

FELLOWSHIP NOTES ~ SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13th, 2022



Missions Month - "What is Missions?" Acts 14:21-28

Biblical Missions includes...

1. Spreading the gospel and making disciples – Acts 14:21a
2. Nurturing (strengthening) believers and churches – Acts 14:21b-22
3. Planting and organizing local churches – Acts 14:23

Growth Groups Study Guide November 13th – 20th The Status of World Evangelization

Getting Started

What is one thing you learned or application you took away from Sunday morning's message about the "Why" of biblical missions?

Digging Deeper

1. Jesus' last words

Read Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15 and fill in the blanks below:

Jesus wants us – His body – to make disciples among _____ nations so that _____ person on planet earth has the opportunity of hearing the Gospel.

Read Revelation 7:9 and Habakkuk 2:14 and fill in the blanks below:

The result of fulfilling Christ's mission is so that God's _____ and God's _____ fills the earth.

Jesus left us with the mission of reaching every nation (Greek word, ethne) with the Gospel. A nation is not a country with geographical boundaries. A nation is an ethnic people group that is bound by a common affinity for one another because of language, culture or religion.

A study of the book of Acts reveals that the early church pursued Christ's mission through a church planting strategy. So for practical purposes we can deduce that it is our responsibility as followers of Christ to initiate church-planting movements in every distinct people group so that the Gospel will be propagated throughout each culture and eventually spread to other unreached cultures as well.

The completion of the task then Christ left the Church will require that in every single one of the people groups on earth, at some point in history, there will be a movement of baptized and obedient disciples (Matthew 28:19-20) capable of evangelizing their entire people group. Until there are such movements in every people group, we have not completed Christ's mission (which is ours).

What is the distinction between a *reached people group* and an *unreached people group*? A people group is considered reached when it has a strong enough church to evangelize its own people. This in no way suggests that all individuals within a people group have become believers or even yet have encountered the claims of Christ; that's the goal of evangelism. An unreached people group is one where there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize its own people outside cross-cultural assistance. For measurement purposes this is considered to be less than 2% of its population.

2. A Church for Every People – What is the status? (see answer at end)

Guess the estimated number of unreached people groups still left in the world:

- A. 3,950 B. 4,490 C. 6,900 D. 12,090

Over half of these people groups each have a population less than 10,000 people. The country with the largest number of unreached ethnic-people groups is India with 2,233. The other top 5 countries with the least-reached people groups are Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and Nepal. Do you know the designation that missiologists have given for the area where each of these nations are?

3. The Gospel for Every Person – What is the status? (see answer at end)

What percent of the world's population have the New Testament Scriptures in their language?

- A. 50% B. 71% C. 82% D. 96%

That's good news that the Scriptures have been translated so effectively. However, to complete the remaining Scriptures in the rest of the languages will require possibly as many as 2,200 new translation efforts.

What percentage of the world's population can hear a radio broadcast in their language?

- A. 35% B. 54% C. 70% D. 91%

In addition to radio, there have been approximately 6.5 billion viewings of the Jesus film and it is available in over 1,100 languages covering 95% of the world's population.

Approximately 70% of the world's population (over 4 billion) has heard the Gospel in some form. 30% (2 billion) have had virtually no exposure to the Gospel message.

What's the good news and the bad news in regard to the status situation outlined above?

4. Challenges of the Unfinished Task

Spiritual challenge – More Christians were martyred in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined. How do you think this impacts the sending of missionaries and the spreading of the Gospel?

People challenge – The remaining people groups and individuals tend to be in remote locations, have greater language and cultural barriers, practice religious fundamentalism, and are the most resistant to the Gospel. What will this challenge require the Church to do to finish the task?

Political/national challenge – The countries with the most Least-Reached people groups tend to be closed to Christianity.

Church challenge – Over 87% of all cross-cultural missionaries labor among nominal Christians.

Financial challenge – What percent of every US dollar given by Christians for all church causes goes toward pioneer church planting among Least-Reached people groups? (see answer at end)

A. A half of one penny (.05%) B. 5 cents C. Ten cents D. 25 cents

What do the above statistics tell us about the challenge of the Unfinished Task?

5. Why are we to complete the task?

Not because it is our duty – though it is. Not because it will bring eternal life to many – though it will. Not because it will improve the living conditions of the poor – though it will. Not because it will improve stability in the world's institutions - though it will. Not because it will improve environmental stewardship – though it will. Not because we will be rewarded – though we will. Read Revelation 5:12 & 7:9 and fill in the blanks...

We should disciple the nations because _____ is worthy to receive THEIR honor, glory and praise.

Wrapping Up

What have you learned from this lesson that you can apply to your life? Spend the remainder of your time in prayer for our lost world and the raising up of laborers to take the gospel to them.

Answers: **Answer: C – 6,900, Answer: C – 82%, Answer: D – 91%, Answer: A - .05%**