

Global Missions From God's Perspective



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From God's Perspective

Class Outline

- Biblical Perspective
- Historical Perspective
- Strategic Perspective



Biblical Perspective

God's Perspective on Global Missions,

God's perspective on global missions is a paradigm shifting course that will help move us from having a man focused perspective on global missions to a God centered focus. We will look at how God planned, prepared for and carried out his eternal plan of redemption and continues to do so throughout history.

Class 1- Defining the Eternal Purpose of God.

Before the foundations of the earth, God predetermined the eternal plan of redemption. That plan and purpose provides the contextual backdrop for every part of God's word. (Thoughts from PowerPoint on what is the "whole counsel of God").

Class 2 - God's Faithfulness to fulfill His plan through the ages.

There have been 4 main stages of the eternal plan of redemption that God has been carrying out through every age of the history of mankind.

Class 3 - God's Purposes for the Church

Exploring God's purposes for while the church remains here on the earth, and along with having an earthly purpose for the church, God also has an eternal purpose that will be accomplished with the church throughout eternity.

Historical Perspective

Thesis: The growth of missions (the growth of the church) is seen through the imperfect, misguided actions of Christians, combined with the philosophical forces of the day, combined with the wills of empires, all guided by God to build the church, not in the way that we think best, but as part of his plan of revealing Himself from before the beginning of time.

Key Points:

- * God, not us, is building his church. - "On this Rock, I will build my church."
- * God's ways are not our ways - the Church is not built in a logical expected matter, nor is it consistently growing in a numerical or geographical discernable manner.
- * God builds his church in spite of and through, disfunction - the church grows through and with incorrect theology, sinning people, and worldly kingdoms and philosophies.
- * God often builds his church among the weak. (i.e. the persecuted early church and the Chinese growth over the last few decades).
- * God is revealing Himself through how he builds the church.

Class 4: The First 1,500 Years of Missions

Throughout the first millennia after Christ, the church exploded across the known world, till at the end of the first millennium the church stretched from England to China. It then slowly collapsed over the next 500 years. In the early church, missions was carried on primarily by tentmakers and the church spread in spite of persecution and bad theology. After Constantine, missions slowly morphed into something done by church leaders and groups, and then into something done by mainly countries through conquest (the crusades and conquistadors).

Class 5: From Reformation to Missions. The reformers were not mission's minded. They believed missions to be the realm of God, and that the great commission applied only to the disciples. By contrast, the Catholics missionary efforts reached their zenith during this time



period, with outreaches to China, Japan and the Americas. Their methods varied from forced conversion in Latin America, to a ministry in China that respected that integrated tightly with the local culture.

Class 6: The Beginning of the Modern Missions

Movement. In the early mid-18th century, some protestants began turning their attention from the fight with the Catholic Church to missions. Early efforts directed at the American Indians soon led to the likes of William Carey, David Livingstone and Hudson Taylor. As most churches were unwilling or unable to participate, societies were formed by mission minded individuals and evangelical missions expanded rapidly throughout the 19th century. While many heard the gospel as a result of these efforts, the missionaries often took

advantage of the locals while others abandoned their own families.

Class 7: The 20th Century and the Current State of

Modern Missions. During the first part of 20th century, missions became a primarily evangelical outreach. Many in missions began to focus on the idea of reaching the entire world with the gospel, frequently based on a belief that Christ would return as soon as the entire world was reached. Societies continued to play the largest role and an army of missionaries carried the gospel to almost every corner of the globe. Many missionary schools were formed. But, the societies and schools suffered many scandals, and all too frequently, questionable effectiveness. In fact, the greatest gains in this period have come in places where very little missionary effort was expended - China and South Korea.

Strategic Perspective

Through Established in the faith Churches

Class 8 - God's Word for the Church

In order for the church to live, function, and be used by God on this earth according to His will and purposes, she must have access to God's word in a way that produces spiritual transformation.

Class 9 - Discipleship within the Local Church

Discipleship is a common term that all Christians and all churches use, often assuming that we all mean the same thing. The reality is that, your definition of what constitutes a "discipled" person will determine "HOW" you disciple, as well as "WHAT" the focus of your discipleship is. (Use the DDP, as well as our progression to maturity).

Class 10 - The Believer's New Spiritual Identity

At birth, every single human being is born a separated enemy of God, headed for eternal condemnation in hell. How does one move from being "born by nature children of wrath", to one that is seated in Christ at God's right hand, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit and life of Christ through His daily life? It starts with being given a new Spiritual Identity.

Class 11 - From Identification to Practical Living

In Romans 7:18, the Apostle Paul stated, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find." If we are honest, we all must admit that there are areas of our lives where we too are not finding the ability to perform "the good" that we know we should be performing.



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Intro - God's perspective on global missions is designed to be a paradigm shifting course that will help move us from having a man focused perspective on global missions to a God centered focus. We will look at how God planned, prepared for and carried out his eternal plan of redemption and continues to do so throughout history.

One of the biggest deceptions that exists in the heart of all of mankind is the fact that we are so "man centered" or "self focused", which is a direct result from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man wants to be his own god, making his own decisions, determining for himself what is right and wrong or good and bad. This manifests it's self in every aspect of our lives, most importantly regarding every aspect of Christianity, how it's obtained and lived out.

1. Like Cain determining what will make us acceptable to God
2. Regarding service and more specifically global missions.

And so the purpose of this class is to show how global missions is not an expression of the greatness of man or the church. It's not an expression of our wisdom, our commitment and devotion to Christ, or even of our love for the lost. But first and foremost it's an expression of God and His love and eternal purposes. **(Next Slide)**

Where does “missions” begin?

It's really interesting to get online and do a search on the “definition of missions”. You will get all kinds of different views on what it is and what it is not.

But, what is most interesting to me is, that, in all of the definitions that I saw, it was all in regards to what we, the church are doing, what we are planning, or how or where we go about evangelism and discipleship.

What I want to focus on in this class today, is the fact that missions doesn't begin with mankind. It doesn't even begin with the church.....it began in the heart of God.....not when Adam and Eve fell, but even before the foundations of the earth. It's been His heart from eternity past.

Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling,
not according to our works, but according to His
own purpose and grace which was given to us in
Christ Jesus before time began,
-2Timothy 1:9

However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the ~~hidden wisdom~~ ~~which God ordained before the ages for our glory,~~

-1Cor.2:6-7

Now may the God of peace who brought up
our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great
Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of
the everlasting covenant,

-Heb.13:20

1Pet.1:18-20 - knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

Titus 1:1-2 - Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,

And Titus 1:1-2 - These verses all speak about this "plan" and "wisdom" of God that He predetermined and promised from before the foundations of the earth. It was His purpose and plan of the redemption, salvation, and eternal life for mankind. We call it "God's eternal plan of redemption".

This is what missions is.....it's the communication of that eternal plan of redemption to another person either locally or globally. But, first and foremost, it's important for us to recognize that it began in God's heart from eternity past.

One of the main reasons why this is so important is that it will determine who we are trusting in in any ministry. Are we fulfilling our plan? Do we see it as OUR responsibility? Or is it God who is fulfilling His own plan through us? Your perspective of this will determine where your trust and dependence lies. (Example of beginning to teach the Karen).

What has God revealed about Himself?

Not only did this eternal plan of redemption begin in God's heart back in eternity past, but it's what He's been revealing that He is about ever since!!!!

1. Gen.3:15 - The promise of a Deliverer is first stated here and then was continued to be passed along to Adam and Eve's descendants.
2. Look at Gen.12:1-3 - God's first promise to Abraham....."so that all the families of the earth will be blessed".
3. All through the OT, God has continuously revealed His heart to save mankind. After leading Israel out of Egypt, look at this self description of His heart for them in Ex.19:3-4 (slide).

And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.
Exodus 19:3-4

This is an amazing manifestation of the heart of God that I think really brings into focus what His heart is really about. In the story of Israel's exodus, we have salvation and deliverance. They were physical slaves in Egypt and God miraculously brought about their physical salvation and deliverance from slavery.

And so here, we not only have the statement of the fact that it was God who delivered them.....but, here He also gives His purpose for delivering them....."and brought you to Myself". His whole purpose for delivering them from slavery was so that God's love for them and relationship with them could be freely lived out through their lives.

These physical pictures of physical deliverance and the manifestation of God's heart in it throughout the OT are meant to be physical pictures of spiritual truth that is true of us and God's heart for us in the NT. What God communicated about His heart for Israel in Ex.19, He communicates the same for us in 2Cor.5:17-19 (slide)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 2Cor.5:17-19

Here we not only have the fact of our spiritual salvation and some things that it consists of.....being made a new creation, not having our trespasses imputed to us.....but, again we see the heart of God in the purpose of our salvation, in order to be reconciled to Himself.....it says that it's He who has reconciled us to Himself.....that it was His will and desire.

I believe it's safe to say that many many Christians are confused about the heart of God and have a warped perspective about what it is that He really desires. If you have a wrong view of His purposes in the OT it will lead to a wrong view of His purposes in the NT.

1. Lots of commands and judgement of sin in the OT.....Your view of the heart of God will determine your interpretation and application of not only those events, but what we see in the NT all the way through to the book of Revelation.
2. Many Christians make it all about obedience and judgement. - This view begins in the OT and carries through all the way to Revelation and they view Revelation as being mainly about God's wrath and judgement.
3. This is why the point of this lesson (the fact that God's heart has been about salvation and redemption from before eternity past) is so important. For there are a lot of commands and judgement in the OT....God is absolutely holy and cannot associate with sin.....but, as it says in 1Jn.4, God is love!!!! The essence of who He is is love.....which is actually what is motivating His judgement of sin, as it's the only way mankind will recognize his sinfulness and turn to Christ for salvation.....it's not that God hates sin, but that He loves mankind.....and this is the true message of Revelation.
4. We often quote Jn.3:16 - For God so loved.....but, vs.16 is followed by vs.17 (slide)

John 3:17

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

God's purpose is not wrath and judgement.....it's redemption and salvation. And it's been that way from before the foundations of the earth. Here's a few of the statements that were made about God in OT passages.

So, we first looked at factual statements about God's eternal purpose, then we saw that it's what He actually reveals about Himself through His interaction with mankind, and now lastly, we'll look at the fact that indeed, this revelation of Himself has been clear

Now look at what is said about him in the NT (slide)

- And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, Lk. 1:76-77
- Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."Acts 4:12
- For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. Romans 1:16
- For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thessalonians 5:9
- who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:5

- After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" Revelation 7:9-10
- Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down."
 - Revelation 12:10
- After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! Revelation 19:1

To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

-Eph.3:8-11

Paul, as an Apostle and church planter, describes the purpose of his calling to be in proclaiming among the gentiles "the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all see what is their participation of how these things affect them...."

Then he says, this is the mystery that God had hid from the beginning to be carried out by Christ. And then again in vs.11 he mentions that this is the eternal purpose of God that He accomplished in Christ!!!!

It's exactly what he said in 2Tim.1:9 and all the other passages that we read earlier.