



Why Get Involved In World Missions?

By Kurt von Schleicher

“You are called and commissioned to engage your world for Jesus.” —Joseph Stowell

Over two thousand years ago Jesus gave His church the command to go and make followers of Christ from among all the ethnic peoples of the world. Today, significant segments of the people on this globe are still considered unreached. They do not bow in worship before the Lord God Almighty and the ball is in our court so to speak. Spreading the Gospel worldwide is the magnificent privilege that we Christians have been entrusted with, and we must keep our priorities in order.

We must remember that missions begins and ends in the worship of Jesus Christ! Yes, “missions” has rightly never been the first priority ministry for the Christian, worship is. Jesus said that, ***“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth”*** (Jn. 4:24). Worshiping the Lord must come first! Knowing Christ comes before serving Christ—you remember the choices of sisters, Mary and Martha don’t you? Martha’s busyness in frustrated serving wasn’t the best thing. Worship must come before disciplining Christians, practical service and witnessing to sinners! The reason missions exists is because proper worship doesn’t exist in many places around our world. Worshipping God through Christ—alone in private or all through the day as you are out among other people—is the ultimate ministry, not missions even though there are times when audio forms of this vertical ministry could have horizontal impact! It’s the supreme ministry because God is the greatest, not any man. One day after the rapture and Second Advent of Jesus Christ, there will no longer be a need for missions. Fishing for souls here or in another land is only a temporary ministry and our time to take part in this is very limited. Full-on worship on the other hand will last forever in the presence of God! Establishing proper worship everywhere on this terrestrial sphere is therefore the true goal in missionary outreach.

Do you remember when Abraham sent his no-named servant to go retrieve a bride for his son, Isaac? Well that was a picture of what God the Father wants us involved in doing for Him—going to get a bride for His Son. We do this around the world as we share the Gospel in the

power of the Spirit—its so that we can bring Jesus a worshipping committed bride. One day, we will be so blessed when we see the great gladness and joy of incredible celebration together with all the different people groups in the very presence, and glory and greatness of God, praising his holy Name! John describes what it will be like exclaiming, *“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created”* (Rev. 4:10-11). The fruit of pure worship and obedience is spiritual reproduction and that’s worth rejoicing over. The Psalmist proclaimed, *“The Lord reigns; let the people rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!”* (Ps. 67:3-4).

John Piper says that, *“Worship is also the fuel of missions. Passion for God in worship precedes the offer of God in preaching. You can’t commend what you don’t cherish. Missionaries will never call out, ‘Let the nations be glad!’, who cannot say from the heart, ‘I rejoice in the Lord, I will be glad and exult in thee, I will sing praises to thy name, O Most High.’ ... When the flame of worship burns with the heat of God’s true worth, the light of missions will shine to the most remote peoples on earth. And I long for that day to come!”* (See Ps. 104:34; 9:2).

If the hot pursuit of God’s glory is not ordered in your heart, mind, priorities and life or in the church, above the pursuit of man’s good around the world, people and people groups will not be well-served and God will not be suitably honored as He should be. What is my point in this? I appeal for an increase in missionary involvement that’s first coupled with biblical adoration of God!

Where passion for God is weak, zeal for missions will be weak. Churches that are not centered on the exaltation of the majesty and beauty of God will scarcely kindle a fervent desire to "declare his glory among the nations" (Ps. 96:3). Even outsiders feel the disparity between the boldness of our claim upon the nations and the blandness of our engagement with God.

Here are some reasons why *not* to become a missionary in another country:

- 1. You really love to give the orders and be in charge of other people—it makes you feel important and necessary in God’s Kingdom.*
- 2. You feel that your family, nationality and race are somehow superior to other families, nationalities and races and that all Christians should become just like American Christians.*
- 3. You are running from something that you really should stop and face.*
- 4. You’ve been rejected by one or more Christian leaders for promotion.*
- 5. You don’t like accountability or being under delegated authority and feel the distance on the mission field will protect you from close scrutiny and liberty in the Spirit.*

6. *You didn't allow God to produce fruit in your life here, and you didn't learn to witness or win unbelievers in your mother country.*

7. *You simply don't like church in America (and there are some aspects of certain churches that God doesn't like in America, that are in clear contradiction of His Word).*

8. *You've grown weary of hard work in this filthy world—it's simply not for you working around foul mouthed reprobates.*

9. *You've feel you deserve some sightseeing in other countries for some months and you are long overdue for such a vacation but can't afford it.*

10. *You are clearly called to serve Christ in America.*

"After the age of 35 years, only one person in 50,000 receives Christ. After living 45 years of life, only one in 300,000 people receive Christ. After 75 years of life, only one in 700,000 plus receives Christ"—Skip Heitzig

Christians can witness without loving, but they can't love without witnessing. They can be involved in missionary activity minus proper worship and without having any concern for the nationals, but they can't really have proper concern for the nationals without being involved in worship and missionary outreach. It is sin!—whatever you do missionally without the underlying motive,

and only motive being love (first upwards and then outwards) is wrong. Perhaps you have you been called to pray or support missionaries or maybe even do overseas ministry with a group of Christians out on a short term missions trip? If that's the case, please do so with worship and the right motives, right love and right spirit. Chuck Smith said, *"The strength of a church isn't determined by how many quality Christians it can seat, but by how many quality Christians it can send."* Maybe you want some reasons to join in this effort of reaching every people group with the Gospel? Maybe you are wondering why you shouldn't join in? For some, there are potentially negative reasons for career missionary involvement in the cross cultural arena of service.

"Life isn't about accomplishments, it's about relationships—relationships with carnal Christians, spiritual Christians, and not-yet-Christians."—Rick Warren

Here are some reasons why real Christians that are called to do short-term mission trips, should obey God and go preach the Gospel:

1. *God said to.*

2. *No matter what you feel like or desire, the people need what God can impart to them through your ministry. Fred Clark said, "To feel sorry for the needy is not the mark of a Christian—to help them is."*

3. *You will view temporal possessions and material things much differently.*

4. *Your perception of hardship and trials will change.*
5. *You will return with a new perspective about people, Heaven, Hell and those who are headed for both places.*
6. *Christian nationals will be encouraged to follow you example, as you witness, plant seeds, water seeds, and reap a harvest using the Scriptures.*
7. *Your biblical faith will take a leap forward as you see God answer prayers and work to heal, restore, and edify the people.*
8. *You could very well be used of God in such a way that you know He did something really awesome to save someone or to change their society a bit in the area practical social work and should get all the glory for it.*
9. *You will learn that you can hear from the Lord as His child and better understand His calling on your life.*
10. *Your view of God will change radically for the good.*

“You might say, ‘Well, I’ve witnessed to fifty people and none of them accepted Jesus.’ That’s Ok, we Christians are not paid commissions. It is something more like a salary for faithful witnessing, if you will. We don’t have to close the deal—though we always want to try or give them an opportunity to repent and believe. We’re just called to witness faithfully for Christ.” —KvS

Here are fourteen internal motivations for getting involved in missions in any capacity:

- 1) **The Promise (Gen 12:1-3)** – Because God has promised to bless all nations (or people groups) on the earth. What better motivation and encouragement can we have than the understanding that missions (blessing the nations with the Gospel) is in the sure purposes of God.
- 2) **The Purchase (Rev 5:9)** – Because Jesus has already purchased people from every tribe and nation with His blood. Like the Moravians motivated by this purchase we should repeat what two Moravians missionaries said as they set sail for India, “*May the Lamb receive the reward of His suffering!*” In other words, He has already purchased them; our job is only to gather in what is His.
- 3) **Because the Harvest is plentiful (Matt 9:37)** – Now this is for all the numbers gurus out there who are motivated by sheer statistics. Today, out of the 6.5 billion people on the planet, over 4 billion are without a saving relationship with Christ. More tragic is that 2.4 billion of these who are lost have no means to hear the message of salvation through Christ – they are cut off from the gospel through lack of missionaries, lack of resources, etc. If you lined them up in a single file line they would wrap around the earth 25 times. The majority of these

people are located in the area of the world known as the 10/40 Window (see map). The harvest is plentiful!

4) **Because the Laborers are few (Matt 9:37)** – This is probably what runs through my head the majority of the times I get up to speak. Only one in every 20,000 believers will ever take the gospel to those who are out of reach of the church. What's worse than that? Out of all the cross-cultural missionaries in the world, you would hope that the majority would be working where the majority need is. However only 2.5% of all the 430,000 missionaries are working in the 10/40 Window. More laborers are needed.

5) **Because the Destiny of the Lost (Rom 1; John 3:18; John 14:6)** – Now this is harder to take in, but I believe the Bible gives us no means by which a person can be saved other than through Christ's work, and by exercising faith in His name. This means not by other religions, not without hearing specifically about Christ (through evangelism and missions) and not because they died without hearing. The Scripture leaves no loopholes for those living in ignorance. All are born in sin, the Cross has real meaning for salvation, and the Great Commission is necessary for people to hear and be saved. If this shocks you, you may have been influenced by the universalism that is gossiped among church goers. In Romans 1 (creation) does exactly what God designed it to do – it condemns people, leaving them without an excuse and knowledge of a Creator – not a saving knowledge of Christ Jesus. This makes missions not only important, but urgent!

6) **Logically Necessary for Hearing the Gospel Message (Rom 10:14-15, Acts 8 (Philip and 10 (Cornelius))** – This goes along with the last one. Every time someone comes to Christ in Scripture there is a human messenger involved. It would be great to think that God would draw people to Himself in the world apart from someone going. He is able, but this is not the means He has chosen to use. The Church is the means. The Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah (the OT Bible!) and still God miraculously transported Philip, a human messenger to explain Christ to him. An angel appears to Cornelius, a god-fearer. But still Peter must be summoned and travel all the way to Cornelius' house to explain the gospel to him before he could be saved. Why didn't the angel just tell Cornelius? It would have saved a lot of time and gas money for Peter – but God used a human messenger. Missions and evangelism are necessary. I hope we are speaking the message around us as well – they must hear.

7) **The Example of the Church (Acts 1:8, 10, 15, Rom 15:20)** – The early church has given us a model to follow. They went out, sent out their own missionaries like Paul and Barnabus, and evangelized the Gentiles beyond the reach of the gospel in their world.

8) **The Descriptive Future is Prescriptive for Today (Rev 7:9, Rev 21:24-26)** – Now, it's tricky but follow this logic. If there are people described in heaven in the future – it is logical that they must be reached with the gospel at some point in history. So because we see a great multitude gathered around the throne from every tribe, people, and nation – we must labor to begin with this end in mind, bringing it into reality as God uses us to fulfill it.

9) **Because We all will be Held Accountable (Ezek 33)** – Here is a passage that will cause you to re-evaluate life. The people of God, meant to be a blessing to the world, were held accountable for not warning others of the danger coming. Will believers be held accountable for their obedience to the Great Commission? It may mean great reward-loss by many Christians for failing to use what God has blessed them with to bless the nations.

10) **Because To Whom Much is Given Much is Required (Luke 12:47-48)** – Here is Jesus’ measuring standard. It’s like a blessing and obedience math formula. Our accountability may be based on our resources, our understanding, or our ability – more given equals more expected.

11) **Because the Church is the Means (Rom 1:5, Gal 3:14-15, 2 Cor 5:17-20)** – You are God’s ordained means for the blessing of Christ reaching to all the nations, just like He promised (Gen 12). Jesus has purchased them (Rev 5:9) and commissioned us with the task of gathering them in for God’s glory.

12) **Because History Awaits the Fulfillment of the Promise (Matt 24:14)** – Not sure how it’s all going to play out, but if God has promised that all nations are reached and Jesus says here that the gospel will be preached to all nations...then the end will come – it just seems logical. The story of history seems to be arranged on the thread of this mission, even the history we are a part of today. That is exciting!

13) **Because the Glory of God is Yet to be Known (Hab 2:14; Ps 72:19, 86; Isa 11:9)** – There are actually about a dozen times that Bible talks of God’s glory “*filling the earth as the waters cover the sea.*” God has created people to worship Him and that worship is being given to other lesser things right now. Missions is spreading the worship and enjoyment of God to those who are not currently worshippers, because God’s glory is increased by the increase of His church in the world. As John Piper says it, “Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Where passion for God is weak, zeal for missions will be weak.”

14) **Because of the Commands of Jesus (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, 13:47; John 20:21)** – Yes, last of all – because Jesus commanded this. Just as Jesus says in John 14:21, “*He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me,*” or 1 John 3:24, “*The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him.*” I hope we can all stand before him in the end and hear him say, “*Well done, good and faithful servant.*”¹

If God's love is for anybody anywhere, it's for everybody everywhere. —Edward Lawlor

You need to know:

- That ninety five percent of the world's unreached people groups live within the 10/40 Window (that eastern area from 10 degrees to 40 degrees north of the equator).

- That 3.3 billion people live in that Window.
- That 85% of the world's poorest people on the planet live in this Window.²
- That 47% of the world's population lives in two of the countries in that Window—India and China.³
- That the 10/40 Window encloses almost 100% of the world's 1.1 billion Muslims, 800 million Hindus and 300 million Buddhists.
- That every major religion finds its roots within the Window: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Confucianism, Bahai, Sikhism, Judaism and Jainism.⁴
- That 380 million people in 3,000 language groups still have no Bible in their language.⁵
- That a record number of international students have been studying in American universities, bringing the mission fields of the world even from that Window right to our back door.⁶
- That 55% in fact, of all international students studying in the United States are from Asia.⁷

Here are ten reasons why every local church should commit to missions involvement:

1. Because Jesus Christ is worthy. He is radically worthy of praise and honor from all people on this planet! The Bible says in 3 John 7 that "*they went forth for the sake of the name.*" It's the name of Jesus that's worthy to be praised and proclaimed by all the peoples of the earth. You remember hearing about how Nikolas von Zinzendorf challenged the Moravians missionaries saying, we are to "*go and win for the Lamb the reward of His sacrifice.*"

2. Because the Father is longing. God isn't selfish or egotistical. He doesn't have needs at all. He doesn't expect or demands us to scratch his back, but the Bible is replete with the assurance that God desires for "*all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth*" (1 Tim. 2:4). Ever since the Garden of Eden, the Father-heart of God has aggressively sought to reconcile humanity to Himself.

3. Because the Holy Spirit is moving. In every era, even like it is today, the Spirit has been doing His best to get the righteous presenting a good witness to lost people. Yes, He wants this to happen in every nation. Every decent section of the Body of Christ realizes that this is the time for fishing souls. The Holy Spirit is speaking out the Message of reconciliation today. If a church is "*in the flow*" so to speak, of what the Holy Spirit is doing, that church will see world missions as front and center.

4. Because the harvest is ripe. Musicologists tell us that there is more openness to the Gospel now on a global scale than there ever has been in all of history. As it was in Jesus' day, the problem today in missions is *not* a scarcity of harvest but rather a scarcity of harvest laborers. Now is the time to "*thrust in the sickle and reap... for the harvest of the earth is ripe*" (Rev. 14:15).

5. Because Hell is hot and people are really lost. This should be reason enough to be compassionately involved in missions and evangelism. We must have a burden for them and rescue the perishing! There is a creeping universalism, even among some evangelicals; and

universalism is never a friend to evangelism. And the enemy so wants us Westerners to believe in universalism, for then we will layback and do as we please. But unless God has amended Holy Scripture lately, the Bible still describes those without Christ as *"lost," "perishing,"* and headed for a place of eternal judgment where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth—*"where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched"* (Mk. 9:44).

6. Because the nations are waiting. Jesus of course deserves our all, along with full obedience from all peoples everywhere. But there remain 10,000 people groups which do not yet have a community of on-fire disciples living among them who can witness of His true and holy nature. We have Good News for them if we can only get to them before it's too late. Oswald J. Smith asked the piercing question, *"Why should anyone hear the gospel twice until everyone has heard it once?"* Why *should* we in America keep being exposed to (and in many cases increasingly hardened to) the Gospel when hundreds of millions would gladly receive it if they heard it once?

7. Because the Church has been commissioned. The final marching orders of our resurrected Lord for His army, right before His ascension, were to go and preach the Gospel to every person and make disciples of all the nations. This clear missions mandate should give the Church a crystal clear focus. Yet in the last twenty centuries, it would appear that the Church has done *everything* except this *one thing* that Jesus clearly left for us to do.

8. Because the workers are few. Jesus told us to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers while the need is there. Of course "the need" should not be our first motivation for us doing anything in missions, but it is certainly a legitimate one. And the necessity is large because the workers are basically small in number in comparison to how many need to hear. Jesus, *"Therefore said he unto them [His disciples], The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest"* (Lk. 10:2, kjv). Not only do our hearts need to bleed again so to speak, they need to bleed and respond in the right direction. As Bob Pierce prayed, *"Let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God."*

9. Because the American Church needs a vision. Too many local churches are adrift without a rudder so to speak. Many are aiming for numerical growth and they really want to survive. Some think that by merely

existing as a group of nice people in the community and remaining fiscally viable as an end in itself, they are fulfilling their mission. In his final book, Richard Nixon made this observation: *"Without a great cause to galvanize America, the very unity of*

"Jesus Christ affectionately won people face to face, one at a time. Yes, even when ministering to the masses, their hearts were captured individually. The person entering the arena of professional net fishing should never lay down their pole! Christ's extremely personal passion addressed each one separately—each person as vitally important and extremely valuable." —KvS

our nation will be at risk ... If America is to remain a great nation, what we need today is a mission beyond peace." And if the American nation needs a mission beyond peace and beyond

itself, how much more can it be said of the American Church? All local churches need to put Jesus first of course and aim for quality ministry output, feeding the people from all sixty six book of the Bible in a non-boring way. If they seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and do this, the numbers of people are bound to follow.

10. Because there's dignity in participating in God's global fishing purposes. Too many pastors today are burning-out, or getting chopped out, or being smeared out, falling or getting voted out unfairly. Some are choking on trivia, swamped by secondary busyness or living an uncompromising life as they consistently teach through the Bible in a dynamic way by the Spirit. Many are finding themselves under their senior-pastor's-family-first-nepotism or under spiritually abusive or money-hungry weird politically volatile regimes. Some are getting chewed up by sheep that bite. It is so vital that we fully obey God and see ourselves, as part of the grander scheme of things. No matter the size of your flock, your church can rock and make a world of difference! "Yup, rock"—that's just a figure of speech, but you know what I mean. The Holy Spirit wants us to make paradigm shifts from a fleshly to a spiritual orientation; from an *us-four-and-no-more* inverted orientation to a reaching-out orientation; from a temporal to an eternal orientation and from a merely local to a global orientation.⁸

Are you still wondering why you or your church should be involved in missionary outreach on some level? If you'll prayerfully read through the book of Acts, it will be very hard not to see why God wants you to pray, to go or to send someone. There is no such thing as a non-evangelistic Christianity! True, biblical Christianity is constantly reaching beyond its current borders to people not yet reached with the Gospel, to plant soul-winning churches that will plant for of the same. It's been said that *any church that is not actively involved in world missions forfeits its biblical right to exist!*

Some pastors have said...

"Why should we try to reach the lost around the world when we haven't even reached our own communities fully?"

"With shrinking budgets and rising costs, God understands us not being involved in missions. He knows that the church should come first."

"It's crazy to talk about evangelizing the world when America itself is in such great need. Just look at our political leaders."

And there is really no time for cop-outs at this point. Jesus said what He meant and meant what He said about our missions involvement and with all due respect, that basically leaves you and I with a decision to make. We make a decision every day when we get out of bed to be involved or not. I am not trying to get you to support this ministry; I want you to simply obey the Lord and commit to what He would have you do. Your church, whether huge and high-tech or small and low-tech, can play an integral part in bringing closure on Christ's Great Commission!

I love what Joseph Stowell said, “*Do what Jesus called us to do, and that is to break out of that huddle and take Jesus and engage our world with the reality of Jesus Christ through our lives. Now, how do you do that? That's the big question. I have to say that merely hanging out in the church world and staying in these little cloistered environments that we craft for ourselves is really the easiest thing to do. When you really get a grip on the commission of Jesus Christ to be the light of your world, to engage your world with Christ, then it gets trickier. It's a little riskier; it takes a lot more discernment. Temptations are greater. You have to interface with people who don't talk church-talk; they have a whole different language.*”

So where do we start?

We start where we are ...prayerfully witnessing in faith. When it relates to missions or spiritual activity, *Christians* and *Spirit-led-fishing* should go together! Distractions are Mr Lucifer's game plan for you. Satan really doesn't care what we Christians do, just as long as we don't lovingly worship God and evangelize. Satan never cares what a clergyperson chooses, just as

long as they personally put off being born again.

Eighty percent of those who become Christians do so by the age of fifteen. —Luis Palau

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me.”

Satan doesn't care how a minister lives in public, just as long as they neglect applying Scripture properly. Satan doesn't even care what any preacher preaches, just as long as it's not the Word of God.

Pastor, he wants you to play fast and loose

with the truth; to mix truth in with error, to major on psychology, politics, moralizing, social issues, home-schooling, hospital building, civic activities with the rotary club, protesting, bingo, petitioning, fundraising, arguing, and politicking in place of exalting Christ and teaching all the counsels of God.

Satan doesn't care what or who any sinner worships, just as long as it is other than the Person of Jesus Christ—the Bible Jesus! Satan wants to keep missionaries too busy with both important and trivial matters—good and bad things—too busy to spend time alone with God in intercession and searching the Scriptures. He wants real Christians too busy to spend time building relationships together with needy lost nationals. He knows that isolation will lead to frustration. He knows that God's instruction without application will also lead to the same.

There are so many other “missionary activities” missionaries can give their time to, other than to praying and articulating the Gospel to the nationals in their own language.

Introducing people to Christ with the Gospel is supposed to be like fishing, not like hunting! What's the difference, you might ask?

<i>HUNTING...</i>	verses	<i>FISHING...</i>
Is very aggressive		Is more gentle
Is based on confrontation		Is based on attraction
Is mainly “ <i>Go out there and shoot them dead</i> ”		Is “ <i>Get them to nibble on your bait</i> ”
For the most part is: “ <i>one size fits all</i> ”—one bullet size		Allows you to try all kinds of hooks/lures
Means taking your best shot and its curtains		Is reeling them in—it requires <i>give and take</i>
Is scary and chases off the animal if you miss		Is non-scary—you get more than one chance
Means the animal never has a choice in it		Means the fish gets to choose every time
Means you must be a very skilled shot		Is for anyone who'll cast a hook into water

In Jesus' day, they only used nets for fishing. Today, we have many kinds of methods for fishing, even bass boats with built-in sonar equipment!

Here's Three Key Missionary Questions for Spiritual Fishing:

1.) Identify which pond of people God is calling you to fish in and what He wants you to use for this purpose there.

Jesus said, “*You will be my witnesses - in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world*” (Acts 1:8, niv).

Paul said, “*For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*” (Rom. 1:16).

New Testament Pattern	Our Church's Pattern
“Jerusalem”	Your county
“Judea”	Language/Ethnic groups in America
“Samaria”	All of America
“World”	Every country, every people group, every person

2.) Learn about the people in that specific pond, lake or sea that God is calling you to Reach out to, what idols they typically worship and which commandments and Scriptures address their sins and needs. Learn their language, their culture, their demographics, their

weaknesses, their hopes, their goals, and what or who God has used in their land in the past.

The Bible says, ***“Every prudent man acts out of knowledge”*** (Prov. 13:16, niv).

Paul the missionary said, ***“To the Jews I became like a Jew to win the Jews...to those who are without the law I became like a person who is without the law... to those who are weak I became weak so I could win the weak. I have become all things to all people so I could save some of them in any way possible. I do all this because of the Good News and so I can share in its blessings”*** (1 Cor. 9:20-23, ncv).

The more you know about and pray for a person, a people group, a city, a nation, a land ...the more you and God together will have to work with. Not that God needs to learn or needs info—He doesn't. But He loves to answer the intelligent prayers of His children!

3. What consumes the thoughts of the masses? What are their fears and aspirations? How can you use the Law of God with the proud to show them their need?

The Bible says, ***“Jesus knew what they were thinking...”***
(See Matt. 9:4, 12:25; Mark 2:8; Luke 5:22, 9:47, 11:17).

Fishing is About Being Yourself as You Build A Bridge of Friendship For God.

Do you have a missions plan for sharing your faith first domestically and then abroad? Good friendships are usually intentional, rather than accidental. Does the Bible say, ***“A friend must sit there in front of their video game and wait for people to come love them”***? No, it says that a friend must show themselves friendly to others.⁹ It also says, ***“A friend loves at all times”*** (Prov. 17:17). Developing friendships with unbelievers often requires going the second mile, taking some risks, and moving outside your own comfort zone. And with our busy lifestyles these days, it takes some *planning*. If you don't plan to cultivate friendships with unbelievers, you'll find that you will never have enough time to do so.

STEP # 1: Become aware of the unbelievers that God has placed in your life.

- ✓ Make a list of them by name for prayer purposes.
- ✓ Realize that they are your responsibility.
- ✓ Assess each person's level of spiritual receptivity.
- ✓ Discover and write down what their interests and needs really are.
- ✓ Look for areas of common ground that you can build on.
- ✓ Figure out what kind of testimony each would respond to.

STEP # 2: Commit to praying for those near and far that need Jesus.

- ✓ Use your list to plan and daily pray for your unsaved friends. The Bible says, “*We should make our plans—counting on God to direct us*” (Prov. 16:9).
- ✓ Pray that God will woo and draw them to Himself (Jn. 6:44).
- ✓ Pray that God will remove their spiritual blinders (2 Cor. 4:3-4).
- ✓ Pray that the Holy Spirit will soften their hearts and make them receptive (Jn.16:8-13).
- ✓ Pray you’ll get the opportunity to share a clear Gospel witness (Col.4 3-5).
- ✓ Pray that God will give you wisdom in what to say (James 1:5).
- ✓ Pray the Holy Spirit will use the words you say (1 Thess. 1:5).

STEP # 3: Show that you care.

- ✓ Treat everyone with respect as people, not as “prospects”.
- ✓ Be a genuine friend. Help them in practical ways.
- ✓ Be a good listener (take interest in their interests). It is a great way to show love.
- ✓ Make service your aim, not recruitment.
- ✓ Invite them into your home.
- ✓ Consciously focus your concern on meeting their needs.
- ✓ Go out of your way to love them until they ask you why.
- ✓ Accept people as they are without being judgmental.

STEP # 4: Be ready to share the truth with a sense of urgency and enthusiasm.

- ✓ Identify yourself as a positive, upbeat, joyful follower of Christ.
- ✓ Share a testimony when the occasion naturally arises. (It will)
- ✓ Never force the Good News. Be patient. God is working!
- ✓ Use crisis situations to show why we all need God.
- ✓ Ask questions that lead to spiritual discussions.
- ✓ Give them appropriate message tapes or books to read.

***Let every kindred, every tribe on this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe and crown Him Lord of all! –John Rippon***

Are you sure you are [born anew](#)? If so, you can begin today to involve your church in God's international fishing plan by getting down on your knees with the other Christians there and pray with power. You can even start a regular *missions prayer and share* type of meeting at your church and together call out the names of the ones you have sent out and those they are around. Just make sure you actually do spend some time praying for the nations there rather than just strategizing and gabbing. You can also take these following five important steps.

1. Get more informed with the real facts. Our God deals in true information. Learn the situation in the land to which you are called to serve and learn the Word that addresses their weakness, needs and hopes.

2. Allow God to answer the big question. Ask the Lord to give your church leadership the answer to this question: “*What unique role are You calling this local church to play in helping to fulfill the Great Commission?*” He might have you adopt a country in the 10/40 window or maybe a city or a region of one country to start targeting in prayer and to visit. In the New Testament we see how the Spirit of the Lord answered this specific question for the local church leaders in Antioch. God loves that kind of prayer and you can expect Him to reveal His strategy for your church as you continue to pray, fast and seek Him. Out of the answer to your question that God will give you, you can together begin to formulate your missions policy and missions budget.

3. Work from existing sound Christian relationships—yes, with people and groups that love the Bible Jesus and adhere to essential Christian doctrine. I’m sure you already know some healthy ministries, missionaries and local church leaders. Start there, by serving them and learning more about their vision, their plans and their existing good works. Good relationships breed more good relationships. You may be surprised to discover that the slightest signal of missions interest expressed by your church can be learned about and picked up on by a national worker on the other side of the globe!

4. Take one missions trip this year. I always encourage pastors of churches that one of the first items in their missions budget should be to send a pastor (maybe their senior pastor) on an annual

- **Seventy nine percent of Christians do not give to missions.**
- **Twenty percent of Christian leaders do not involve themselves in evangelism efforts.**
- **Sixty three percent of Christian leaders have not led someone to Christ.**
- **Forty nine percent of Christian leaders do not minister off the church campus, let alone off the continent.** —Ray Comfort, September 6 ‘06

missions trip so they can get their finger on the pulse or non-pulse of what is happening there. I don't mean another overseas vacation. I'm talking about a real missions trip where they will go to serve and minister to their own home-grown missionaries and the nationals. I mean a trip where you preach the Gospel and minister until you feel like dropping to your knees. You will be transformed when you see third world needs where you hold dying babies in your arms, where you get a genuine taste of "Third World" need and where you see miracles from God's hand. Such a trip will give a global dimension to your ministry for the rest of the year.

5. Aim to plant a church cross-culturally. You know how the church exists to reproduce itself, both within its own culture and cross-culturally. The training, supporting and resourcing of national pastors and leaders, along with international partnerships in planting new churches, are some of the wisest missions investments you can make.

Just go for it...

If you’re moving, praying, prioritizing properly and listening, then God will guide you. Trust

Him to. I like what Ted Engstrom said: *"Missions is not an adjunct tacked onto the church's ministry. To this end, every church everywhere is meant to be both a caring and a sending group. This means that world missions must be at the heart of every healthy church."*

There are many aberrant so called Christian churches today in America and overseas, but that shouldn't discourage you at all. Your church doesn't have to be that way. It can make a world of difference if you will pray in faith and accurately teach God's Word for His glory. We do this to please Him and to gain a harvest we'll one day see in Heaven. If God has called you to fish in foreign waters, He will provide, but you must prayerfully plan well, thoroughly prepare and trust God to meet all your needs. Don't wait to start bathing this idea in prayer. As in farming, harvesting is seasonal and there is limited time for agricultural workers to respond, so it is with us. You know how it is on a farm—during harvest time, there's only one item that comes to the top of the enterprise's agenda: [Let's get the harvest in](#) right and safely.

¹ I believe it was David Bryant who wrote these fourteen motivations.

² See Y.W.A.M. Strategic Frontiers www.sfcos.org

³ See "Light the Window." Floyd McClung. Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 1999.

⁴ Drawn from "Strongholds of the 10/40 Window." Ed. George Otis, Jr. Seattle: Y.W.A.M. Publishing, 1995.

⁵ See Wycliffe International Bible Translators at: www.wycliffe.net

⁶ There were in 547,867 international students here in the year 2001 and there are even more now.

⁷ See www.opendoorsweb.org

⁸ Mr. David Shibley at Global Advance taught me these ten reasons in the '90s.

⁹ See Proverbs 17:17