. God has given to each one of His children some gift (e.g., exhortation, showing mercy with cheerfulness, giving with liberality, teaching, faith, and wisdom). These spiritual gifts cannot be utilized appropriately apart from small groups.
2. We also grow through "*one another*" relationships. (Look up the two words "one another" and you will see that we are to bear one another's burdens, admonish one another, rebuke one another, consider one another better than yourself, urge one another unto love and good works, and love one another). These are likewise best fulfilled in the home or small groups.
3. They grow by their *mutual experience in the word of God*. They hear the word as they study it. As they see the word of God living in the people they are bound to in this small group, they grow because of the exercise of mutual gifts, mutual love, and the mutual experience in the word of God that day.

H. They Learn to Trust the Lord

1. Romans 8:28 is a message of trust.
 - a. Divine work – God works.
 - b. Thorough work – God works all things.
 - c. Beneficial work – God works all things together for good.
 - d. Discriminate work – To those that love God and are called according to His purpose.
 - e. Assured work – For we know.
2. The word of God in the small group instills within us the faith that the Lord is with us in all that we do everyday.

I. They Have Life

1. No one leaves empty. Sometimes people who come to worship on Sunday morning will leave as empty inside as they were when they came.
2. The small group is able to be more conscious of the truth that Christ lives in the body.
3. Timidity often gives away to boldness in the small group setting.

CONCLUSION:

The church will grow when the seed is sown abundantly through small groups. May God make us a missionary on our block using our home as the evangelistic center. Go preach the word to every creature!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE

1. What are some concerns / dangers of small groups?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. Give at least four New Testament examples that illustrate a pattern.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

3. How should we define a small group? _____

4. What are the four points that should be the purpose behind small group missions?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

5. What is the underlying principle of the small group? _____

6. List the nine features that bring health to those in the small group.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____
8) _____
9) _____

7. Discuss your personal concerns (if any) about starting a small group where you are. _____

8. In what three areas do people grow within small groups?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
9. Discuss how sharing faith with others can become contagious.
10. Discuss ways to invite people to your home Bible study group.
11. Discuss how this study of Biblical Missions has enhanced your desire and understanding for winning others to Christ.
12. Who do you know in your congregation that would take an interest in this with you? (Try to promote this among your leaders)

Study Guide

Richard Rogers

Richard Rogers was born in 1936 in Dallas, Texas. He was educated at Abilene Christian University, and Florida Christian College. An avid reader and diligent student of the Bible, he authored some twenty teaching workbooks and published outlines.

Richard was a well-known and gifted evangelist, teacher, and lectureship speaker. Until his death he was in great demand as a missionary encourager and world evangelist. He taught for more than three decades at Sunset International Bible Institute, assisting in the training of thousands of preachers and missionaries. Richard mentored church planting teams in California, Mexico, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Richard preached for local congregations in Blue Ridge, Azle, and Midland, Texas, and the Sunset Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas. Speaking appointments took him to at least forty states and thirty foreign countries as well as to many Christian university campuses as a teacher and lecturer. He was also a frequent speaker at soul-winning workshops across the nation.

Richard can still be heard proclaiming the word of God via hundreds of audio and video sermons and lessons available through Sunset External Studies.

Richard and his wife, Barbara, were blessed with four children and many grandchildren.



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