

HOW TO CHOOSE A MISSION FIELD

by

Rodney P. Loewen

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Author: Rodney P. Loewen  
Degree: Master of Arts in Missions  
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Advisor: Dr. S. Wayne Beaver

Within the wonderful framework of the sovereignty of God there are various choices which may direct a Christian into missionary service. It has been the object of this research to examine carefully and practically the theology of a personal call in light of the Great Commission.

A second area of much concern has been the proper choice of a sending agency. It has been the writer's experience that some earnest Christians may stress too strongly the personal call, at the expense, of not being diligent in the proper choice of a mission organization. There must be a needed balance between these two. There will never be an organization which has in it all the policies each aspiring missionary may desire. However, there must be a certain number of basic principles and practices available so that a lasting and fruitful relationship will be established. The final area of research involves the specific subject of choosing a certain mission field.

This "field" includes vocational ministries as well as geographical locations.

It should be emphasized that knowing God's specific will requires one to be flexible yet purposeful.

Each chapter has been designed as a step which, when taken, leads on of necessity to the next; each becoming more and more specific, culminating in full-time missionary service.

These days are exciting, yet challenging.

It is hoped that this work may help and direct many into His whitened harvest fields.

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## INTRODUCTION

Missionary work through the centuries has been incredibly difficult.<sup>1</sup> Stephen Neill expresses it well:

Christian missionary work is the most difficult thing in the world. It is surprising that it should have ever been attempted.<sup>2</sup>

As one experiences the cutting edge of conflict between Satan's territory and the overcoming Christian church he may ultimately be deterred due to a lack of recognition as to where and who the enemy is. The missionary's unflagging optimism in the face of continual and countless insoluble problems places him always within the realm of the possible rather than the impossible negative thinker. This zeal when controlled and used in a sanctified manner can only lead to success. Roland Allen states it well:

Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs nor out of theological arguments but out of love. Knowledge of Christ is so rich a treasure that the spirit of love must necessarily desire to depart it.<sup>3</sup>

Missionaries are indeed a strongly motivated people, they will go to the ends of the earth, cross impossible barriers expending themselves, to spread the news of salvation thru Christ by Grace. Their determination and sense of call is admired and read by all. C. T. Studd who gave away his

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<sup>1</sup>J. Herbert Kane, Christian Missions In Biblical Perspective (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

fortune and became a member of the famous Cambridge Seven that went to China in the 1880's has inspired and warmed the hearts of many an aspiring young missionary candidate.<sup>1</sup>

Yet today as that backward glance would thrill and inspire there is a new spirit of the age which needs to be met and conquered for Christ. Perspective and previous missionaries are looking for practical direction as they seek to choose a field of service (or) a field on which to serve their Master.

Whenever this anthropocentric question is raised (how to) one can expect a corresponding degree of problems to arise. However, the problems of choosing or switching fields is very much a reality. It will not go away, it must be dealt with. It is the purpose of this project to do just that, recognizing the pitfalls inherent, but at the same time the rewards as His messengers move out again and again in His service.

The unwillingness of missions to change in the face of Western materialism produces a tension which is now being felt in the National Church.

The title of this project may have misleading overtones to some. In choosing a mission field one is called upon to exercise the will and intellect so that it corresponds with God's directions as laid down in His Word.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

A tragedy can develop--although it need not--when an earnest Christian makes all the choices tacking on to his opinions the Lord's sanction only to find that the scheme collapses to the detriment of God's credibility. The sovereign hand of God must be of prime importance when considering His leadings. The proper response is that, "If it is the Lord's will we will live and do this or that" (Jas. 4:15). This leaves no room for boasting.

As the Western world continues in unparalleled prosperity while a third of the world's countries slowly begin to establish themselves, there is a definite hostility felt towards missionaries coming from these countries.<sup>1</sup> At home the phrases, "the Lord needs Christian business men," or "the need at home is great," or "if God wants me on a foreign field He will show me," put forth a negative attitude towards obeying the call to go and make disciples.<sup>2</sup> Ninety-five per cent of those in full time service are working at home while five per cent are trying to cover the rest of the world. It is clearly stated by Harold Lindsell when he declares,

Unfortunately the suspicion lingers that there are more in business who should have been missionaries than there are missionary misfits who should have been businessmen.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>C. Troutman, Everything You Want to Know About the Mission Field (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 1976), p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>H. Lindsell, Missionary Principles and Practices (Westwood, N. J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1954), p. 54.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

The Scriptures give examples of many who were willing to obey God's will. Noah faced great harassment as he prepared the ark. Abraham too, took his father from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran. After his father's death Abraham followed God into the promised land. These Biblical illustrations and others have stirred many a young missionary to do great exploits for God. The Scriptures are literally bulging with examples of men and women who faithfully followed God.

Let me give you a personal example of how another's faithfulness establishes within us the desire to move out for Him.<sup>1</sup>

The object of this brief testimony is to observe that obedience in specific small areas produces willingness in larger areas. If Christians have difficulty maintaining a regular time of devotion or going to mid-week prayer

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<sup>1</sup>I was a Christian business man who was seeking God's will. Since coming to know Christ as Savior I had several experiences where further and greater commitment was called for. A day came in this process when I felt the need to remove cigarettes from my business as merchandise. The Lord blessed and gave greater sales. Eventually it was realized that the worldly pocket books were a negative witness too. When they were removed Christian pocket books replaced them. It was through the reading of missionary biographies that God began to call this businessman into His full time service. There were three obstacles why this pharmacy should not sell before we could begin our career. God miraculously overruled and it sold.

Another hurdle was the size and ages of our family. We had six children to start off on our venture with! God raised support for us and truly watched over all of us on the mission field in Africa.

meeting, then they will never find greater degrees of commitment appealing.

Total life commitment to the general will of God is an absolute necessity. This begins by obeying the Lord in small requests.

Lindsell correctly analyzes the problem when he states,

the problem of discovering the specific will of God as to field and place of service follows. Discovering this will is not as simple as it might appear on the surface.<sup>1</sup>

It is that specific will of God which every earnest Christian wishes to know. In today's unstable and changing world, missionary fields are closing and re-opening rapidly. Through this maze, missionaries need to know His will. Also, missionaries, as a general rule, tend to be practical individuals. Therefore, expediency may tend to overshadow theology, which will inevitably cause a variation between God's will and that of the missionary.

Because of this it would be well to re-examine what a missionary call is.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

## CHAPTER I

### AM I CALLED TO MISSIONARY SERVICE?

#### Introduction

Every occupation has its hazards. Therefore, as the study of the theology of a call is considered, it is no exception. Many a student has found that at the end of a theological course he does not know what to believe.<sup>1</sup> The study of theology can have this effect. As T. F. Torrance said,

Detached from the empirical reality of the living and acting God theology tended to become abstract and rationalistic and got stuck in avid ideas and inflexible frames of thought losing its relevance for the life of faith.<sup>2</sup>

Of course the easy way out is to have a compartmentalized mind. In one part, private devotions, public worship, and Christian fellowship exist while the other rooms contain life pursuits and the pleasures of this world. Theology if divorced from practical Christianity can also become that sort of a pleasurable pursuit which tickles the intellect but at the same time will create horrible tensions if approached with this attitude.

#### The Theology of a Personal Call

Glover takes the Biblical theological approach as

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<sup>1</sup>K. G. Hawkins, The Challenge of Religious Studies (London: Tyndale Press, 1972), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.



he elucidates the call of God.<sup>1</sup> His attempt is to produce as broad a Biblical basis as possible. He states,

Something deeper and broader is needed to constitute a solid foundation for a worthy and enduring missionary effort.<sup>2</sup>

The scope of such a work is immense and for this reason it may be too broad to effect a lasting result.

Gerhardus Vos in Biblical Theology of Old and New Testaments<sup>3</sup> places redemption and revelation as the two practical pillars for all theology. Essentially this is what Glover has done and this unsystematic approach is a requirement often neglected by all who do not wish to have a Biblical overview, but long for examining details.

The second view of looking at the missionary call is well systemized by men like Kane. He displays this view when he states, "What exactly is a missionary call?" or "Can I be a missionary with a call?"<sup>4</sup> He goes on to declare,

All believers are called to be saints (Rom. 1:7) to grace (Gal. 1:6) peace (1 Cor. 7:15) light (1 Pet. 2:9) hope (Eph. 4:4) glory (1 Th. 2:12) holiness (1 Th. 4:7) liberty (Gal. 5:13) and suffering (1 Pet. 2:20-21). In these latter instances this is more of a call to

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<sup>1</sup>R. H. Glover, The Bible Basis of Missions (Chicago: Moody Press, 1946), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Gerhardus Vos, Biblical Theology of Old and New Testaments (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup>J. Herbert Kane, The Making of a Missionary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), p. 24.

Christian living, however, all these above qualities must be evident to those who are considering Christian service.<sup>1</sup>

There is another type of a call which is mainly for those who will leave their own profession and devote themselves full time to serving the Lord. That is prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4).

The call to service as it appears in each gospel and Acts (Mt. 28:19,20; Lk. 27:47; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 20:23; Acts 1:8) was addressed to the apostles. As we have observed, all are called to be saints (Rom. 1:7) but not all are called to be apostles (1 Cor. 12:29). Paul felt that he was an apostle by God's will (1 Cor. 1:1) and calling (1 Cor. 9:16-18) and that he did not choose this himself nor was it given to him by others (Gal. 1:1).<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that the first apostles were given an office which has not been duplicated since. Some even feel that the gift of apostleship has passed away (Eph. 4:11). The messengers (2 Cor. 8:23) in every case were modified. Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25) is called your apostle, in Romans 16:7 one sees the apostles of the church. In Acts 14:4 Barnabas is also called an apostle. In a lesser sense men who were "sent ones" would be the equivalent to today's missionaries.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>S. W. Beaver, Missionary Principles and Practices, unpublished class notes (Winona Lake, Indiana, 1977), p. 5.

Kane correctly points out that Paul never referred to himself as a "tentmaker" by the will of God but was called to be an apostle by the will "of God"<sup>1</sup> (Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1) although it is true that at times Paul found it necessary to work with his hands at tent making.

Paul's case is indeed an interesting one because God told Ananais "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel" (Acts 9:15). Paul himself felt that God called him to be an apostle to the Gentiles at birth (Gal. 1:15-16) to preach the gospel. The elders of the Antioch church at a later time chose Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:2), thus confirming the other two previous calls. These same three aspects of a missionary call have been present in the writer's life. As a small boy of five or six he sensed God was drawing him to be His servant. Later on at his conversion the Christian who led him into the assurance of his salvation said, "Now the rest of your family will come to know Christ." This has come to pass. Finally the local church rejoiced at the call to service of the family and have greatly supported them financially and by prayer.

The call to full-time Christian service is further enforced by those who volunteered to follow.<sup>2</sup> This type of

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, The Making of a Missionary, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

enthusiasm was rejected by the Lord and the volunteer eliminated himself due to the sacrifices that he would be called upon to make. Extra Biblical history informs us that all of the apostles did missionary service.<sup>1</sup> Of particular interest and worthy note is Matthias the apostle chosen by lot to replace Judas (Acts 1:23-26). McBrine writes about Matthias in this way:

There were colonies of Jews and other Hebrews to be found in practically every center of population throughout the Middle East. There is therefore no difficulty in accepting the tradition of his apostleship in the regions of Armenia.<sup>2</sup>

The sovereignty of God is an absolute necessity when considering the call of God to missionary service because Christian missions are no human undertaking, but a supernatural divine enterprise.<sup>3</sup> This latter point cannot be stressed enough when dealing with a work of this nature which deals with choosing. The reader begins to realize the gravity of never choosing simply on the basis of reason and thus even in some small degree undermining His majestic sovereignty.

Kane rightly states, "Not only does God make sovereign choice of the man, He also decides the kind of ministry

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<sup>1</sup>William S. McBrine, The Search for the Twelve Apostles (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1973), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>3</sup>Glover, The Bible Basis of Missions, p. 70.

His messenger will engage upon.<sup>1</sup>

Harry Boer improperly stresses God's sovereignty over that of the Great Commission.<sup>2</sup> This is unfortunate as God the Holy Spirit is the author of both the call and the need which cannot be divided. Next, the examination of the Great Commission will be necessary.

### The Great Commission

The Great Commission is found in its most extensive form in Matthew 28:19-20. Whenever this order has been obeyed by earnest Christians, the church has grown. Negatively, when spiritual life has become cold and feeble missionary zeal and effort as a result has declined.<sup>3</sup> Robert Glover goes on to state,

We write with deep conviction as to the necessity of testing all present missionary work by New Testament standards and rediscovering the great root principles in which the church of the first century found the law of its service and the secret of its triumph over the powers of darkness.<sup>4</sup>

In Acts 1:8 the stress on δυναμις (power) has been the missing ingredient by a good many Evangelicals. At the expense of being labeled fanatics the seeking for this power has unfortunately slipped into the realm of pentecostalism.

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>3</sup>Glover, The Bible Basis of Missions, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

Some Christians are so afraid of wild-fire that they have become afraid of any fire.

The Great Commission is not some option to Christian discipleship. It is a call to Christian disciples to go and make disciples.

Therefore, there must be a direct connection between the universal Lordship of Christ and the worldwide mission of the Christian church.<sup>1</sup> Harold Lindsell enforces this by stating that although Jesus Christ commissioned men to go He did not start something new here, but simply enlarged on the disclosed will and plan of God.<sup>2</sup>

There is abroad today a host of theologians like Culver, Kane<sup>3</sup> and Bright among others who take the approach that the "go" of the Great Commission is not so much an imperative as a temporal translation as: "having gone," or "as you go" make disciples. The reason they feel free to translate the participle "going" this way is because the only main verb in this verse is "make disciples." Campus Crusade under John Bright's capable leadership promotes this view so as to mobilize the lay churchmen to evangelize the world. This in effect eliminates the missionary call.

Most mission societies are experiencing a drop in

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup>Lindsell, Missionary Principles and Practices, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>Kane, Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective, p. 46.

the number of missionaries.<sup>1</sup> A cold materialism ever eats at the Christian church membership. Consequently this new interpretation puts making disciples on just a local level relieving many whom the Holy Spirit is dealing with. In essence the theme "Every Christian a missionary" may get some people to knock on doors but it does nothing to enhance the missionary movement. It should be stressed too that most missionaries begin witnessing locally but they do not stay there.

Kane is inconsistent here when he states,

In several passages of his epistles Paul seems to make a distinction between the 'spiritual' and the 'secular' or 'material' (Rom. 15:27; 1 Cor. 9:11). In his own case Paul was conscious of having been appointed to a special ministry (1 Tim. 1:12) that of teaching and preaching the Word (2 Tim. 1:11).<sup>2</sup>

Further he also states,

It is generally assumed that the word 'go' is an imperative verb and constitutes the last command of Christ. This is not correct. The word 'go' is not an imperative. It is an aorist participle and should be translated 'having gone' or 'as you go.'<sup>3</sup>

This missionary felt that circumstances controlled by God would do the scattering. This may have been true in the book of Acts but it is strongly suspected that there are many would-be missionaries being lulled into despondancy by

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, The Making of a Missionary, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 27,28.

<sup>3</sup>Kane, Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective, p. 46.

this error. If a revival should sweep the land, confessions of this type of disobedience would be great in number. They would cry out, "I felt God calling me but I did not act."

Cleon Rogers<sup>1</sup> presents in detail an excellent reply to this latest theory in which the strong "Go" in the missionary command has been replaced by a weak "as you go." He believes that a closer examination of the grammar of Matthew 28:19-20 shows that the imperative sense is more accurate.<sup>2</sup>

The following examples cited by Rogers need to be mentioned here so that this point is settled once and for all.

(1). Genesis 27:13--'Go, bring.' Rebekah when speaking to Jacob. The Septuagint text of manuscript B has an aorist participle followed by an imperative. The interesting thing is that in the Hebrew text both are imperatives.

(2). Exodus 5:18--'Go and work.' Certainly Pharoah did not mean having gone, then work.

(3). Matthew 2:8--'Go and search.' It could be possibly translated 'when you go search out' but the urgency of King Herod demands an imperative 'go and search out.'

(4). Matthew 17:27--'Go . . . and cast.' Here the Lord gives Peter the specific task to carry out.

(5). Matthew 28:7--'Go and tell His disciples.' This was not a matter of 'when you go' or 'as you go' or 'having gone' but 'go and report.'<sup>3</sup>

It should be observed that in all these examples without the action of the participle "go" having taken place it would be impossible to carry out the second command.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cleon Rogers, "The Great Commission," Bibliotheca Sacra, 110:437 (July, 1973).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 260.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 263.



As the context often determines translation it must also be recognized that this was a teacher telling His students what to do.<sup>1</sup>

In this age of individualistic endeavour where everyone is seeking to specialize in his or her particular field of expertise, the problem of submitting to such a command is difficult. This is why the unfortunate use of this translation is so popular today.

The Great Commission as listened to by its first hearers, the apostles, was shocking. Not only was the dispersion (those Jews dispersed in the then known world 1 Pet. 1:1) to be evangelized but the Gentiles as well. G. Campbell Morgan comments that Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and disciple the nations." He did not say, "Make disciples of," there is no substantive in the command except nations.<sup>2</sup> It is a command to influence all the nations towards His standards and ideals.<sup>3</sup>

#### By Practice

Recent converts to Christianity in the Third World have the Great Commission placed on them too. It is valid for us to see what their interpretation is.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>2</sup>G. Campbell Morgan, The Gospel According to Matthew (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1929), p. 321.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Ato Tesfaye was converted to Christ when he was a young man. He was an educated Ethiopian of the ruling tribe. Because of his conversion he was cast out of his home. He went to Bible school and heard the call to go. His heart burned to see a fierce tribe, known as the Gooji Gallas, evangelized. Through a series of moves after Bible school he was appointed to start some churches where this tribe and another tribe, the Derassans, had a peaceful border. It was here that he started two churches and learned to speak the Gooji language perfectly. After the revolution he was taken and made the secretary of seventeen farmer's associations. He was not happy here although the farmers were happy to have such an honest leader. Finally he asked the Derassan church to send him to the Goojis. After much prayer this group of 225 churches sent him in to evangelize the Goojis. When Tesfaye and his wife and two children went in they were very happy although there was unrest in this area. In the six months while Ato Tesfaye was there he faithfully taught the Gospel and was instrumental in stopping one tribal war. In October (1977) Gooji warriors killed him and his oldest boy. His wife with one other boy and a ten-day old baby fled.

Ato Tesfaye always showed courage for he was following the Great Commission. As a result of his obedience eighteen new evangelists have left all to follow Christ and the Great Commission. It would appear by this example and

countless others that newer converts to Christianity take these words literally and seriously.

Some believe that a missionary call can only be validated by the subsequent experience a perspective candidate will have when he attempts to cross a culture.

Dr. Wagner believes that every Christian is not a missionary<sup>1</sup> but that he will display the spiritual gift of missionary work. He forcefully states:

What is a missionary call, then? To come right to the point there is no difference between the missionary call and the missionary gift. As a matter of fact there is no difference between any call and the corresponding gift.<sup>2</sup>

Although this sounds very good it does not include the Great Commission and therefore becomes too utilitarian. An anthropologist who has not believed in Christ may have the innate ability to cross a culture but this does not mean that he has been commissioned or called of God.

J. Robertson McQuilkan feels that the Great Commission did not just want the world informed but was interested in their being won to God.<sup>3</sup> Of course, once they are won to faith in Christ they should be joined to a visible church. He goes on to state,

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<sup>1</sup>C. Peter Wagner, Stop The World I Want To Get On (Glendale, California: G/L Publications, 1974), p. 35.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>C. Peter Wagner, Church/Mission Tension Today (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), p. 40.

The Great Commission was understood by those who heard it. They set about establishing churches.<sup>1</sup>

This latter statement can be backed up by facts from the book of Acts and so it becomes a convincing argument for today as well.

Calvin holds this same view when he writes,

And it is obvious how necessary it was that the apostles should be clearly told of the calling of the gentiles from the fact that even after receiving the commandment it was with the greatest reluctance that they approached them, for fear they would pollute their doctrine (Acts 10:28).<sup>2</sup>

### Summary

The Great Commission is a serious call to begin the church beyond the bounds of one's own ethnic background, therefore, it requires obedience to the first two commands, go and make disciples. Everyone is not a missionary but everyone needs to respond in obedience to this call and let God be sovereign in His choosing.

### The Personal Call

There is another basis upon which a missionary may be called. Generally it comes after an obedient response to the Great Commission. This is fundamentally seeking to determine God's precise will for a person to enter God's service on a continuous basis.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>John Calvin, Matthew's Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), p. 251.

This call comes for continuing longer periods until the person is involved full-time for the Lord. The apostles, Peter, James, and John, left their fishing and followed the Lord for longer and longer periods.<sup>1</sup> Even after the Lord's resurrection some of the apostles took up fishing again. John Mark is another example of one who turned back. After this he went with Barnabas and eventually was thought to be profitable for the Lord's work which Paul was leading. It is also believed that this missionary eventually wrote First and Second Peter plus the second Gospel.<sup>2</sup>

#### The right relationship

The right relationship to the Lordship of Christ is an absolute requirement for continued service or to receive and fulfill a personal call by Him. Although the reason for this may seem obvious it is because day by day His will is being revealed to His missionaries.

God's will is not an easy thing to be determined. It could best be described as a combination of confirmations found in God's word plus the circumstances which validate a strong inner sense that this is the direction to follow. If this act will glorify God and the Christian feels led, He should launch out seeking the Lord's leading as doors open or close. However, the Christian disciple is not at liberty

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<sup>1</sup>Beaver, Missionary Principles and Practices, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>McBrine, The Search for the Twelve Apostles, p. 70.

to pick or choose his calling.<sup>1</sup> The Lord was not offering optional life-styles when He called His own.

#### The call subjectively

As a new Christian begins to mature there should come a growing awareness of submitting to the Lord for full-time service. This call, as the writer experienced it, was not a sudden conviction but rather a time when to be with the Lord and in His presence became uppermost. For several months the feeling persisted but as the writer is a pharmacist he felt he did not want to be called on the basis of feelings and a greater interest in God's Word. Even when sending the first letter to the sending agency, great negativism persisted to the point of listing three reasons why he could not be a missionary. Now it was to be seen if this call would work out practically.

#### The call objectively

Aside from having at least three obstacles for entering full-time service there was a very good reason to enter that service. Both the husband as pharmacist and the wife as a teacher were qualified to fill needs on the field.

As the family was large, with six children, so too the support took longer than normal to raise but once these funds were supplied in such a wonderful way, they had the

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, Christian Missions in Biblical Perspective, p. 49.

assurance the details of the subjective call were being worked out.

The objective call continues to validate itself as the missionary begins to cross the culture and learns to adapt to his new country.

#### How Does the Original Call Influence a New Field?

The original call and all its previous ramifications definitely effect the choice of a new mission field. A certain geographical location with its people's customs and religions was bridged because of God's call. So therefore, the second time becomes only a building block on the first as God continues to complete that original call.

The Israelites continued to hearken back upon the historical acts of God in calling and delivering them from the hands of their enemies. They did this to gain present strength to face present obstacles. This principle is essentially the same as a person looks to his second field of service.

#### The Problem of Non-committal to a Call

In the S.I.M. booklet, "Who Should Go?," the challenge to involvement is thus worded,

If you feel that the training experience and qualifications you have, together with the spiritual growth you have experienced make it possible for you to serve abroad perhaps you are ready to answer the question 'should I go?' If the answer is 'yes' or even 'I think so' the Sudan Interior Mission would like to know about that answer. We would like to help you implement your decision--

help you take definite action while God is speaking to you.<sup>1</sup>

This large established missions society handles the problem of non-committal by appealing, firstly, to the prospective missionary's natural talents and, secondly, to "recent spiritual growth"<sup>2</sup> (a very nebulous term) as the basis for becoming committed.

The Evangelical Alliance Mission handles this problem in a much more direct fashion in their pamphlet, Where Do I Go From Here?<sup>3</sup> The subtitle states, "Guidance for the young person genuinely committed to Christ." They put equal importance upon formal preparation involving school and other means of learning and informal preparation. Their pamphlet has a much more direct selling approach with lots of questions on "How To" although it appears to be more Biblically based than the first.

The most contemporary challenge to involvement is found in David M. Howard's pamphlet by the Evangelical Union of S. A., Don't Wait for the Macedonians.<sup>4</sup> He writes,

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<sup>1</sup>R. J. Davis, The Missionary Call (Cedar Grove, New Jersey: Sudan Interior Mission), n.d.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Where Do I Go From Here? (Wheaton, Illinois: The Evangelical Alliance Mission), 1972.

<sup>4</sup>David M. Howard, Don't Wait for the Macedonians (Englewood, New Jersey: Evangelical Union of South America), n.d.



God did not rebuke Paul for trying to go to Asia and to Bithynia. In both cases Paul was mistaken. But this mistake was made in all sincerity as he attempted to fulfill the great commission. There is a far greater danger of missing God's will by sitting still than by moving.<sup>1</sup>

It is noteworthy that this pamphlet says nothing about vocation and training in preparation to go.

There is a decided decline in people of the world getting involved in secular community programs. This apathy towards commitment is based upon fear and a tremendous desire to be self-centered. Consequently, if the person senses a chance of advancing through a community organization then he will use it for his own ends.

Unfortunately this sickness has spread to the church so that the apathy we see there, for people not to get involved, is further reflected in young people when it comes time to go to the mission field. The 1970's undoubtedly will be a period for "passing the baton" to the national church.<sup>2</sup> This will mean that the foreign missionary is becoming a vanishing breed.<sup>3</sup> Although McQuilkan in this latter article is making a strong theological plea for the perennial need for foreign missionaries the facts must be faced that fewer are going and those who do go prefer the short-term.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Wagner, Church/Mission Tensions Today, p. 39.

### Short Term Missionary Service

C. P. Wagner feels that as the call is the same as the gift that short-term service<sup>1</sup> becomes a way to try out your gift! He declares,

Experiment with as many as possible. To try out the missionary gift you can become involved in a summer missions program, short-term missionary service or a cross cultural involvement in your own country.<sup>2</sup>

This method seems highly ego-centered. Undoubtedly if a missionary candidate is going to the field to see if he will like it or not, the chances are very good that he will not have the spiritual strength to withstand the first problem he faces. This may come when the field leader tells him to cut his hair! At present there are between 4,000 to 5,000 short-term missionaries out of a total of some 55,000 Protestant missionaries in all parts of the world.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Stop the World I Want to Get On, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>3</sup>Kane, The Making of a Missionary, p. 74.

## CHAPTER II

### AM I COMMITTED TO A CERTAIN MISSION?

Undoubtedly, if a person has served as a missionary and for the reasons of accident, sickness, political trouble<sup>1</sup> or education of the family has temporarily left that mission, he would feel somewhat obligated to re-examine that organization again.

Also another mission would be less than wise to accept missionaries from other agencies if they had left their services for reasons other than the above.

However, the factors which would need to be considered because a certain field closed due to political difficulties may necessitate choosing a new mission.

The obvious danger which would arise is the never ending comparison of the previous mission with the new agency. A large part of this could be termed the process of adaption while if this persisted beyond two to three years it may simply be a carnality which creeps in to destroy the missionary's fruitfulness.

#### The Term Indigenous

One of the most overused words and least understood is the term indigenous. All missions claim this principle

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<sup>1</sup>Lindsell, Missionary Principles and Practices, p. 85.

first as all cars claim to have four wheels (not counting the spare). Roland Allen, possibly one of the more popular supporters of the indigenous method, feels that the churches formed must be ones the people themselves will support. Also it should not be so elaborate or costly that small communities cannot maintain it. The test will be their ability to carry on managing their own business independent of any foreign subsidies.<sup>1</sup>

As this term evolved it came to mean self-supporting, self-governing and self-sustaining. In this present age indigenization of the church can mean anything from drinking real blood in the communion service in Africa to paying pastors in the Philippines.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the cliché, indigenous, has lost its original meaning and should be used carefully and understandably.

#### Fusion or Partnership

If partnership, or fusion between mission societies and the churches they have formed is to work, flexibility and adaption is required. It is imperative they both have the right attitudes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Roland Allen, Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1952), p. 151.

<sup>2</sup>The A.B.W.E. in the Philippines have a plan of paying their pastors until the work becomes self-sufficient, yet they claim to be indigenous.

<sup>3</sup>Wagner, Church/Mission Tensions Today, p. 203.

First an example of fusion will be discussed. The Evangelical Lutheran Mission of Ethiopia is completely fused into the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This means that missionaries are stationed by the church and are directly responsible to the church in Ethiopia which they formed.

In this instance of fusion in a denominational mission all monies for missionaries' salaries come directly to the main office where they are paid out by the Ethiopian Evangelical Lutheran Church and their officers making the fused church dependent on foreign funds.

Two illustrations of this method could be cited which would show this way to have difficulties. (1). In Ethiopia due to the socialist revolution laws were enacted to limit high salaried positions. This meant that the president and secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church had to take a substantial cut in wages. This resulted in a poor testimony and a means of propaganda against Christianity. (2). In this instance a white missionary was seized by the authorities carrying a bag of money which was the offering from a certain small Evangelical Lutheran Church. He was formerly accused of taking money from the poor people and sending it back to his home country! Of course, this was false but a poor testimony was achieved as a result of this fusion principle which allowed him to handle their money.

Partnership means that the mission acts like a good

neighbor trying to help and support the national church wherever possible. In this case the agency handles its own funds, pays its own missionaries, and along with the church carries out its own programs.

The Partnership principle is also fraught with problems. The church leaders, although independent, are often charged with being the white man's lackies and not being in control (of the purse strings).

Generally due to health and sanitation requirements missionaries have to live at a higher standard than their national third-world brethren. This is all right in the church's early stages of development but as time passes this can produce harmful jealousies.

### Doctrinally

In becoming committed to a mission the person must have a clear understanding of their doctrinal position.

### Inerrancy

We are living in a day and age where Evangelical Christians are beginning to question the inerrancy of the Bible. Now many missions have updated their doctrinal statements of faith to either clearly indicate their position or to cover it up.

For example, to say that the Word of God is infallible leaves many open doors for liberalism to seep in. "Infallible" can mean without error, or it can mean that

where the Bible speaks on matters of faith and salvation it is inerrant.

However, generally these people believe that in the area of history and its facts the Bible may or may not be true.

This debate is going on in the Western sending countries so the position one takes here will inevitably be taught on the field. Now, if one is committed to the position of absolute inerrancy of the Scriptures as found in their original form, it would never be a lasting fruitful relationship to go with a mission who is not.

There are many other divisive doctrines which have been known to split churches so these need to be examined as well.

#### Tongues and Spiritism

A clear position on the use and/or propagation of the gift of tongues is needed.

Also each mission needs to know their theological position on whether or not believers can be possessed by demons and their powers.

Another source of division which can come in an interdenominational type of mission is the type or kind of eschatology they teach on the field. Most Third-World countries have new believers who have just become literate. Now if the Amillennial view in eschatology is put forth and taught

they begin to wonder where allegory begins and facts end in hermeneutics. Naturally when the Word of God becomes a rule of life this can be confusing to a new believer.

It should also be noted that radical dispensationalism can also be shown to cause confusion to new world Bible students.

#### Calvinism vs. Arminianism

It is interesting to note that these two views have never been a problem in the 2,700 Word of Life (S.I.M. related churches) in Ethiopia.

Most of the missionaries would be modified Calvinists<sup>1</sup> in their own doctrine while most of the national churches would be modified Arminians.<sup>2</sup>

#### Degree of Social Involvement

The validation of the Christian faith is seen by our love for one to another (Jn. 13:34).

There are also many other missions who do not preach the Gospel but do good works. They too seem to have a social concern.

The proper balance between an evangelistic (church planting and building up believers, say in a Bible school)

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<sup>1</sup>Modified Calvinists. He is a four point Calvinist who does not believe in the fifth point of Limited Atonement.

<sup>2</sup>Modified Arminian. He is one who believes that a person could apostate themselves and lose their salvation over a long period of backsliding.



ministry and social concern ministries like schools, clinics, hospital and agricultural needs to be maintained.

Now, suppose a missionary chose a new mission which strongly believed in church planting only. (The Gospel with no strings attached). He may become concerned how he could further the gospel by a social program and eventually leave the field in frustration if that had been his previous method of getting the good news out.

One Latin American church leader wants social revolutionaries, not missionary evangelists.<sup>1</sup> This clearly shows that the calling and the Great Commission will not be totally operative for those who choose this mission.

#### Financial Policies

Some may feel that it is even presumptuous to think that a Christian committed to full-time service can choose his or her mission.

One thing everyone is agreed on, however, is that the missions enterprise is costly. This means that if mistakes are made they too are expensive errors which may have been prevented had a little more thought gone into it at the beginning.

Stewardship is something which Christians are exhorted to exercise so money is one of the important considerations.

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Church/Mission Tensions Today, p. 203.

If ninety-two per cent or above of the missionary dollar is going directly towards missionary support then one may assume the organization is reliable. Most secular organizations use ten per cent for general office.

The Sudan Interior Mission, long established and one of the larger missions in the world, uses forty-four per cent of support figure for personal allowance, thirty per cent for maintenance and sixteen per cent for transportation.<sup>1</sup> The actual office and running expenses of the mission are about eight per cent of the support figure. This is very low for an organization this size.

One mission which gets the Scriptures into closed countries funnels off fifty per cent of an offering after an area representative speaks in the local church! Needless to say this seems like too much. They would do better to pay their representative a flat salary and have him send all the money to the general fund. (1). Some missionaries are allowed to make their needs known if asked, and to solicit support. (2). Others make only their needs known to God. (3). While others may be allowed to make their needs known only if asked. Sudan Interior Mission is in category number three while Worldwide Evangelization Crusade and Overseas Missionary Fellowship are in category number two.

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<sup>1</sup>Dollars and Sense About Missions (Toronto: Sudan Interior Mission), n.d.

### Schooling for Children

As couples choose a new mission field they will be interested in the schooling of their children.

Also, it is in this area where most parents tend to feel guilt at leaving their children in another's care. Therefore, problems could be inevitable.

The probability is that no school will be able to come up to the standard of the school on the previous field. This will be due to the fact that the memory is more inclined to remember the "good old times." Therefore, at the expense of the new school situation it will not get a fair chance to prove itself.

The availability and kind of schooling is an important consideration as a couple looks to a new field of service. Generally, their children are older so they would like schooling which would carry them through high school if possible.

### How to Measure the Success of a Mission?

Naturally if your mission is active in a hard or semi-hostile area, i.e. the Moslem world, it will be more difficult to measure the success of that mission.

Occasionally in areas which are receptive to the Gospel so that vast numbers of people believe, success is often measured by the number of new churches which are established.

It could be safely said that where great numbers are

turning to Christ there will be great amounts of false teaching and backsliding as the church needs to disciple and train these new converts, but lacks trained Christians to do so.

For example, if a missionary who worked long and hard with a few Moslems was suddenly placed in a receptive area he may become altogether frustrated as he sees men get converted to Christ and then fade away due to a lack of sound discipleship and teaching.

In 1976 in the Gideo area of Ethiopia there was an estimated 23,000 new believers added in a short time.

The one missionary there contacted hepatitis so he never did get an opportunity to teach these new ones. Several district Bible schools were started and this year (1978) eighty-five are attending the main Bible school. In part, the change in social conditions brought about this large influx of believers but this has brought with it worldliness such as drinking and polygamy. A sudden people's movement towards Christianity should be viewed with some suspicion as personal conversion is the Biblical norm. Also the initial phase of evangelism will produce numbers of professions but these new converts need to be added into the church before the Great Commission has been completed.

Often it is very difficult to find out the true picture with regards to programs on the field.

The tendency is to glamorize the work to its final

detriment. A typical instance would be the following statistics from The Sudan Interior Missions and The Evangelical Churches of West Africa.<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Churches</u>	<u>Sunday Attendance</u>	<u>Communicants</u>	<u>Pastors and Evangelists</u>
1908	1	unknown	10	0
1954	400	50,000	14,700	583
1964	900	300,000	21,000	650
1970	1,400	400,000	60,000	1,700

These figures are very revealing. If 1954 can be used as an African norm then approximately 1 in 3 Christians became members while 1 in 8 went into full-time service. In 1964 only 1 in 15 became members while 1 in 490 went into full-time service. In 1970 this trend began to reverse itself and 1 in 6.5 were members while 1 in 235 were in full-time service.

Although there has been a dramatic growth in churches it would appear that there has been a correspondingly alarming degree of coldness which would have only 1 in 6.5 as members.

How one is able to honestly measure the mission one is committed to will have a direct result on the work accomplished. If in the past it has been a success and the life-term missionary force is stable or growing then this will indicate its effectiveness or lack of it.

As observed, the number of churches planted on the

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Church/Mission Tensions Today, p. 198.

field may or may not act as a source of evaluation. Many organizations can build straw houses with statistics. The statistical data may indicate phenomenal success while actually the mission is in decline.

## CHAPTER III

### AM I CONSIDERING A CERTAIN FIELD?

#### Introduction

It should necessarily follow that after a person is sure of the call he has received to missionary service, he will begin to investigate various mission societies and their policies. At this point the prospective candidate may have a specific area in mind which he wishes to serve. This area of service can be divided into two sections, namely vocationally and geographically.

#### Vocationally

##### Church planting

Legendary figures such as C. T. Studd, Hudson Taylor, Henry Venn and others dot the historical landscape of missions. As the missionary candidate enters this field it would not be with awe as much as with a determination to plant national churches while pushing back Satan's strongholds. Modern mission strategy is not simplistic.<sup>1</sup> It involves the right objectives at the right time using the right program with the right personnel.

These four aspects of mission strategy need to be analyzed in light of the Scriptures.

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Stop the World I Want to Get On, p. 77.

The main reason that church planters do not accomplish their goals is that they misunderstand the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19-20). This verse has four verbs in it, "go, make disciples, baptize, and teach." The main verb is "make disciples" while the others are participles. When the main objective is to make disciples, the right program or method must involve going, baptizing and teaching. These latter three pillars of the Great Commission are supporting the one objective--to make disciples. They are not an end in themselves; the end must be to make disciples or plant churches.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Wagner succinctly points out,

One entire mission might concentrate on translating the Bible, for example. Bible translation is an essential function of the Body, for without the word of God in the language of the people they would not be able to hear the message of salvation. But proper strategy will coordinate this work with the other members of the Body so that translated Bibles become not just some exotic contributions to the literature of mankind but effective instruments for making disciples.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, whatever the field or service which the candidate eventually finds himself in, it must be part of an overall whole objective to make disciples and plant churches.

Roland Allen in great detail sights a present-day contrast.<sup>3</sup> The missionary in his earnest desire to start churches went about it in the wrong manner.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 78.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>3</sup>Allen, Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours, p. 164.



He exhorted and taught his converts until they began to understand that it was to their advantage to lend their help.<sup>1</sup>

As the country in this example was poor the advantage derived no longer became spiritual but material.

There is an easy way like this which will be presented to every new missionary. He will either accept its expedience to the church's detriment or he will chose to make disciples and plant churches which will not be dependant upon him.

Compare these two methods.<sup>2</sup>

#### Paternalistic Church Planting

1. Mission hires and pays agents from among converts.
2. Mission funds used to stimulate growth of national church in first stage of development.
3. Hopes to discontinue eventually the use of mission funds but finds it difficult to do so.
4. Uses the more advanced and intelligent of the National church members in the capacity of mission paid coleporters Bible teachers, evangelists and pastors.
5. Mission selects and pays for the training of promising young Christians trusting that they will enter the ministry.

#### National Approach

1. No mission-paid national pastors.
2. Is willing to trust unpaid lay leaders to shepherd the flock.
3. Church is encouraged to be self-reliant from beginning.
4. Church meets in homes or buildings belonging to Christians. Foreign funds not used to build churches for them.
5. Leaders trained in local environment. Not taken from community, family or job.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Beaver, Missionary Principles and Practices, p. 18.

6. Mission acts as moral and spiritual policemen.

6. Mission does not select, send and pay for training of young people.

7. Mission erects large and prepetious compounds--churches--schools--hospitals architecture--money direction--all western.

7. Discipline is left to local church.

8. New churches planted by existing churches.

Both of the above methods seek to eventually establish indigenous self-reliant self-propagating churches.

Many missionaries by using the first method have not planted churches. They merely have made Western transplants.

In Vietnam when the work of the Christian Missionary Alliance began they had definite objectives in view. Their goal was to win adults to Christ and establish churches in all places where converts are won.<sup>1</sup> In the earliest days Dr. R. A. Jaffray kept to the self-support principle. For the support of workers he reduced mission subsidy ten per cent for each ten new believers. In a short number of years there were eight self-supporting churches. Some twelve years later seventy-five per cent of the 121 congregations had become self-supporting.<sup>2</sup> However, at a later date when the mission tried to withdraw its support, relations became strained but fortunately when the church and mission stopped talking about money it passed away.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Church/Mission Tensions Today, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 169.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., 170.

In 1977 the church and Sudan Interior Mission of Ethiopia worked out a program of the nationalization of Bible schools. In the year 1977 they received 100% of their previous subsidy to mission paid Bible schools; 1978 will be 80% so that in five years they will be completely self-supporting.

In summary, church planting has been given, not as a choice or alternative to a certain field of service but rather as a basis for a missionary presence in any country of the world.

It is widely felt that a planted church has not fully taken root until they are sending their own missionaries out. This is the case of the Sudan Interior Mission churches in Nigeria. The Evangelical Churches of West Africa send their own missionaries out and in 1970 their budget was \$20,682.79.<sup>1</sup> However, Sudan Interior Mission does not feel its work is finished in Nigeria yet. Dr. Ian Hay, General Director writes,

S.I.M. is not concerned with its euthanasia. . . . As long as E.C.W.A. needs S.I.M. to accomplish that goal, the two will seek new ways of sharing that burden.<sup>2</sup>

Every missionary, whether he is teaching school, working in a hospital, flying an aeroplane or operating a radio or press should ultimately be there to plant churches.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

Various choices available

Each respondent to the Great Commission will be faced with various fields of service open to him. From this writer's experience it would be best not to get any one field of service too firmly fixed on this side of the ocean. Because of sickness and furlough the missionary staff is quite fluid so new missionaries are often called upon to fill in areas they least suspect.

Personal example: First term.<sup>1</sup>

This same story could be told over and over again and for this reason I believe that during the first term the new missionary should be prepared for anything. Undoubtedly at the end of the first term his gifts will be obvious to the mission leaders and those he has worked with. It would be wise, if at all possible, for the furloughing

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<sup>1</sup>I entered S.I.M. as a missionary pharmacist. The first four months before language school were spent in the main pharmacy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The plan was that I would return to the pharmacy and the other pharmacist would go to language school. This plan failed however, and I was stationed to Shashamane to be the hospital administrator for two hospitals and look after the pharmacy. However, upon arrival the doctor who had asked for me to do this had to leave early. The new doctor wanted to be the administrator. So I worked in the hospitals in the mornings and was asked to teach in the Bible school each afternoon. As I was new in the language this afforded an excellent opportunity to learn it by teaching. The Bible school work was interesting and soon I was working closely with an emerging church in that area. Then suddenly a famine came to Ethiopia. After much prayer the leaders felt I was the one to go to the North and head up that program. So for one year we managed a station in the midst of the famine plus evangelize that area.

missionary then to take some further training in the area he will be working in upon his return to the field.

Some people feel that it is impossible to separate the spiritual life of a person from his physical and intellectual parts of his life.<sup>1</sup> In other words, if a trained medical doctor went to the field he would show forth Christ in his practice to the same degree he would in his home country. One medical doctor even felt that to witness to patients in the hospital ward was "missionary kid stuff" and should be done by the evangelist. He felt that his gift was helps and that to get involved anywhere else was not building up the body of Christ. This type of reasoning leads to all kinds of social services to the neglect of the basic spiritual aims of missions.<sup>2</sup> In all cases the National Christians are looking to the missionaries for leadership in the field. If the missionary is a pilot, but while he is on the ground he is constantly talking about the Lord and is enthused and excited about spiritual things, he will greatly influence others and never be forgotten although his term may be short.

#### Medical

The medical nursing profession is one in which if the person is proficient they can be constantly at work.

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<sup>1</sup>Harold R. Cook, Missionary Life and Work (Chicago: Moody Press, 1959), p. 264.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The medical needs of North America are not being met. With the abundance of hospitals and doctors, one still has to wait to get a bed in the hospital. This problem is greatly magnified in the Third World. Also if the missionary is in a clinic or hospital the people are coming to him instead of him going to the people. It would be much better for a person with this training who was contemplating missionary service to think about rural out-reach clinics or mobile clinics so that the spiritual side of their ministry can be fulfilled. If a nurse is working sixty to eighty hours a week in a hospital, week in and week out, without an outside ministry she will not last more than one term without serious problems developing which may sideline her from the ministry.

There is likely to be an increase in the number of short-term missionaries in the future.<sup>1</sup> This will most likely be due to the spirit of the age which tells young people to keep their options open. The youth of the world are traveling more and more before they complete their studies. Aside from the fact that these young people have not considered the claims of the Great Commission with the same gravity, it must be remembered that they can be of some value. In crossing a culture they suffer shock by "going native" which can cause tremendous injury to their own health. It

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, The Making of a Missionary, p. 74.

should then be mandatory for short-termers and first-termers to measure their success so that if they wish to return they will be better prepared.

This is also an age when everyone is seeking to find their spiritual gifts. Here are seven steps which should help one to do this.

1. Know what the gifts are and what they imply. Study (1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12; and Eph. 4).
2. Try out as many of these gifts as possible.
3. Examine your own feelings about the gift you are experimenting with. One should feel unusual joy when using it.
4. Evaluate your gift. It should be producing fruit. If you are a teacher others will learn. If you are an evangelist others will come to Christ.
5. Find out what others say about your gift. If you have a gift others in the church will recognize it. Fellow Christians should confirm every gift.
6. Develop and use your gift. Remember it must be done with the fruit of the Spirit.
7. If you find your gift is not being an evangelist do not stop witnessing. God has souls for you but not in the abundance He would have for someone with this gift.<sup>1</sup>

#### Media

In this world of rapid change new and exciting areas of service are being made available to missionaries. With the transistorized radio becoming commonplace the size of the audience is immense.<sup>2</sup> Another parallel aid is that of tapes using cassette machines.<sup>3</sup> This has become very popular where Christian radio stations have become nationalized. Radio

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<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Stop the World I Want to Get On, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup>Cook, Missionary Life and Work, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Voice of the Gospel was nationalized in Ethiopia in March 1977 and changed to Radio Voice of Revolutionary Ethiopia. The result has been a great turning to cassette tapes to meet the spiritual needs and spread the Word.

Another form of media is putting together slide-tape series for national evangelists to use as teaching and preaching aids. To date, due to lack of personnel this field has never been properly developed, however, it offers great potential.

Television has also become a media which will in the next twenty years be extensively used to further the gospel. This "window of the world" could well be the single method of at least pre-evangelizing the earth. To properly evangelize and plant churches it is of course necessary to have dialogue. For the most part these tools do not offer this yet, however, in countries where the Gospel preaching of Christianity is closed this becomes the sole means.

#### Literature

This ministry in missions is always one which is widely received in most foreign countries. There are three requirements needed which are:

1. The writing of suitable works in the language or dialect which involves careful translation work.
2. The financing of literature which is expensive but to some degree can be self-supporting if the quality is good.
3. Distribution is also needed so that the literature is put in the hands of those who will read it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 210.



### Other ministries

There are many other ministries which are helps to those missionaries who are out planting churches. One of these is the service offered by missionary aviation. The time saved by this useful means of transportation is immense. Aerial photography as a tool for missiological research is a new way to use the aeroplane. P. M. Sandahl writes, "Testing sails to locate peoples receptive to the gospel is a cardinal principle in mission strategy."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, aerial photography would be looking for rapid cultural change, cross cultural borrowing or an increased incidence of anxiety or stress.<sup>2</sup>

There are also missionaries who teach the children of other missionaries so their parents can give more time to evangelism and church planting.

Missionary pharmacists are able to prepare and manufacture drugs for clinics and for hospitals. In this way costs are cut for medicine and the gospel preached.

Illustration: Upon arrival on the field I was asked, as a missionary pharmacist, to prepare an ointment for burns. It was extremely complicated and also effective. Shortly after compounding this preparation an emergency call came

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<sup>1</sup>P. M. Sandahl, "Aerial Photography: A Tool for Missiological Research," in Missiology, Vol. I, No. 3 (Pasadena, California, 1971), p. 505.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

for it from a down-country hospital. A woman, while sleeping in her grass hut, had inadvertently rolled into her fire. She was severely burned. This ointment when applied saved her life. Later as she was convalescing in the hospital she heard the hospital evangelist speaking about the Lord. She came under great conviction because she had made a profession of faith some eight years earlier but was now a backslider. At that time she gave her heart and life to Christ.

Now, although this was a very rewarding experience for the missionary pharmacist to hear, it must be remembered that this missionary must also himself learn the language. He must begin to cross the culture so that he will be a more effective messenger.

It would do well if all missionaries in these specialized fields would ever keep the priority of church planting uppermost in their ministries. It is much easier to escape into one's field of expertise than to determinedly work on the main objective. Some form of spiritual service and direct involvement is a must or the vision will be lost.

#### Geographically

There is yet another way of considering the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19,20). In this instance "going and making disciples" are called Evangelism, thus becoming the reason why the church exists in the world. The second part

of the Great Commission is "baptizing and teaching" which becomes edification and explains why the church is a gathered community.<sup>1</sup> This paradigm helps one to understand more clearly the Biblical approach of church planting as it is seen in the book of Acts. This approach is basically the same as that used by the Sudan Interior Mission in the Word of Life churches in the New Life For All campaigns which have been instrumental in bringing vast numbers to know Christ. The emphasis is basically on not using the church as a center of evangelism but as a center of edification. This has, to no small degree, produced a large number of professions of faith but it sometimes becomes impossible to get these people to church so that they can grow spiritually.

### Classifications

Fuller Seminary has developed a classification system using "M" and "G" as symbols for Missions and Geography,

1. Missions--one (M1) are missionaries who go to plant churches in their same culture, like "Jerusalem and Judea" of Acts 1:8, i.e. Japanese missionaries who work with Japanese in Brazil.
2. Missions--two (M2). These missionaries go to another culture but the difference between the two is not a radical difference. In Acts 8:1 "Samaria" would be an example, i.e. American citizen becoming a missionary to Europe.
3. Missions--three (M3). These missionaries go to a radical different culture. The "uttermost parts of the earth" as in Acts 8:1, i.e. a Canadian going to Ethiopia.
4. Geography--one (G1). The worker ministers in his own homeland, i.e. an American from New York working with

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<sup>1</sup>Gene A. Getz, Sharpening the Focus on the Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), p. 270.

Navajos in Arizona.

5. Geography--two (G2). The worker has to leave his own country to get to the place where he is sent. Most missionaries are G2 missionaries.<sup>1</sup>

There are six possible combinations. These are M1-G1, M1-G2, M2-G1, M2-G2, M3-G1, M3-G2 missionaries.<sup>2</sup> Only the M1-G1 and the M2-G1 missionary will not be working in the Third World. Extensive research has shown that most of the two billion plus people who do not know Jesus Christ as their Savior will be won by M2 and M3 missionaries. Most foreign missionaries are M3-G2 missionaries.

In considering a geographical field it would do well to consider that the radical change in culture will be a strain. Also the change in geography will take some adaptation particularly if it is in the Southern hemisphere.

Because the Western countries are usually the senders the westerner will have a further obstacle to overcome. Many Third World countries have rejected Western colonialism and neo-colonialism and the culture associated with them. They are tending to look to the communist world for their source of inspiration.<sup>3</sup>

Racism too has become a problem for M3-G2 missionaries. Wingrove Taylor, vice president of the Caribbean

<sup>1</sup>Wagner, Stop the World I Want to Get On, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup>A M1-G1 missionary is designated as one individual.

<sup>3</sup>Roger Ringenberg, Nationalism, Racism, Communism and the Missionary, unpublished paper presented in class (Winona Lake, Indiana: Grace Theological Seminary, June 1977), p. 13.

Association of Evangelicals states,

Although it may be harder to adjust to and overcome rejection where there was once widespread acceptance I earnestly point out to missionaries that they come to grips with the situation.<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary for the new M3-G2 missionary to learn how to handle hostility and rejection and by his integrity earn the respect he once was freely given. He needs to be a cultural relativist and Biblical absolutist.

Many seek to know the geographical will of God. (It appears that Jonah had some problems in this area). This is good and proper but other factors should be considered as well. If, for example, a person finds it impossible to like certain races of people he should exclude them as a possibility or change his own prejudices.

Very often health problems develop in stressful G2 climates, i.e. too hot, too cold, too dry, too damp or too high an altitude, therefore, these factors should all be considered in choosing a mission field. If a person dislikes camping out in his own country he should seriously question M3-G2 pioneer missionary work. The potential for such a career would be minimal.

Occasionally missionary candidates feel called to work with a particular group of people. This calling needs to be substantiated and confirmed as much as possible before entry to that group is made. For example, if a person is

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

not willing to give up eating pork he should not count too seriously upon his call to the Moslems even though there is a tremendous need.

### Soil testing

In choosing a mission field it would be prudent to explore the receptivity of the people to the gospel message. This is often called soil testing.

The 600 million Muslim population has been notoriously resistant to the gospel down thru the ages. A good anticipatory strategy will test the soil among the Muslims before beginning to sow the seed. Soil testing missionaries are urgently needed to tell Evangelists where the most likely place for seed sowing is.<sup>1</sup> It would appear that Bangladesh and Turkey should demand close and accurate soil testing in the months ahead. It must be remembered that receptivity is not studied as an exercise in anthropology but for its application to the complex process of church growth.<sup>2</sup> If receptivity is demonstrated in one section it is likely to be found in another. One major key to unlocking these areas is a close study of man and his social structures. It is sensed that any social change which might appear in a

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<sup>1</sup>C. P. Wagner, Frontiers in Mission Strategy (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Wayne Weld and D. A. McGavran, Principles of Church Growth (S. Pasadena, California: W. Carey, 1971), p. 10.

given area may be an opening for the gospel. Seemingly, this type of reasoning must be followed by a definite leading of the Holy Spirit, and many other factors to effectively reach fallen men and women with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## CONCLUSION

This writer is convinced that although there is some confusion as to the exact meaning of the term indigenous (it generally refers to plants native to a given geographical area) that the indigenous method is the only way of ultimately evangelizing the world. Right now the church is unable to enlist a sufficient number of missionaries to accomplish the job.<sup>1</sup> Instead of the present 55,000<sup>2</sup> missionaries (37,000 of whom are from North America) two to three million would be needed. The possibility of overpopulation of this earth becomes a reality as nearly three people were born every second in 1977. This is 172 each minute, 10,000 each hour, 240,000 each day,<sup>3</sup> which amounts to 87 million new people on the earth last year. These figures should not be a cause for discouragement though. As Emilio Castro writes,

The God in whom we believe is a missionary God. Mission is not something that we invented. Mission belongs to the very fundamentals of our faith in God.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cook, Missionary Life and Work, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Norman B. Rohrer, "Religion in Review," in The Evangelical Beacon, Vol. 51, No. 7 (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Free Church Press), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Emilio Castro, "Evangelical Missions and Revelation Today," Missiology, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Pasadena, California, 1971), p. 359.



However, one must not bask in the sunshine of optimism either for there is a great work to be done.

It should also be reiterated that a missionary call comes once in a lifetime and once it is understood and obeyed it need not be repeated, whereas guidance is always needed.<sup>1</sup> That is the difference between a call and guidance.

There are three basic ways to receive a call:<sup>2</sup>

1. An open mind is needed to destroy deceptive fantasies.
2. An attentive ear.
3. A pure heart ready to accept the call and go.

There is also an increasing number of self-supporting missionaries.<sup>3</sup> These people are in industry, higher education, or a government agency. However, not many succeed in planting a church because much of their time is taken with their work. Conversely the influence these people have on the Christian community is immense.

The most thrilling and exciting place to be is in the center of God's will. To be God's chosen ambassador, working for Him full-time is unquestionably what the Lord meant when He called his apostles together on a Galilean hillside and said,

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, The Making of a Missionary, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 32-33.

<sup>3</sup>Troutman, Everything You Want to Know About the Mission Field, p. 4.

commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Mt. 28:19-20).

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