

"MISSIONS: WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE"

LUKE 24:45-53

INTRO: Biblical MISSIONS, as defined and described in the Word of God, is to be a **VERY VITAL PART OF THE LIFE OF EVERY CHRISTIAN AND EVERY LOCAL CHURCH.** Unfortunately that IS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE! Consider some observations:

- 1) Most Christians do NOT consider missions on a regular basis.
- 2) Most Christian parents do NOT encourage their children to go into missions.
- 3) Most young people do NOT consider missions as a life's vocation.
- 4) Most Christians are not interested in and/or have never visited a mission field.
- 5) Many local churches do NOT make missions a priority in their ministry.
- 6) Many local churches CUT missions when finances get rough.
- 7) Many local churches have NEVER sent a person to the mission field.
- 8) Many pastors "appear" to be more interested in building church facilities than building missions minded congregants.
- 9) Fewer Christians proportionately are considering going into missions today than in previous generations.
- 10) Many mission fields are losing missionaries due to interpersonal conflicts, lack of vision and retirement.
- 11) Many mission fields are hurting because of the lack of workers, either through not replacing those who have left the field or not being able to fill the positions to do the work.

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HAVING MENTIONED THOSE ELEVEN STATEMENTS, THERE MAY BE SOME WHO ARE ASKING, **"WELL WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?" IT MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE WHICH I INTEND TO OVSERVE WITH YOU IN THIS SERMON.**

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IN CONSIDERING THIS SERMON APPROACH IT WITH AN OPEN HEART AS IF YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD ABOUT MISSIONS BEFORE THIS TIME.

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THE TEXT BEFORE US REVEALS THE WORDS OF CHRIST PRIOR TO HIS ASCENTION BACK TO HEAVEN AND IS ONE OF THE FIVE PRESENTATIONS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION RECORDED IN SCRITURE. SOME OBSERVATIONS OF THE TEXT:

- 1) Christ "opened their understanding" - Vs. 45
- 2) Christ reminded them of His work - Vs. 46
- 3) Christ presented the message of the Gospel - Vs. 47
- 4) Christ reminded them of their positional responsibility - Vs. 48
- 5) Christ commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until empowered by the Holy Spirit - Vs. 49

I. WHAT IS MISSIONS?

A. Missions is NOT just a New Testament Concept. All throughout the Old Testament God's people were expected to be involved in the MISSION OF PRESENTING THE TRUTH OF GOD TO THE WORLD AROUND THEM.

1. Psalm 96:3
2. Isaiah 45:20-23

B. Missions is presented by Christ in the Great Commission recorded in the Gospels and the Book of the Acts

1. Matthew 28:19,20
2. Mark 16:15
3. Luke 24:45-53
4. John 20:21-23
5. Acts 1:8

C. Missions is emphasized in the Epistles

1. Romans 10:13-17
2. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

D. Missions in the New Testament is outlined through the life and ministry of the Apostles and the early church and involved three components that describe what MISSIONS IS ALL ABOUT BIBLICALLY.

1. Evangelism - Winning the lost to Christ
2. Church Planting - Establishing churches in local areas
3. Discipleship - Leading Christians in spiritual growth

E. The Definition of BIBLICAL NEW TESTAMENT MISSIONS would include: **THE BIBLICAL MANDATE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH SENDING FORTH MESSENGERS OF THE GOSPEL INTO THE WORLD TO EVANGELIZE, PLANT CHURCHES AND DISCIPLE NEW BELIEVERS.**

ILLUSTRATION:

II. WHO IS TO BE INVOLVED IN MISSIONS?

- A. The Local Church is to Support Missions (Financially/Prayerfully)
- B. The Pastor is to Promote Missions
- C. The Individual Christian is to be involved in Missions.

ILLUSRATION:

III. WHERE DOES MISSIONS BEGIN?

- A. With the Local Church Evangelizing the Community.
- B. With the Local Church making provision for Missions.
 - 1. Teaching on Missions
 - 2. Challenging Congregants to go to missions.
 - 3. Sending Missionaries
 - 4. Inviting Missionaries
 - 5. Support Missions
- C. With each believer asking, "LORD WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME TO DO?" Acts 9:6

ILLUSTRATION:

IV. WHY SHOULD EVERY CHRISTIAN BE INTERESTED IN MISSIONS?

CONSIDER MARK 16:15 AS A BASIS FOR PERSONAL INTEREST

- A. Missions is a Biblical Mandate
- B. Missions is an Expectation from God
- C. Missions is an Act of Obedience
- D. Missions is a Personal Responsibility

ILLUSTRATION:

V. WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT MISSIONS?

THREE POSITIONS ON MISSIONS: WHICH ONE DESCRIBES YOU?

- A. Very Little Interest In Missions
 - 1. Seldom if ever think of it.
 - 2. Seldom support missions in prayer or finances
 - 3. Avoid hearing missionaries speak
 - 4. Miss out on attending mission conferences, etc.
 - 5. Never consider personal involvement in missions
- B. Moderate Interest In Missions
 - 1. Think of missions from time to time
 - 2. Support missions in prayer and finances every now and then when convenient
 - 3. Listen to missionaries when they happen to be at church
 - 4. Attend mission conferences out of duty
 - 5. Have considered missions but dismiss the thought
- C. Aggressively Involved in Missions
 - 1. Think of missions often
 - 2. Support missions prayerfully and financially all the time
 - 3. Look forward to hearing missionaries speak
 - 4. Make mission conferences a scheduled priority
 - 5. Willing to do whatever God wants you to do in missions

ILLUSTRATION:

LESSON/APPLICATION:

Missions is NOT just to be tucked into our life here and there. Missions is not just to be added on at the end of the church budget. Missions is to be and WILL be a priority in the lives of obedient Christians and Christ-centered churches.

ARE YOU WILLING TO OFFER THE WORDS OF ISAIAH TO GOD?

"HERE AM I; SEND ME"

ISAIAH 6:8

IF YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO OFFER THOSE WORDS, WHY NOT?