

The Faith Mission 1886-1964

by Duncan Campbell

The Faith Mission is a Christian organization that has been spreading the Gospel and encouraging Christians to witness for Christ in their own churches for over 77 years.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Evangelism", "Faith and Mission"

Description

Duncan Campbell reflects on the founding of the Faith Mission by John George Govan, who, after a divine calling, dedicated his life to evangelizing rural Scotland. The mission experienced significant revival, inspiring many to join as Pilgrims, and expanded its reach to South Africa, Canada, and France. The itinerant nature of the mission emphasizes collaboration across denominations, focusing on outreach in remote areas and maintaining connections through Prayer Unions. With over 200 missions annually and a robust training program, the Faith Mission continues to equip believers for ministry and foster spiritual growth. Campbell highlights the enduring impact of the mission over its nearly eight decades of service.

Transcript

Over eighty years ago, a young man with life before him was sitting on a hillside on the Island of Arran. Below, on the Firth of Clyde, steamers and liners bound for America were passing, and yachts sailing hither and thither. As he watched, God spoke to him, challenging him as to what his life was to be -- like a pleasure yacht sailing to and fro, or like a liner bound for its ocean goal. He had trusted Christ as his Saviour: now he determined to yield his life utterly to Him, to do His will. Later, he heard of the fullness of the blessing, and by faith received this wonderful gift, and God's purposes became clear: He was calling him to evangelize the villages and country districts of Scotland. So in obedience to the heavenly vision, leaving business and home, with a few kindred spirits, John George Govan launched the Faith Mission.

The early years were glorious times of revival, with awakening in many communities, when many were saved and others became inspired with the same heavenly vision, joining the new band of missionaries as Pilgrims -- the name by which the workers are still known. The work has continued strong and vigorous throughout seventy-seven years, and today almost one hundred are engaged in it.

The vision was carried to South Africa in 1916 by the Misses Garratt, who went forth from the Mission in the homeland and formed the Africa Evangelistic Band. In 1927 the work was extended to Canada. An invitation from a nucleus of friends in Toronto came as a clear call from God to the Founder, just before his Home-call. In 1960 an associate Mission came into being in France, commenced by the Kremer family

who had worked in the Faith Mission in Britain.

Working in pairs the Pilgrims give missions of three to six weeks or more to rural and industrial villages and scattered country or highland districts; included in the work have been the Shetland and Orkney Islands, as well as the islands off the west coast of Scotland, and many out of the way places in Eire. Recently work has been commenced in Yorkshire and the English Midlands. Over two hundred missions are held each year, including seaside campaigns in the summer, for which the Pilgrims usually group in fours. Missions are held by invitation of the various evangelical denominations, or independently -- frequently in places where no one locally has any concern to see such work done. The Pilgrims devote much time to meeting the people in their homes, and at night evangelistic meetings are conducted -- in public halls, churches, schools, barns, portable halls, tents and kitchens or drawing-rooms; in recent years the difficulty of getting lodgings in remote places has been overcome by the use of caravans.

The Mission is interdenominational and the work itinerant: not the establishing of permanent mission stations. The co-operation of all who are favorably disposed is sought, and denominational preferences and distinctions are not interfered with. Those who get help are encouraged to witness for Christ in their own churches. Contact with converts and others who may be blessed is maintained through the Prayer Union, the members of which gather on a suitable week-night for fellowship and prayer, and receive a quarterly visit from a representative of the Faith Mission to take the weekly meeting. There are more than 500 of these little fellowships throughout Scotland, Ireland, East Anglia and Yorkshire and the English Midlands, and often the Prayer Union is the only prayer meeting for many miles around.

Well over 200 Christian conferences are held annually, to which Christians in outlying places, who have opportunities, gather to hear of the fullness of the blessing. The annual Conventions in Edinburgh, in the end of August and early September, and at Bangor, in Northern Ireland, at Easter, are looked forward to with expectancy by very many.

Much interest and support for work in other lands is created, and from among the Pilgrims and Prayer Unions a great number have gone forth into the Christian ministry at home, and in connection with well-known foreign Missions.

In the well-appointed Training Home and Bible College in Edinburgh there are some fifty students in session for a two-year course of instruction in the knowledge of God and His Word, the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, the prayer life, holiness in every-day living, the art of preaching and personal work, work among children and other related subjects. Experience is received in visiting, preaching, personal work, open-air witnessing and many practical things of everyday life. Lecturers with regular classes include ministers of most denominations, and other leaders in Christian work, with members of the Mission's own staff, also have regular appointments.

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