

A Vision for Missions

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the critical role of indigenous missionaries and theological training in fulfilling the Great Commission effectively.

Duration: 57:40

Scripture: John 3:3, Romans 10:14

Topics: "Missions"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of preaching the true gospel and warns against the dangers of diluting it with human ingenuity. He highlights the negative impact of evangelistic campaigns that focus on superficial conversions rather than genuine repentance and faith. The speaker also discusses the consequences of a dumbed-down gospel, where essential theological concepts like propitiation, justice, satisfaction, and imputation are not taught. The sermon concludes with a reminder that the ultimate goal of mission work is to bring glory to God, and that prayer is more valuable than financial support in advancing the Kingdom of God.

Transcript

Well, I really appreciate that. And I would, this conference, I know something of Brother Tom Askill, and I have a great respect for him. And I think this would probably be very beneficial, very beneficial.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, I thank you so much for your kindness, the beauty of this day, the beauty of the Spirit of God indwelling us, helping us, strengthening us, his fruit, his consolation, his comfort. Lord, I pray that you would use this, Lord, to set our minds on the nations, on the Great Commission, that this gospel go out into all the world, to every creature in our lifetime.

Father, I ask that you would help me to explain, to say things as I ought, to correctly, Lord, demonstrate what we do in missions. Father, please help us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Well, we're going to have actually a presentation, a slide presentation. One of the things that we want to make very clear about HeartCry, when it was founded years ago back in Peru, we decided that we were not strong enough to carry a ministry like this, that we did not have the gift of salesmanship or promotion. In my early life, the greatest influence, and still today, is George Mueller.

Not just his prayer life and his diary, but also the way he addressed the Word, so many things in his life. But we would not raise funds for HeartCry. If we were asked to go somewhere and make a presentation, we would, but we would only present the work that we're doing.

That we would never lay it upon a congregation that there is so much to do if only they would give. Because in fact, if we have a need, we're to go not to the congregation, but to our Heavenly Father. And if a work is of God, He will be our patron.

He will be our helper. He will raise up the people. And now it's been nearly 20 years, and not one time in 20 years has God failed.

Not one time has there been a missionary who has not received their full support. Not one time. He's never failed.

And it is not because of great faith. It is because of great faithfulness. I cannot think of one time in the many trials that we've had in the last 20 years, I cannot think of one time when I was not afraid and did not think that everything was going to come to an end.

I'm sorry. I would like to be able to say something different, but that's the truth. As a matter of fact, my wife so often has had to say to me, the time before this, did He let us go down? No.

Well, the time before that, did He let us go down? And she could get me out of bed with that. And so what I want you to see is that there are no great men of God. There are only pitiful, weak men of a great and a merciful God.

And so what we're going to talk about today at HeartCry is I believe that it has been a work of God because we've not made our needs known to men. In secret prayer, a friend I think it was of Jim Ellis once said, God delights in vindicating the confidence of His children. That's a statement that has stayed with me since the very first moment I heard it.

And I like to say, God delights in even the smallest confidence of His children. The more we trust in the arm of the flesh, the less we will see the arm of God. The more we cut ourselves off from the arm of the flesh, the more we will see of Him.

This goes contrary to every trend in evangelism, church growth and missions. Every contemporary trend. And so I want us to... We're going to talk a moment about HeartCry.

If you could turn on the thing there. Okay, is that the... That's the first one. All right.

First of all, our ministry. We work in six distinct areas. First of all, indigenous missionaries.

Now, why indigenous? We are not saying that there should not be cross-cultural missionaries. We need more cross-cultural missionaries and missionaries from the West than we have ever had. But God has laid it upon our heart to support indigenous missionaries.

Missionaries who come from that very country and that very people work. Also, we feel that our most important role is theological training. All the maladies you see the church suffering today, the church in the field is suffering for the very same reason.

Bad theology. Missions is not about sending missionaries. It's about sending God's truth through men.

There's a tremendous difference. If you go to a seminary or a Bible college, one of the things that most troubles me is you have different types of students there. We all know that.

And you will see certain students who love Greek and Hebrew and hermeneutics and theology, and they seem to go in this direction. And the students who often go into missions have very little to do with these disciplines. Do we not see that our greatest theologians, our greatest exegetes, must be the ones we send to the nations? Because the church that you plant there may be something of a mother church to every other people group in that area.

We do not have the right to be an elder simply because we aspire to it. There must be qualifications met. You have no right to be a missionary or even go on a mission trip.

There are qualifications to be met. And that is not just moral, not just the desire, not just a will to give your life away. It must be theological also.

A young man came to me or called me years ago and over the phone several times he said, Brother Paul, I want to come to Peru and give my life away. I said, tell me about the systematics you have studied. He said, well, that's not really something, that's not a strong point of mine.

I said, tell me about your desire to preach expositionally. And he kept saying, Brother Paul, I just want to give my life away. I just want to give my life away.

And finally, out of love, I said, young man, there's nobody here in Peru who needs your life. They need God. And they need someone who can come down here and open up their mouth and teach them about God.

So theological training is the greatest need probably in America. It is the greatest need overseas. Even worse, even worse.

Bible distribution, as we all know, Reformation, the Gutenberg Press, we know you get Bible into the hands of a people and you will see transformation. Above every other book, the Bible is to be put in the hands of the people. And from that literature distribution, we all know from history that as we look at great works of God throughout history, there's always been an increase in godly, biblical literature.

That is a great necessity. Then there are evangelistic tools. That can range from anywhere from a bicycle to a boat to go down the Amazon to a donkey to go across the Andes.

So absolutely anything that is needed in order to put these men in the places where they need to be. And then finally, church construction. That is there, but that is not a great ministry of ours.

We pride ourselves in a sense when we do build a church, of building the ugliest church building on the face of the earth. Now what we mean by that is this. There are certain situations where Christians, because of persecution or poverty, will end up having themselves a place.

They'll be renting that place. But in renting, they do not have the funds. They cannot collect it together in order to build themselves a chapel or something like that.

And so what we will do is come in at times and help them build a building that is completely and totally rustic. It is just the core that they can get in and get out of the rain. And then from there, they can start taking their own funds and do what they would like with the building.

Now, let's go on. Indigenous missions. Indigenous is native to a certain place belonging to a certain locality by birth, a permanent resident as distinguished from a temporary resident or visitor.

And then indigenous missionary, of course, is one who preaches the gospel to his own people. Now, I want to tell you something. It is true that in many third world countries, there is not the training.

And there is a need for greater and greater training. But never think that God is not at work and never think that God is not raising up godly men who are led by His Spirit. They may not be able to define everything exactly as we would, but they believe the core doctrine.

Some of their simplistic theology, I would hold to much sooner than some of the complicated stuff going around in America. They believe primarily that men are saved through preaching. They believe that conversion is by the Spirit of God.

And they believe that the evidence of conversion is not that one time somebody prayed a prayer and asked Jesus into their heart, but the evidence of conversion is enduring fruit or sanctification. We can work with men like that. Now, let's go on.

Now, the first, why do we do this? Well, first of all, we must go back to simply this is the way we have felt led. We have over and over confirmations from the Lord that this is what He would have us do. But here's some facts of why indigenous missionaries.

First fact, it is a wise use of human resources. Do you realize there are almost 7 billion people in the world? Even if every church sent missionaries, we would not have enough missionaries to reach the world. Now, let me say this, brothers, never let terminology like that make you afraid.

We ought to want to reach the world. We ought to seek to reach the world. We ought to seek the salvation of every human being that walks on this planet.

We ought to preach the gospel to every creature. And we ought to give the greatest effort to see that accomplished in our generation. We of all people, if you have the truth, how can you not pour it out on a dry and thirsty land? Let's go to the next fact.

It is a wise use of financial resources. It can often cost \$80,000 a year, \$4,000, \$5,000 a month to put a western missionary on the field. Now, let me say this again.

Some of that is necessary. Brothers, it doesn't matter how much it costs. If a man with sound theology, filled with the Holy Spirit, feels like he is called from the West to go to a third world country, we ought to get behind him no matter what it costs.

We ought to. So we are not against cross-cultural missions. But we want to point out, in contrast, many indigenous missionaries live on \$200 and \$300 a month.

And that allows them to live at the same level with the people to whom they're ministering. Now, let's go on. Also, it eliminates the language and cultural barriers.

It takes a long time to learn a foreign language. Do you know a missionary spends his first four years on the field? He's learning the language. You have spent a quarter of a million dollars or more.

And the man is learning the language, learning the culture, and is probably participating in some sort of church plant. Or you would be surprised how many missionaries never plant churches. They attend a local congregation.

Now, let me say something here that is so important. I'm going to say it later as brothers. If you think theology is bad here, you need to see what it's like among Western missionaries.

Now, there are some Western missionaries that are worth their weight in gold. We do not want to take anything away from that. But the trends in Western missions, their methodologies, are not close to heresy.

Many of them are heretical. We have got... Now, let me just say this. Missions and mission strategies cannot come from the anthropologist and the sociologist or the cultural expert.

Missions must be birthed and the methodologies of missions birthed by the pen of the exegete and the systematic theologian. There you go. And for many, many years, there has been a great divorce between theology, Scripture, and missions.

So now you have pragmatism and man's wisdom. And it is deadly and ineffective. Now, also we have a fact here that it eliminates political barriers.

Let's just face it. There are a lot of countries in this world that do not like our country. Now, I am loyal.

I am a citizen of this country. But nothing is going to hinder me from my greater calling which is taking the gospel to the nations. Every nation needs Christ.

Let me say this. If we are biblical Christians, we ought to have a love for the nation of Israel. But we need to be very, very careful that we do not despise the Arab world.

My dear friend, so much damage has been done in evangelism because of radical eschatologies found here in America. We need... Christ died. Christ died to gather a people from the Arab world.

And I want you to know He is doing it. He is doing it. Now, so let's go on to fact number five.

Also, it eliminates economic barriers. Western missionaries, their high standard of living creates an obstacle at times for reaching a people. They live in a different neighborhood.

They drive a different kind of car. They don't take the bus. Their children study in a different place.

That can create barriers. It truly can. Where an indigenous missionary doesn't have that problem.

He takes the same bus with the people that he's pastoring. His children go to the same school. There's an identification there.

Also, we always have to be careful of what has been termed rice Christians. When an American goes to a certain place, at times, it is a very, very distinguished thing to be his friend. Also, missions have at times stooped to, in a sense, I would say, buying people for Christ.

By the clothing and food and the prosperity and everything else they can hand out. But when a missionary is just as poor as everyone around him, he has no drawing card except the gospel. Let's go to the next.

It eliminates difficult transitions. Let me just say this. One of the greatest problems in planting a church on the mission field is not so much planting it by the Western missionary, but that church making a transition over from Western leadership to indigenous leadership, many times the church just collapses on itself.

From the very beginning, we have to be training leaders. Now, when we begin with indigenous men, there is no transitional problem. Let's go on to next.

Now, I want to look at just some of our ministries. Theological training. Missions is primarily a theological endeavor.

It is theological. I was just recently in Indonesia. I could not believe some of the things that I was hearing.

Methodologies that are syncretistic at best. Teaching Muslims to pray in the name of Jesus. Telling Muslims that although you've become a Christian, you're still a Muslim and you should be going to the mosque and all sorts of things that are going on.

Men, here's what we have to understand. First of all, there is a fear among many Western missionaries. They're in bondage to fear and much of what they do has to do with self-preservation.

I'm afraid of being kicked out of the country. I'm afraid of being persecuted. Brothers, we are not going to reach the world.

We are not going to preach the gospel to every creature without suffering. It's not going to happen, number one. Number two, and this is a malady you'll be able to identify with in the United States.

Start off by preaching the gospel, but when there's no theological foundation or as generations start to pass, what happens? There is a dumbing down of the gospel. When the gospel is dumbed down, it's also lost. When people have no sense of what is propitiation, what is the real reason He died? Do we know anything about the justice of God or satisfaction or imputation? When the true gospel is not preached and a counterfeit gospel of a few spiritual laws or five things God wants you to know with a prayer at the end of it, then what happens is the power that was in this true gospel is lost.

Now, the moment it's lost, I don't know why this occurs except for human nature which is depraved, but when it's lost, people never think we have no power, maybe we've lost the gospel. Let's return to it. That's not the way they think.

They begin to think, whether they would say it or not, that the gospel is not enough. They say, well, look, we can see it. As a matter of fact, if you go to the mission field with just thinking you're going to have a Bible, you're going to do expository preaching, you're going to pray, and you're going to witness, they will look at you as some Bible-thumping buffoon.

Obviously, you know nothing about missions. And so gradually, the gospel is lost and instead of returning to the gospel, you open yourself to every manner of pragmatism. Pragmatism.

You talk about, you know, we talk about the regulative, the normative principle. Brothers, when you start saying that God has opened up the door for human ingenuity in all sorts of things. Now, we all know that some things are based upon just cold, hard doctrine.

We know some things are based upon inference and principle. We know that. But when you open yourself up to human ingenuity and no longer need, has God said? Has God spoken? You open yourself up to a

Pandora's box which leads to death.

And that is what has happened in evangelism. And brothers, even churches that before were behind the Iron Curtain and although their theology, you couldn't necessarily put it into a systematic. They were preaching the things I said, but once the curtain fell and America arrived, their gospel turned from one of repentance and faith and fruit producing, sanctification as evidence of conversion.

It went from that to, repeat this prayer after me, I see that hand. One Romanian brother told me one time, he says, if what the American evangelists say about the amount of people converted in their evangelistic campaigns in Romania, if what they say is true, then everyone in my country has been converted four times. Inflated numbers.

And brothers, we've got to take back missions. Just to find a man who believes in the power of the gospel is absolutely phenomenal. We've got to take missions back.

And it begins by training men in theology. Now, we will go into certain areas as God leads, and begin to work with men who are committed to Scripture. They maybe have a very primitive view of things.

They are open for learning, and we will work with them, and work with them, and work with them. And gradually, over the years, we have seen many of them come to the doctrines that we most believe in and we most cherish. It is a labor of love.

We don't just go around finding perfect people. We go around finding teachable people. And it's so amazing.

Let me just give you an example. I was told not to run on, and I'm going to try not to. But I was preaching on regeneration in Peru.

This was years ago, a few years ago. And I decided, you know, I'm going for broke. There's all these pastors here.

Many of them have been so influenced by the West. Easy-believe-ism. Pray the prayer.

I'm just going to go for broke, and there's going to be a riot or a revival. And so I just began to preach. And men started weeping.

They said, I've never heard this before. But we know. I mean, we know it.

We've always known. There was a real problem with our evangelism, but we didn't know what was the option. And there was an alternative.

Now we see it. This is marvelous. And I saw a man.

He was sitting there on the front row, and he was very, very old. And he was just weeping profusely. A Peruvian man.

And so I went to him afterwards. This is what he said. He said, Brother Paul, he said in 1960, 1961, he said there was a group of people called... I don't really remember what it was.

He said it may have been Banner of Truth. I don't know if they've been around that long. I think they have.

He said they sent a shipment of stuff over to Peru, and some of us got a hold of it. And it was mainly Charles Spurgeon. And we couldn't believe it.

We read everything. It was so wonderful. We just had it in tracts and parts, and we thought it was so amazing.

And he said, and the missionaries came and told us we were a bunch of dumb Indians, and that was heresy. He said, but I have always held on to these doctrines, and I have taught them to my children, and here I am at the end of my life, finally someone is preaching this truth again in my country. Do you see that? Oh, brothers, it's just an open door.

An open door. So we do Bible conferences, and our main focus in the conference is teaching systematic and biblical theology, hermeneutics, and expository preaching. Oh, brothers, there is such a need for expository preaching, to teach them the simple principles of no, you're not going to read this text and then talk for 45 minutes about something else.

You're just going to learn the simple... Brothers, if you could see the light, you see a person that's converted right before your eyes, and you see the light just turn on in their eyes, to see that same thing in a pastor, the only thing is he's never been taught. I mean, I've seen them weep with joy. And you know what they all say, this is what's so amazing, if they haven't been contaminated, they all say this, I knew it was like this, I just didn't know how to say it, I just didn't... Isn't that amazing? The Spirit of God.

The Spirit of God. And so, teaching Scripture is the greatest need on the mission field. Teaching the men, the indigenous missionaries, the Scriptures, and how to preach from the Scriptures.

Okay, let's go on. We have theological education by extension. Here I've put many mission agencies, they're all theological.

Let me stop there for just a second. This is true, brothers. And I'll stand here, and I don't care who will argue against me, I know it to be true.

They're all theological. Theology has little to no bearing on what is done on the mission field. I have seen it so often with my own eyes.

Others of you have seen it. It's just true. Alright, to reverse that, among men, these are men in the northern Andes of Peru.

We set up a thing working with a brother, Angel Comenades, and his son, helping them in which we have module training throughout the northern part of the Andes. We do this in other places also. And someone will go once every three months, we'll visit with a group of pastors in a certain area, we'll go through a training program, we'll receive from them their work and check it and all sorts of things like that.

And again, brothers, some of these men have no education, just barely learned to read, and yet the magnificent work of God through them. But now we have a problem always. The Peruvians say this, Los bautistas evangelizan a los perdidos y los demás evangelizan a los bautistas.

And what this means is this, the Baptist evangelized the lost and then everybody else evangelizes the Baptist. And that is so true in the sense of, now we know that there are believers outside of us, but there are so many marginal and falsely called Christian groups. And whenever there's a move of God in these

areas, those groups will come.

Just like wolves. And so these men have to be prepared. They have to be prepared to defend the doctrine of the Trinity.

Because there's the group, the Jesus only, or the oneness group, the Jehovah Witnesses. They have to be able to rightly view the law of God. Seven-day Adventist constantly attacking.

You see? So we have to not only proclaim the gospel, we have to teach these men to stand. To stand. Now let's go on.

Literature distribution, as we've already talked about a bit. We're working at times. We've got a few translation projects at the moment into Hindi and other languages.

But, brothers, you know how much your libraries are cherished. Think about a man who hardly has anything. I remember one time I flew to Peru and my plane came in at like 2 in the morning, but for some reason, I just popped out of bed at like 6. And I was just wanting to do something.

So I told someone, I said, I'm going to go down to the... there's a Christian bookstore in the center of Lima. I'm going to go down there and I'm just going to look around. I've got money to buy some dictionaries and stuff for pastors, so I'm going to go there.

Well, I arrived too early. It wasn't open. And I see this little man.

He couldn't have been more than 5'2". He's sitting there on the curb outside the store there in the big city. The way he was dressed, I knew he was from a place called San Martin in the jungles of Peru.

And I sat down beside him. I said, where are you from? And he told me. And he had just had a little Presbyterian church turned over to him.

And I said, is he all there all alone? He goes, yes. I go, are there any missionaries? No, there's no missionaries. And I said, why have you come here? It's a long way.

He said, yes, it was two and a half day travel. I said, why have you come here? He said, the congregation has given me money to buy some books. He was so excited.

But I knew that he wouldn't have enough money but to buy a few tracks. He had no concept of how much it was going to cost. So the doors finally opened and we went in there.

And I went around and I was buying dictionaries and concordances. They also now have John MacArthur's stuff and Piper. And I was getting all kinds of stuff for the men.

And I just kept watching him out of the corner of my eye. And you'd see him go to a bookshelf and just look. And just, I can't buy that.

He'd go somewhere else. I can't buy that. And finally, I'm up there at the counter with all these books.

And he walks up with a few tracks. And I said, so did you get your stuff? He goes, well, I didn't know. I said, do you see all the stuff I got? I said, do you know how much my plane ticket cost to come here? He said, no.

And he was like, almost like he was thinking, why are you saying this to me? I said, my plane ticket cost \$800. And I said, and you know what? There was a church right before I got on the plane, like a week before, that gave me something like \$2,500 just to buy books. And I said, you know, my plane didn't get in until 2 this morning, but I got up out of bed like a rocket at 6, just knew I had to come down here.

And he's looking at me and he's like, why would you be so cruel to say this to me? And I said, your God has moved heaven and earth. Your God has spent thousands of dollars just to send me here for one purpose, to buy every book you need. To buy every book you need.

But that's not an exaggeration. Can you imagine? Think about the love of God for you. Can you imagine that? He moves nations for you.

Planets. Everything here is for you. Everything that's done, even though governments and kings and all these people make all these decisions and never have you in mind, it's all for you.

And it's all for that little guy. Man, I love a God like that. Don't you just love a God like that? But what we try to do is we get them a pastor's library, which will be, if we can, a study Bible.

We try to get them a good dictionary, concordance, a one-volume systematic, maybe something of a commentary. But, of course, as you would know, they're very expensive. Well, let's go on.

Bible distribution. I just want to say this. We do give away New Testaments to people on the street, especially in the Muslim areas.

We have some very bold brothers who do that. And I don't even want to give their names out, but that we're working with in different parts of the world. But here's something that most people don't realize that many, many believers have no Bible.

And so what we do is we go into a place and we find out what could the normal believer pay for a Bible. Because we don't want to set up some sort of dependence or social security system. So if the Bible costs, let's say, \$6 and the people can pay \$1.50, then we set the price at \$1.50. We make sure.

We've had people come and bring beans, coffee beans, chickens, all sorts of things. Now, here's one of the things that we do. When you're going to buy a Bible for someone who's never had one, who's a believer, you don't want to buy a paperback Bible that's been glued.

We buy a Bible that is glued and sewn with either a hard cover or a vinyl cover, which seems to endure the wet. And always, if we can, Old Testament and New Testament. There is a sense in which we are New Testament believers, but brother, we are Bible believers.

They need the Old Testament and a concordance as exhaustive as possible in the back. So Bible distribution is primarily to Christians. Primarily.

Let's go on. Evangelistic tools. Indigenous missionaries are often limited by the lack of proper tools.

We've bought boats and motors on the Amazon, transportation for pastors, from cars to horses to bicycles, sound systems, clothing, other things that may be required. Here I am in this picture at the bottom. On the top, I'm there on the right with our boat that we used on the Amazon with a thatch roof and stuff.

And that was a missionary Francisco Acho, who's now working actually in Colombia. And then below, I'm standing by Ángel Colmenares. Now, I know this is going to be hard to believe, but he is the pastor leader of a movement that has left in its wake over 500 churches in the last 35 years.

You're looking at a man who is one of the choicest servants I have ever met. And I consider him a father. He taught me much about missions.

He really did. Right now, he's in a hospital in Lima. He has diabetes.

He has malaria. He's mad as a hornet because they took him to Lima because he had a trip planned for the jungle. If I could only tell you the benefit my life has reaped because of that man.

You'd have to be there. It'd be good if some of you one time went to one of the pastor's conferences in the north, and you saw maybe 1,000, 1,500 leaders down on their knees in the dirt crying out for God's help. And in the midday after the services, they're gathered together copying by hand hymn books.

It's an amazing thing. When you meet one of the brothers in the mountains, like you're going up, and they're coming down, and you go, ¿Cómo estás, hermano? How are you doing? They will always say, avanzando, hermano, avanzando. Which means, I'm advancing, brother.

I'm advancing. Let's go on. Church construction.

Here in both of these, actually, these pictures, it's not a church being constructed, but the seminary in northern Peru. Ángel Comenades, his son Daniel, has become a very, very sound theologian. He's received a lot of his training now in a Grace Baptist church in the Dominican Republic, which is a very, very amazing church.

It has a lot of scholars that go down there and teach, actually. And the entire seminary is geared towards the ancient faith. And it's amazing.

You see people being brought in there from the jungles and from the mountains. And the reason why Daniel wanted to start this seminary is because most of the other seminaries, and this is not a criticism of them, but were geared more towards people on the coast, where the men who could barely read and things were kind of... they couldn't study in such a place. So this is open to the men who live in the rural areas.

And it's amazing when you see men who can barely read starting their journey in Spurgeon. Or when one of them says, Brother Paul, have you ever heard of Richard Baxter? Or, I was reading a little booklet by John Owen. Let's go on.

We're working in a lot of places. There's Peru and Serbia and Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Egypt, and Zambia, of course. Most of you are familiar with Conrad Mbewe.

And we work hand in hand with him helping the church there in Lusaka to send out men and working with the other Reformed churches. We count it a great privilege. Brother Conrad is truly... God has raised him up.

What's amazing is there are other men of the same cloth, of the same metal, that work with him. It's a great privilege to serve there. Now again, this just gives you a perfect example.

In Zambia, the men that are being sent out are being trained by Conrad and the elders. I mean, they can actually train men better than anybody I know. They're being sent out.

The churches are sacrificially giving in order to send these men out. But by having us come alongside them, we're able to do twice as much. And it is a relationship not of a mission organization over a church, but a church being helped by a collective group of churches back here in the States.

We strongly believe in the autonomy of the church and that the church sends out men. And what we seek to do is simply help with some of the funds in the States to provide what those churches are doing, to provide what they lack. One of the things that I always do in the ministry, whether it is here or abroad, is I look at the person that God's put in my life and I say, what do they have in their hand that I do not have? And I look at my own hand and I say, what do I have in my hand that they do not possess? We complement one another.

We're also working in Namibia, Malawi, Kenya, Israel, Lebanon, Siberia, Japan, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, India. I just returned from Indonesia and India. And in India, I think that I have seen the darkest place I have ever seen in my life.

We were in Varanasi, which is the holy city, one of the great holy cities. You can't imagine what a squalid sewer. And then to see people bathing themselves to be purified in what some declare to be the most contaminated river on the face of the earth.

And then to be covered in the smoke as you walk through the streets of the dead bodies being burned in order to release their spirits. And what's most amazing, to see Americans coming there for enlightenment. The very people who benefit from the prosperity of a country at least being formed in part on biblical principles, are now going over to do yoga while the smoke of dead people roll into the windows.

And it just shows you once again, the darkness of this world does not prove the scriptures wrong. It affirms the scripture at every step. Romans 1 is lived out every day.

But they need the gospel. I'll tell you this, I've never seen a place so dark, and yet I have never seen Christians so beautiful. There is such a contrast.

It is absolutely phenomenal. Now, from here, is to expand in these areas according to how the Lord desires. But a great burden, there's Bhutan, and Bangladesh, and India, and Indonesia.

We're going to make really a focus into Asia. Because just in India alone, there's over a billion people. Then Nepal and Tibet are very important to me, along with Mongolia and China.

There is such a need. There is such a need. But not only is there a need, there is an open door for you.

In what way? We are able, because of our contacts, to use what God has given us to provide a means for theologian pastors to travel and train some of these men. We have several men pastors here in the States that are serious about truth, that are serious about Scripture and preaching. And they go over, because obviously, the fellows at HeartCry can't do it all.

And again, we look at what has God given us. In this country, there has been a resurgence of truth. There's been something of a reformation, and we need to acknowledge that.

Many of you are praying for reformation. You should just be praying for a greater reformation, because there is an underground reformation going on. And some of you who are serious about truth, but yet at the same time, filled with the Holy Spirit and bearing the fruit of the Spirit.

These men need to see love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. They need to see men who not only can communicate the truth to them, but men who can also communicate such life to them. But we're always looking.

If someone is desirous about teaching in a certain area, and that person is worthy, we would be more than happy to facilitate that training and to make it possible. So where in the world is HeartCry? That's where we are. And the thing in Peru, let me point out now, the church that is in Lima is having an impact on churches in Chile, in Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia.

So it's not HeartCry so much as it is one of the churches that we planted. God seems to have given that church great favor. We did a conference there.

Just to tell you how God works, we did a conference there about three and a half years ago. And it was all put on DVDs. Somehow, the DVDs, a man in Venezuela who told me, he says, I was a carnal elder and I was just lazy and looking for something on the internet that I could preach on Sunday.

I came across the teaching of the men there in Peru in the church. He said, I locked myself in a room and listened to every one of the CDs in tears. Then I went to the leader over our entire denomination of about 14 churches and I got all the pastors from those churches and I said, you've got to listen to this.

They listened to the first one. They canceled their Sunday service. They all stayed in that building and did not come out until Monday.

They went on Thursday and did not come out Monday. Watching the CDs and weeping from the teaching that was going on. And they said, gentlemen, we have never preached the gospel in our life because we have not known it.

And so now that church in Lima is actually working with the church in Venezuela. And so brothers, there's great opportunity in the world. Great opportunity.

And in the end, I think there may be one more slide. I don't know. Let's see.

Oh, let me go through these convictions just quickly. Our first conviction. The chief end of all mission work is the glory of God.

Our greatest passion is that His name be great among the nations from the rising to the setting of the sun. We find our great purpose and constant motivation not in man or his needs, but in God. His commitment to His own glory and our God-given desire to see Him glorified in every nation, tribe, people and language.

We must love men, but a romantic love for men will not keep you on the field. It must be a passion for the glory of God. Next conviction.

While we recognize that the needs of mankind are many and His sufferings are diverse, we believe that they all spring from a common origin, the fall of man and the corruption of his own heart. Therefore, we believe that the greatest benefit to mankind can be accomplished through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the establishment of churches that preach the word of God and minister according to its

commands, precepts, wisdom. The greatest need on the field is biblical evangelism, which must always end in the planting of an autonomous church.

Brothers, there is nothing the devil will fight more than a church being planted, a biblical church being planted. And that's why so many on the mission feel shy away from this. As a matter of fact, it is in vogue now, not even to think about planting churches.

The vogue now is just to get little cell groups all over the place. And then they count them as churches and then six weeks later, they fall apart. Now, I believe that you take a young group of converts, even if it's 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 converts and they've been converted and they're gathering in Jesus' name, there is a sense in which that is a church.

But it is an immature church. A full mature church has elders, it has deacons. It's autonomous.

And that's what we need to shoot for. Not just little cell groups, but mature churches. Now, why do people not want to do that? Because it's hard work.

Because the process goes too slow for people who want to impress other people with their newsletters. The greatest thing you can do is plant one biblical church. Let's go on.

Third, every need of this ministry will be obtained through prayer. We may share our missionary vision with others and even make known to them the specific tasks which the Lord has laid on our heart to do. But we may not raise support through prodding or manipulating our brothers and sisters in Christ.

If this ministry is of the Lord, then He will be our patron. If He is with us, He will direct His people to give and we will prosper. If He is not with us, we will not and should not succeed.

So if this ministry goes down, it needs to go down. All things have a time, brothers. As a matter of fact, one brother told me one time he thinks that in any organization there ought to be a clause that says after 50 years you blow it to smithereens.

So this is not about oh, if you don't give, we won't be able to do. Listen, I appeal to God. And what's amazing about that is if I seek to manipulate God's people, then I can actually lead God's people into doing something that's not the will of God.

But if I pray to God and God raises up people to give, then I am more assured that it is the will of God that we are doing. Let's go on. We intend to never enlarge our field of labor by contracting debts.

This is contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the New Testament. In secret prayer, God helping us, we will carry the needs of this ministry to the Lord and act according to the direction that He gives. It's amazing when you submit yourself to something of a regulative principle how easy it is to make decisions.

It's also quite amazing how easy it is to make a decision when you decide you're not going to go into debt. You do according to what the Lord gives you. Go on.

Those employed full time in this ministry should be afforded that which is required to live with dignity. To neglect their welfare would give excuse for the ungodly to bring unjust accusations against the Lord that He is either uncaring or unable to meet the needs of those He employs. To the same degree, those who are supported shall not be given so much as to waste the Lord's resources, acquire luxury, or live above those who so graciously give to the Lord's work.

To seek wealth and luxury in the ministry is to deny the call. And then our last conviction. Our goal is not to enlarge ourself or to become a key figure in the Great Commission, but to be faithful and obedient stewards of God.

It is our desire to present our ministry in such a way that men may see our weakness and glorify God for His strength. That they may see our inability and glorify God for His faithfulness. There has never been a great man of God, but only weak, faithless, pitiful men of a great and merciful God.

And then our final slide. The way that people help is by prayer. I would trade prayer over any amount of financial support.

Have any of you ever been walking along and felt an unusual help in your step? Know this. Someone was probably praying for you. Undesignated support.

It's used for the general working of the mission and the payment of missionaries and things. And then there are certain things such as projects that we have that sometimes people give to designated such as Bible, literature, or working in a specific country. Okay? I love this.

I always say this. What part of Go do you not understand? Whenever I'm asked to go to a missions conference, that's usually the first statement I make. It's like, this is not rocket science.

I know you're having a missions conference, but just what part of the word Go don't you understand? You and I are called to go. Or we are called to hold the rope. I like to look at it this way.

You are called to go down in the well, or you're called to hold the rope for those who go down. Either way, there's going to be scars on your hands, blisters, payment, cost. Every one of us is to be equally devoted to the Great Commission.

It should cost us. The Great Commission should cost us just as much as it costs the man in the field. Oh brothers, I turned 49 yesterday, and I'm still not that old, at least in comparison to some of you guys.

I'm not that old, but I can already say that I have many regrets. I regret everything that I have held back. I regret nothing that I have given.

Every man in this place who has the Spirit of God would say the same. Brothers, while we still have breath, let us remedy some of our past failures. Let us live as men who are dying.

Let us live for Christ. Let us spend our life on something that is eternal. And for you young men, while you are in your 20s, oh, hopefully that now you have enough wisdom.

Pour yourself out. That age of strength and energy doesn't last long. Do not pour your youth out on the silliness of this world.

Pour it out on the cause of Christ. And for those of you who are young fathers, know this. Be careful that you do not lead your children to love the world.

You'll take them to baseball games and soccer, and you'll get them involved, and you'll have them doing so many things. But are you teaching them to radically live for Jesus Christ so that one day, if they are tied to a stake and burned, they will be singing hymns as they are engulfed in flames? What kind of children are you raising? It's very important. Very important.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for your Word. Thank you for the opportunity to share about our mission.

Lord, I pray that you would get some glory out of all of this. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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