

Autism 11/19/67

## Christian Missions Today

Scripture: Luke 4:16-19

John 20:21 "Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you, As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."

Mt. 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

The subject for today could fill whole libraries and certainly cannot be adequately covered in one sermon. We will concentrate on certain basic principles with illustrations from our experiences here in Korea. Christian mission today may be considered under four topics: (1) Standing orders (2) Objectives (3) Tactics and Strategy, and (4) Evaluation.

**ORDERS** (1) Standing orders. To those who ask "Why Missions?" our initial answer is, "Because all Christians are under Standing ORDERS." The parting command of Jesus to all His disciples was, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you-, and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." On other occasion he voiced a similar order: "AS ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ the Father has sent me, even so I send youj." For those who acknowledge Christ as Lord, the order of such a "commander in Chief" cannot be ignored. It must be obeyed.

**COMPULSION** But there is more compulsion for the missionary than that of orders. There is a reflection of the great love and longing of God, who sent His Son to save the world. True Christians are constrained by that same love for their fellow men. We see the physically sick and needy and ignorant and we want to help. Even more we see spiritual blindness, moral poverty, and ignorance of God's way of life. To remedy these ills the missionary goes to tell primarily of a Saviour from sin who said: "I am the way, and ~~thy~~ truth and the life, no man comes to the Father but by me." This love is not a mere sentimental emotion, but an overriding concern for the eternal salvation and physical well-being of our fellow men. It is this compulsion which has driven men and women of all ages to give their lives and their possessions to tell a lost and needy world of a God who cares and a Saviour who died to redeem us from sin.

**ORDERS NOT SAME** God's orders are not the same to everyone. He does not expect every Christian to go to the jungles as a missionary. He expects many to ~~ke~~ keep the home fires burning, and to provide the logistical support for those on the firing lines. God does expect every Christian wherever he is and whatever he does to be loyal to the King and obedient to His orders, and to give a good witness to His goodness and love and mercy and forgiveness. The fact that to a few He commits the task of being a missionary does not make that person any better than God's other witnesses but it does place him in a special category where he needs the full support and sympathy and prayer of all Christendom.

**Jesus** This person called a missionary is an ordinary Christian under special orders from the supreme Commander and is charged with an inner yearning to tell distant peoples the wonders of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many years ago I preached in a distant Korean village after an elderly lady missionary had been holding Bible classes there for a week. She intended them for the women and children, but one old village elder insisted on coming every time, complete with topknot, horsehair hat, and long white robe. After I preached he arose with all the dignity of an Oriental patriarch and

and announced: "I have not been a Christian ~~xxx~~ but I have been coming to these meetings. Not long ago I went to Chunju and saw where these missionaries live, in houses much nicer than ours. I am sure from what I have read and the pictures I have seen that they must have left even finer places in their homeland. If they are willing to leave all the comforts and ease of their own homelands and come to our village with its flies and mosquitoes and smells and diseases and filthy simply to tell us about the love of this Jesus, then there must be something to this message. I have decided to believe and to accept this Gospel." I tell this story not to glorify the missionary but to demonstrate the impact of their obedience and sacrifice upon those to whom they minister.

(2) Obejectives. Not only are missionaries people under orders, but they have objectives. The grand objective is universal, it is enormous, but it can be simply stated. The objective of missions is to glorify God by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every creature, using whatever means make that message understandable and acceptable, and bringing those who respond into the fellowship of His Church.

DEFINITION

"MISSIONARY"

J. Allen

Primarily then, Missionaries are people sent to deliver a message. The word "missionary" is based on the Latin word to send, as one might send a servant with an urgent message. There is an Old Testament story which illustrates this. The city of Samaria had been under a long siege by the Syrian army. Food was gone and the people starving. Four lepers who lived by begging at the city gate reasoned thus among themselves. "If we stay here we will die of hunger. Let us go over to the Syrian line...if they kill us we will be no worse off than starving here, and they might let us live." When they reached the Syrian lines they found the camp deserted, with all equipment and provisions abandoned. The Syrians thought they had heard a great army coming to the relief of the besieged city, and fled in disarray. So the lepers ate their fill, then conscience-stricken said, "We are not doing right...this is a day of good tidings...let us return and tell the good news to the people of Samaria." So the missionary is a bearer of the good news that deliverance and salvation have come from the oppression of the enemy, the life of sin.

PERSPECTIVE

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Various periods of history have placed this objective in different perspective, but without essential change. For the Apostle Paul the objective seemed to be to win the Roman Empire. For countless unknown messengers through the dawning centuries of European history it was what we call France and Germany and England where our ancestors had lived as barbarians until Christian missionaries won them to Christ and brought civilization as a by-product. The 19th and 20th centuries have seen the modern missionary movement sweeping Asia and Africa and Latin America and the islands of the seas. In our own day these geographical frontiers still remain but are more and more yielding to concentration on an invasion of various areas of modern culture...industry, youth, intelligence, rural, etc. Still the message is the same: Man is lost because of sin. God loves man in spite of sin, and gave His Son for sinners. Through faith in Him God grants forgiveness of sin, and renewal of fellowship with Himself, with all the benefits and joys that attend thereto.

INDIVIDUAL

J. Allen

The objective is universal, but it is to each individual that the message must come and be accepted, for the Kingdom of God is composed of individuals. About a year ago I was examining a old Korean Lady for admission into the church. For years she had been mentally "off" and used as a sort of fortune teller or witch by those who wanted to make money out of her condition. Her family tried to kill her. When the family moved to Seoul, due to the prayer ministry of a Christian woman she was healed and returned to her own village. When I asked her why she accepted Christ, she refused to give the stock answer "In order to be forgiven of my sins," and would only answer, "Because He got rid of the devil in me!" Changing my question I asked, "If you have gotten



rid of the devil, what do you have instead?" Immediately came the answer "I have a sin-segye (new world)." No amount of prodding would change her answer, so I concluded the examination with this commend to her: "You have answered far better than most...you have found the meaning of true faith in Jesus, who has rid you from the old dominion of sin under the lordship of the devil, and brought you into the new world of light and joy and hope and peace that comes with acceptance of the Gospel" No matter how universal in scope the objective of Christian missions, ultimately it is bearing the message which brings all men into this new world.

3. Tactics and Strategy. In what is known as the Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus ~~himself~~ suggested tactics and strategy. The disciples were to go ~~happily~~ preaching and teaching and baptizing. *OUTLINE* In another place, Jesus outlined geographical strategy..they were to witness in Jerusalem first, then in Judea and Samaria, and then to the ends of the earth. Modern missionary movements have systematically tried to carry the Christian message to every land on earth. In an amazing degree this has been successful, and there are few lands on earth where the Gospel is not being preached today. Only a very few bar the door, notably some of the communist countries such as Red China and North Korea.

*BEGINNINGS IN KOREA* In Korea ~~missions~~ Protestant missionaries began their work in the 1880s. There had been a few attempts prior to that and Roman Catholic missionaries had been at work with very limited success for about a century. Korea was hostile not only to missionaries but to all foreigners, and it was actually the ministrations of a medical doctor in the court of the King, which "broke" the ice for other missionaries to enter and begin their work. These were days of dark court intrigue as Russia, China and Japan struggled for domination of the Korean peninsula which each considered vital to its interests. Missionaries represented the only ones who existed for the best interests of the Koreans themselves without any ulterior or imperialistic motives whatever. Soon they won the confidence of Koreans, both high and low, and within a few decades the success of missions in Korea was phenomenal, perhaps more so than in any other land in history.

Missionaries, <sup>with</sup> both Methodist and Presbyterian, entered in large numbers and fanned out over every province and major city in the land. There was splendid fellowship and cooperation between missionaries of various sending boards, so that they worked out a division of responsibility resulting in no overlapping of efforts or unseemly competition. In Seoul, and in Pyeng-yang (the present capital of North Korea) the missions combined to carry out great institutional work in education and medicine. At one time Pyeng-yang was the greatest missionary center in the world, and the Christian constituency was so strong that most businesses shut down on Sunday because this was the practice of so many Christian business men it was not practical for non-Christians to carry on business. Great revivals swept the church, and at times it appeared that the entire population would become Christian in short order.

It may interest you to know that in the tri-province area comprising the entire south-western part of Korea, the first missionary work was begun here in ~~XXXXXX~~ Chunju, 40 miles west of this base with Kunsan a close second. In those days there were no highways or public transportation, and it is ~~said~~ said that one of the missionaries, a Dr. Drew persuaded the mission to open the station at Kunsan because his feet were badly blistered from long walks through the country, and he felt he could work this area around Kunsan travelling by goat up and down the Kum river and along the coast. These missionaries began work in Kusan in 1895 and I could take you to the location of their station just north of the city. The station is no longer there, but within a

*thru a jirky village of some 100 thatched roof houses.*

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radius of 25 miles are well over a hundred churches today and thousands of Christians...the results of their pioneering endeavors.

Strategy for missionaries in Korea has always followed three main lines of attack. Primarily has been preaching the Gospel, winning of converts and organization of churches. While this has been the task of all missionaries of every profession, basically it has been the business of the ordained ministers. A second approach has been through education. The ~~first~~ first modern schools of this nation, all the way from primary school through graduate schools were begun and built up by missionaries. In most major cities today are large middle and high schools for boys and girls, now operated by the Korean church, but formerly by the missionaries as training places for young Christians. Christian colleges and universities are scattered over the nation, most famous being Yonsei and Ehwa universities in Seoul. Paralleling this type of education was education in Bible institutes and seminaries for leadership in the church, so that Korea now produces its own ministers and other church workers, literally by the thousands. A third approach has been through medical work, usually with a hospital in each major missionary station. From the very beginning this medical work has not only met actual medical needs on massive scales, but it has clearly demonstrated to the non Christian community the concern of the Christian movement for physical needs, and also been the means of opening countless hearts to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Today, our tactics have broadened into so many fields it is hard to enumerate them. Literature, radio, relief, social services, orphanages and oldfolks homes, care of lepers, TB patients, ~~and~~ deaf and blind, ~~work~~ agriculture and industry...these are a mere hint of the multitude of services in which missionaries, and now their Korean fellow workers, are involved. We believe that the carrying out of all these points of attack are in obedience to the command of Christ to Go, teaching and witnessing.

4. Evaluation. Time fails me to cover these points adequately. Around the world this morning, church bells are ringing in tens of thousands of places and millions worship ~~in~~ in the name of Christ...testimony to the miraculous results of the efforts of those 12 men Jesus selected as Apostles. It is a miracle and not the result of human effort by of the work of the Holy Spirit which He sent not only to the 12 but to all successive missionaries down through the centuries.

Again let us see what has happened in Korea. Today there are over 8,000 Protestant churches in South Korea, with a constituency reported at just under 2,000,000 in a total population of 30,000,000, or about one out of 15, of whom approximately one-fourth are baptized Christians. Remember that this has been accomplished in the face of great odds and persecution. The Japanese who controlled Korea from 1905-1945 persecuted the church and systematically eliminated its leadership. North Korea was once the center of Christian activity in Korea but the tragic division of Korea in 1945 took it into the communist orbit. The Korean War of 1950 resulted in the death of tens of thousands of Christians and hundreds of their pastors. Large numbers of North Korean Christians fled south, many of them in small boats during December and January down the coast where they landed in the vicinity of Kunsan by the thousands, resulting in a strong Yankee accent among many of the Christians of this area.

Yet despite these things <sup>(Korea)</sup> the Christian movement has a strong place in Korea. There are more churches in Seoul than any city in the world. It is a self-governing church, with its own ministry, its own building programs, its own programs of outreach in evangelism, its own church courts, its own leadership training programs. The most serious blight on the total picture are the divisions which have crept into the church, so that every major denomination can record one or more serious divisions, usually the result of power struggles rather than differences of belief. Yet even these divisions have challenged the church to greater



outreach and have resulted in continued growth on a scale unparalleled on the American church scene.

Great churches are to be found in every city. One or two, such as the Yong-nak Presbyterian Church in Seoul rank among the greatest churches in the world. Yong-nak church seats over 2000, and every Sunday morning three complete services are held with the sanctuary filled each time and with an overflow congregation in the educational building watching by closed circuit television. Right now in the city of Kunsan a dozen or so large churches are holding services for capacity congregations. In this province alone are about 700 churches. True many of them are the small rural churches with perhaps 50 in attendance. My own work is in the starting and developing of these.

With such a picture, perhaps you are saying: Is there further need for the foreign missionary and for funds from abroad. Yes, there is. After all less than one in every fifteen Koreans is a Christian. Aside from the great city churches, the majority are weak, leaderless, and dependent upon our help. Forces of secularism and materialism are at work in competition to the spiritual values of the church. The population is ~~xx~~ exploding so rapidly that there are now at least twice as many non-Christians in Korea as there were when Protestant missions began 80 years ago. The vision, and know-how, and resources of the missionary are needed to pioneer into the regions of society as yet largely untouched by the Christian faith.

In closing let me say one word to the American service man. You may know know it, but the generally warm welcome accorded you in this land has been paved by Christian missions. You as a Christian should extend the hand of Christian fellowship and love and witness to these people. You too, are placed here as a Christian, and your attitudes and your actions and your witness can add to that of the missionary in bringing the Gospel of Christ and the newness of life in Him to these needy people. Or you can negate that witness, or even ~~xxxx~~ destroy that which missions have accomplished by any conduct unworthy of a Christian. Remember that the command of Christ is an order to all. You may not be a missionary in the technical sense, but in the providence of God you have been sent here in another capacity and God expects that you too respect and obey the injunction of Christ: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."