

GO FOR



THE GLOBE

Joseph L. Cannon

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PREFACE

I just finished reading all the scripture references to the world, the earth, ends of the earth, all peoples, all mankind, and I am finding it hard to describe the impact it has had on me. That is why I want to share the experience with you by putting them up front in this writing. Please read them.

First, I feel that all the peoples of the world and their governments need to recognize God is ruling over them and his Son sits on the throne of the universe with his hands on the controls. Second, that they need to make haste to be reconciled with him voluntarily before they are forced to. They, yes, we all, are existing because of his graciousness and the nations own nothing of this world. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." The unbelieving, alien-like, temporary occupation of the surface of the earth by rebellious sinners is an unreal, unmitigated affront to the Creator and can only prolong a vain travesty to be resolved by the final and complete judgment day. Now, He is calling through Christ "*all men everywhere to repent.*" (Acts 17:30)

There is one bottom line on every page of the Bible which everyone needs to heed, expressed in an old gospel song, "God is calling the prodigal 'Come without delay;' hear, oh, hear him calling, calling now for thee."

This planet has been hijacked by Satan and is being ruined by nations and people out of sync with God. God in his love is giving us one long, last chance to come across and get with Him before it is too late. Thus enters Christ, the Cross, the Gospel, and the legitimate means of getting the message out through worldwide evangelism.

I started preaching in 1943 and, with a wonderful wife, went into world evangelism starting in Japan in 1947. We worked our way more or less along the western rim of the Pacific with fifteen years in Japan, nine in Okinawa, thirteen in Papua New Guinea, and about six years in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Since 1984 we have also been engaged in a paramissionary training program called Mission/1000. The older I get it seems the more I hear the trumpet sound to wake up to the Armageddon that is calling us to do battle now, to come to grips with the "spiritual hosts of wickedness" now. To rally around The Banner, Christ himself, and "destroy the works of the devil," casting out Satan by the power of the gospel of Christ uplifted on the cross.

In preparing this manuscript, I had a general Christian audience in mind. I have not given an in-depth study of the many passages of

scripture quoted or referred to. That is left to commentators and those engaged in scholarly pursuits. My purpose was to help the reader see the terrific scope of world evangelism as portrayed in the scripture, and be inspired not only to an appreciation of the biblically-based movement, but to participation in the worldwide mission of Jesus Christ, who came to this world to seek and save the lost, and through his body, the church, still do it in today's world. I hope also that this little book may encourage seekers of lost souls, missionaries, and gospel preachers to pursue the most important work that Christ has given his church to do until the day when all has been completely fulfilled and accomplished to the glory of God.

How can we look to final victory at the coming of Christ without winning some battles now? Aren't we "more than conquerors" now? With the whole world being described as "lying in the evil one," is it not our solemn, holy, and happy duty to reclaim lost souls for our Lord now? Does not the Great Commission envisage constant, unremitting world evangelism in "every nation," "to every person" until that last, awesome, glorious day of judgment and salvation? I believe this with all my heart, I hope our trip together through the scriptures that relate to worldwide evangelism will be a strengthening, informative one to the glory of the grace of our Lord Christ. Amen.

*Joe Cannon,
January 4, 1992*

INTRODUCTION

The Bible Basis of Worldwide Evangelism

I don't know about you, but I once had the idea that the work of bringing souls to Jesus began with the Great Commission. I have always looked to this command as my authority to lovingly confront people with the gospel, crossing any and every international and cultural border to do this. Certainly no one can deny the importance of this command, but I considered it just a command among other commands. What a wonderful discovery in pursuing the Old Testament to find the glorious nature of world evangelism portrayed as carrying out God's plan of the ages to bring salvation to the world! Inherent in the Great Commission is the culmination and fulfillment of all God's purposes through the ages in "*bringing many sons to glory.*" It is more than a command among other commands, because it involves every Christian, yes, the whole church in the love of God reaching out everywhere to the lost souls of men and women. It reveals the stairway to Heaven with "angels descending and ascending." It is Christ as the crowned King of Heaven and earth moving in his body, the church, to reconcile all mankind to himself. Carrying out the commission is not just a work of the church, it is the supreme work of the church without which there is no church. Churches not caught up in world evangelism at home or abroad will die. They have died and are dying all around us. Living, breathing, working Christians (the church) are deeply involved in "seeking and saving the lost" even as their living Lord did and is still doing.

When the Great Commission is ignored or played down, the salt loses its saltiness and the light of the world goes out. In fact, the whole Bible (revealed will of God) is the Great Commission Handbook, a missionary manual portraying and instructing us concerning God's love and work in a world alienated by the disobedience of Adam and Eve, resulting in Satan's takeover of the planet. Thus followed more corruptions and judgments. God's actions can now be seen as one coming from outer space invading the earth, now intervening here, now conquering there, now suffering hardship and loss. This impression is laid so heavily upon the history and conscience of mankind that when their dreams, aspirations, and hopes are turned inside out, the hero is always riding in, always confronting the wrong, always risking or giving his life for the benefit of the beleaguered person, town, or nation, always saying in epic, literature, song and novel, "Come over and help us." - the unconscious plea of the lost humanity.

In this little writing I want us to see world evangelism for what God meant it to be, for what the Bible shows it is, so that everyone will become involved in the greatest movement in history: the movement

of the invasion by the Kingdom of Heaven with its ultimate goal of salvation for all who believe, doing God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven. I want us to see it as God's answer to the Pleas of the damned and hear him say, "*I am here, I am here.*" (Isaiah 65:1)

Trying to get a view of the Bible is like trying to get a view of a mirror. As we all look into it, it looks back at us and we will never understand what we are seeing until we accept the Bible's view of us!

From the beginning we see Adam and Eve dropping the ball and turning a winning opportunity into a final loss for all of us. At this point it is hard for us to imagine what the original relationship with God was like - what kind of life it was in Eden and why they fell for a phony like Satan. But, thinking along this line confronts us with our own condemnation and exposure by the mirror of our own obvious deficiencies. To say we are out of control is conspicuously evident in the internal and external history of mankind. Man on earth still does not know where he is going; still repeats the same bad habits; still messes up outward life with inward turmoil. Efforts to police his own evils are as erratic as a ride on a roller coaster. Godless societies are not very happy or stable and, in the end, furnish no real purpose for existence. Man trying to live without his Creator only promotes his own doom; and all of us, altogether, must be ushered off the face of this planet by death. This tells us something about the way we are.

What the venerable, old, always up-to-date Bible presents to us is a comprehensive overview and explanation of the whole scene from beginning to end, fixing our attention on matters that give us hope, and answering all the basic questions of our existence and history. What we have with world evangelism is not returning the planet to its absent owner; but, rather, becoming a part of the restoration of men and women to the original purposes of this creation, becoming reconciled to the Creator who has not relinquished his ownership and control in the least. In spite of the devil's foothold on the earth and the many tragic ramifications of it, at best, it is tenuous. His grip has already been broken. He is losing the war.

As we journey through the Bible, the glorious themes of redemption and release will come to the fore, and we will see the significance and brightness of the jewel of world evangelism. But, wait, let us start at the beginning, no - before the beginning!

PART 1

What the Old Testament Says

Chapter 1: Before It All Started

- A. **Conceived in Eternity** - *"In the beginning God..."* – **Genesis 1:1**
- B. **Eternal Love** – *"Because you love me before the creation of the world"* – **John 17:24**
- C. **God's Love Shared With Us** - *"I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Live in my love."* – **John 15:9**
- D. **God Loved Us From Out of Eternity** - *"The book of life belonging to the lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."* – **Revelation 13:8**
- E. **World Evangelism in the Making** - *"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world... in love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ."* – **Ephesians 1:4-5**

Chapter 2: Earth-shaking Consequences

- A. **The Hostility That Will Not End** - *"And there was war in heaven."* - **Revelation 12:7**
- B. **Titanic Tug of War** - *"You adulterous people. Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God?"*
– **James 4:4**
- C. **Descent into Darkness** - *"The ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient."*
– **Ephesians 2:2.**

Chapter 3: A Crack in the Door

- A. *"Let There Be Light."* – **Genesis 1:3**
- B. **The Shaft of Light** – *"and all peoples, all nations will be blessed through you and your offspring. And the scepter, the ruler's staff will be Shiloh's when he comes, and also the obedience of the nations will be his."* – **Genesis 12:3, 18:18; 26:4; 28:14; 49:10.**
- C. **Battering on the Door** – *"When will you come to me?"*
- **Psalms 101:2**

Chapter 4: Hidden Treasures and Infra-red Rays

- A. **Bursts of Glory** – *"I have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill. I will proclaim the degree of the Lord: He said to me, "You are my Son, today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession."* – **Psalms 2:6-8**
- B. **Universal, Mass World Evangelism!** - *"Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."* – **Psalms 19:4**

- C. Evangelism Will Be Successful Everywhere!** - "All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him... all nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed."
- **Psalm 72:12, 17**
- D. Christ to Be Worshiped Everywhere as King of His Kingdom**
- "Sit at my right hand... the Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion - you will rule in the midst of your enemies."
- E. God is God and Will Be Recognized and Exalted in All the Earth** - "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth." - **Psalm 46:10.**
"From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets the name of the Lord is to be praised." - **Psalm 113:3.**
"Clap your hands, all you nations... how awesome is the Lord Most High, the great king over all the earth... God reigns over the nations... the nobles of the nations assemble as the people of God of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to God..."
- **Psalm 47:1, 8, 9.**
- F Strong Desires that God and His Salvation be Made Known in All the Earth** - "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be made known on the earth, your salvation among all nations. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the people justly and guide the nations of the earth." - **Psalm 67:1-4.** "May all the kings of the earth praise you, O Lord, when they hear the words of your mouth." - **Psalm 138:4**
- G. Worldwide Proclamation Urged** - "...proclaim among the nations what he has done..." - **Psalm 9:11.** "Declare his glory among the nations... Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength..."
- **Psalm 96:3, 7.**
- H. Salvation Among All the Nations to Become an Accomplished Fact** - "All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name." - **Psalm 86:9.**
"All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nation."
- **Psalm 22:27-28.**

Chapter 5: Bursts of Sunshine

"for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples, the nations will rally to him..." **Isaiah 11:9-10.**

"All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a banner is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when a trumpet sounds you will hear it." – **Isaiah 18:3.**

- A. The Last Age with New Universal Worship** - *"In the last days chief among the mountains... all nations will stream to it... many peoples will come... the word of the Lord from Jerusalem... He will judge between the nations... settle disputes for many peoples... nation will not take up sword against nation."* – **Isaiah 2:2-4**
- B. A Universal Signal Will be Given All Nations!** – *"All you people of the world you who will see it, and when the trumpet sounds you will hear it."* – **Isaiah 18:3.**
- C. Resultant Spiritual Joy, Songs, Praise, and Glory to God Everywhere!** – *"They raise their voices, they shout for joy: from the West they acclaim the Lord's majesty. Therefore in the east give glory to the Lord: exalt the name of the Lord, the God of Israel, in the islands of the sea. From the ends of the earth we hear singing: "Glory to the Righteous One."* – **Isaiah 24:14-16.**
- D. Now an Urgent Invitation, Later Inescapable Judgement for All Nations** – *"Turn to me and be saved all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. By myself I have sworn... a word that will not be revoked: before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. They will say of me, 'In the Lord alone are righteousness and strength."* – **Isaiah 45:22-24a**

CHAPTER 1

BEFORE IT ALL STARTED

A. Conceived in Eternity - *"In the Beginning God"...* - Genesis 1:1

Concerning the creation of the universe and man, all things began with God. Concerning the realm of the eternal nature and dwelling place of God, there is no beginning. It is out of eternity that creation came, out of a dimension, a spirit-world, marvellous above words, beyond human comprehension. It is from out of that world that the present universe was formulated and came into existence. Everything that exists is not contained in the physical structure of the universe. Though *"the heavens (outer space) declare the glory of God and the skies proclaim the work of his hands,"*¹ there are those realms of being that are unknown to us. The Bible, a book by God revealing truth to us, relates certain relationships and matters describing that which preexisted creation. Before the beginning there was God and here also is what we find.

B. Eternal Love - *"Because you loved me before the creation of the World..."* - John 17:24

A relationship of heavenly love between the Son and the Father is referred to as Christ prays to God. The world came into existence out of their eternal fellowship. How wonderful and glorious this is. For those looking for real eternal love, this is where it is.

As Christians we do not have any life in this world. The whole world is passing into death and its lifestyles will not survive. We are dead to the world, having been crucified with Christ and now engaged in crucifying the flesh, in order that the new life of Christ in us may be manifested through His Holy Spirit.² But this, our new life coming through the agency of the Spirit, originates in heaven, namely, *"the life which is now hidden with Christ in God."*³ In other words, the blood of Christ may run through all parts of his body, the church on earth, but the heartbeat is in heaven. Our life comes from His as he lives his life in those whose hearts are set on things above, and *"not on earthly things."*⁴ It is important, therefore, for us to realize that the love the Father has for the Son in heaven he has for us, because our lives are

held and sustained by Christ on the throne of God. Whatever love Christ experiences from God, he conveys to us. Whatever the Father had, he gave to the Son born out of his bosom, "*the firstborn of all creation.*"⁵ Whatever the Son received from the father, he passes on to us. In prayer, he said, "*I have revealed you to them... so that the mighty love you have for me may be in them and I in them.*" John 17:24.

C. God's Love Shared With Us - "*I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Live within my love.*" John 15:9 (LB)

We are now caught up in this eternal love relationship which supplies the power for us to love as we are being loved. How wonderful this is! Whatever they have shared from all eternity is now shared with us. The result then is the privilege and pleasure of sharing that love with others. The whole creation came out of the love relationship of the Trinity. Therefore, we are taught to live in the of Christ and pray in the love of the Spirit.⁶ The terrific energy of God's love is communicated to us through Christ's gift of the Holy Spirit sent from above. "*For we know how dearly God loves us; and we feel this warm love everywhere within us, because God has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.*"⁷

D. God Loved Us From Out of Eternity - "... *the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.*" Revelation 13:8.

That Christ should die on the cross was already decided by the time the world was formed. The Lamb was already slain in the plan of God. Agreement had been reached by the Father and the Son that there was no other way for their love to reclaim man except through death - death because sin brings death - death because rejection of God who is life places one immediately in the position of opposing life and stepping outside the door of life. Venturing outside the door to retrieve dead Adam and Eve and all posterity who would be separated from the life of God with them would bring death to the Son. Not only that, but, seemingly never-ending death to one who would take upon himself all the sins that would result from the fall of Adam. But such was the love between God and Christ that as the Father's love gave all to his son, so Christ would give all to the Father and deprive himself of heaven and take on the mission of the redemption of

mankind through his own death. Thus, a choice was made that dying for one sinner, he would die for all, even though all he died for would not be retrieved, and their names would not be written in the Book of Life. The mission, though it would be of limited success, was taken on by Christ through his love for the Father and the Father's love for us. Willful rejection by many was ahead, but the heavenly love of the Trinity was determined beforehand by its own glorious nature. So the Lamb was "*chosen before the creation of the world,*"⁸ and his blood was shed in the due process of God's intervention in the tragic history of mankind that is plunging down to destruction.

E. World Evangelism in the Making - "*For he chose us in him before the creation of the world... In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ.*"
Ephesians 1:4-5.

God reached out to undeserving humanity, not for glory, for heaven and earth were already filled with his glory; not because man had accomplished anything, and merited God's intervention, but God reached out in unconditional love. In the Holy discussions and counsel of heaven, He predetermined the sending of his beloved Son and the adoption of sons out of a world that would reject His fatherhood and claim the source of all evil to be revered and obeyed. In view of what would happen in Eden and consequently in resulting history, why did He decide to create us? It seems that God willed creation. Being God meant that it would be done and his knowledge of what would happen hinged perhaps on his willing it to happen. One thing is certain, He chose those who would believe that he chose them, and appointed our redemption out of his basic nature and heart of agape - love.

"*Oh, you who hear prayer, to you all men will come. When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave our transgressions. Blessed are those you chose!*" (Psalm 65:2-3) This is echoed by Paul, "*In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.*"⁹ Thus, for this was Christ chosen and sent, as God said, "*Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight: I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.*"¹⁰

Thus, God reaches out from heaven through the sending of his Son and initiates the evangelism, the first and only world missionary. All subsequent evangelism would not take place except by him.

CHAPTER 2

EARTH-SHAKING CONSEQUENCES

A. The Hostility That Will Not End - *"And there was war in heaven..."* Revelation 12:7

Now the sending of the Son and his coming to earth involved more than seeking and saving lost men and women, for there is drama of a wider and most significant conflict between heaven and earth. This is seen when human history from the beginning to the end is turned inside out: human eyes seeing only materialized creation miss altogether, or ignorantly interpret the unseen struggle, the war in the heavens over authority on earth.

The appearance of Satan in Eden to corrupt God's creation¹ and his coming into the presence of God with other angels to accuse Job² introduces a tremendous facet to the whole scene. Satan, whose name means "adversary," appears as the opponent of God, creation, man, the Son of man, and the plan of redemption. Apparently, the creation of man earned God and mankind the everlasting hatred of the devil. When Adam and Eve acquiesced to the temptation of Satan, they took a stand against God's purposes in creating them and the earth. This threw the whole system into turmoil and judgement. The result is described as "war in heaven." Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. The dragon was not strong enough, and he and his angels lost their place in heaven. *"The great dragon was hurled down - that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth and his angels with him."*³ To take the use of the word, "heaven," here as meaning God's eternal dwelling place is to fail to recognize that it is used in other ways, such as describing authority as being "high," constituting "heavenly realms."⁴ Satan apparently had heavenly or high authority which he lost when he fell from heaven. Jesus describes this saying, *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."*⁵

Other angels fell with him. They were allied with him in opposition to the plans of God. They are described variously as demons; *"The sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons,"*⁶ and angels, *"the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."*⁷ Any human being that aids and abets Satan is called by Jesus a "devil," as was Judas,⁸ and "Satan," as was Peter.⁹

B. Titanic Tug of War - *"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God?"* - James 4:4

The whole plan of evangelizing the world would meet with Satanic opposition from the start. The world system under the Devil's authority would be marshalled against God and his Christ. *"Why do the nations conspire and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One."*¹⁰

As the nations rage and men strive and fight for authority over the earth, let us not be deceived. As we look at human history, we must see what is behind it. We must see the Devil wreaking confusion and havoc on the earth. We must understand also the uncompromising conflict between God's will and Satan's. The world evangelism initiated by Christ's missionary journey from heaven to earth brought Him into open confrontation with the forces of darkness. So, they the thousands of demons possessing a man cry out, *"What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. I beg you don't torture me... and they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss."*¹¹ The Abyss represents the headquarters and marshalling area of the demons, a prison where God has placed restraints. A fallen star is the angel in charge of the Abyss whose name is Destroyer.¹² The evil spirits coming out of the Abyss brought descending darkness on the world, blotting out the sun.¹³ The Anointed One came to destroy the works of the devil and cast Satan out of the lives of men and women.¹⁴ *"Now, Jesus said, is the time for judgement in this world, now the prince of this world will be driven out."*¹⁵

C. Decent Into Darkness - *"The ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work is those who are disobedient."* - Ephesians 2:2

When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. And out of the smoke locusts came down upon the earth (Revelation 9:2-3). *You belong to your father, the devil... he was a murderer from the beginning... for there is not truth in him... he is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44).*

When Adam and Eve fell and all of the creation with them, the world descended into moral and spiritual darkness. Sin increased and separation from God widened. The tragedy of the universal flood bore testimony to what resulted from the disobedience in Eden. Sin became so prevalent in the world that they foolishly thought darkness was light, not really knowing the difference. We are so used to sin today and so ignorant of its consequences that we think what happened in Eden was a little thing. We forget that one short step is the difference between standing on a cliff and falling off one. One evil man can bring about the death of millions. Satan's deceptions are such a nature that evil is seen as good and righteousness perceived as wrong. Man was made with the ability to rule over earth-bound creation. This authority was expropriated by Satan and Adam and Eve took sides with him, but friction between God and mankind, who deemed to exercise this authority without reference to God, and Satan, who wanted it all, brought about a terrible love-hate relationship. This conflict continues from generation to generation. Great confusion resulted from the three-way conflict between God and Satan, God and man, and man and Satan. In the final analysis, God, who is a God of peace, not catastrophe (1 Corinthians 14:33), will finally prevail.

The Dark Ages began long before medieval times and have continued to the present. "Enlightenment," confined to outward creature comforts by scientific and technological developments, is next to useless in a world of spiritual and moral blackness. We see along with industrial developments, engines of war, killing, maiming, and crushing more people in this century than all the past centuries combined. As medical advances are made, pollution, cancer, heart disease, mental illness, AIDS, epidemics of STD's, alcohol and drug abuse increases. A dark world of unbelief does not have the good sense to make a connection between sin and crime, sin and disease, sin and uncleanness, sin and moral-spiritual ignorance. So, "The beat goes on" - but not forever.

CHAPTER 3

A CRACK IN THE DOOR

A. *"Let There Be Light..."* - Genesis 1:3

Though God's creation began with light and all his works were

good and bathed in the light of truth and love, Satan and sin changed the whole atmosphere. The world was plunged into darkness, damnation, fear and folly. It became as if the door of heaven was slammed shut altogether, for God declared, "*Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear... We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walked in deep shadows.*"¹

Even as God's righteous judgement was pronounced in Eden, a crack of light is seen as the coming of Satan's conqueror is referred to in God's prophecy concerning Eve and Satan. "*From now on you and the woman will be enemies, as will all of your offspring and hers. And I will put the fear of you into the woman and between her offspring and yours. He shall strike you on your head, while you will strike at his heel...*"² But as the brilliance of the sun stands behind the door where only a small crack of light appears, so the glory of the coming Savior stands behind this crack in the door.

B. The Shaft of Light - "*And all peoples, all nations will be blessed through you and your offspring. And the scepter, the ruler's staff, will be Shiloh's when he comes, and also the obedience of the nations will be His.*"³

The above combined verses set forth the precious promise of salvation given to Abraham, his family, and his nation. Here "the obedience of the nations" infers the spread of the gospel. The promise was given first to Abraham who had faith to obey all God asked him to do. First, by leaving, not knowing where he was going or what he was getting into. He walked by faith, trusting God, seeing beyond this life the heavenly City of God.⁴

Believing God's promise, he saw the future glory of the Christ blessing the whole world. Jesus said, "*Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.*"⁵ It is evident, therefore, that Abraham understood the blessing received by the whole world would be Christ the Savior. In fact, the resurrection is taught here because Abraham understood what the promise meant and was happy about it, but when the day of Christ came, he was alive and saw it and had gladness that continued to the time Jesus was speaking of it.

God's promise became a shaft of light in the heart of the faithful Abraham. This was conveyed to Isaac, and Jacob and to Jacob's sons through the prophetic promise. The importance of Abraham and the

promise can be seen in the fact that Abraham is mentioned 317 times in the Bible, 82 of them in the New Testament.

Paul says concerning the promise and its fulfillment: *"Consider Abraham, he believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. Understand then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: all nations will be blessed through you. So, all those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith."*⁶

Notice that the announcing of the gospel to Abraham in advance was an evangelistic act of God, referring also to the evangelistic act of Christ in coming to this world and making the gospel available to all nations through the evangelistic acts of the Church.⁷

What we are talking about here is justification by faith, namely salvation, the forgiveness of sins, free entrance into Heaven. It is about what happens when we believe in Christ and fully trust him. Abraham had the same experience - *"God declared him fit for heaven only because he believed God's promises... I will bless those in every nation who trust in me as you do."*⁸

C. Battering on the Door - *"When will you come to me?"* Psalm 101:2

With the response of Abraham and his family, the light was like a spotlight illuminating these chosen ones who were the forerunners of the promised Messiah. A foothold was gained by God in a world of darkness and ignorance. This foothold became, through the nation of Israel, a beachhead on earth for the cause of the Messiah. But the mystery of the plan of God was hidden through the early ages and is referred to as follows:

*"The proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed... so that all nations might believe and obey him."*⁹ So prophets long to understand what was being prophesied and even angels desired to look into it.¹⁰ The struggle for a faithful nation was along roller-coaster ride. Men of faith, spiritual men, longed for the coming of the Messiah, the Kingdom, the glorious culmination of God's purposes. Isaiah's cry for the coming of God was as a battering on the door of heaven, echoing David's *"when will you come to me?"*

*"Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down... and cause the nations to quake before you."*¹¹ And the prophecy through David, *"He parted the heavens and came down."*¹²

CHAPTER 4

HIDDEN TREASURES AND INFRA-RED RAYS

The longing for salvation and desires for the presence of God were stirred up by the prophets as they spoke and wrote. Their pronouncements were interspersed with Messianic predictions, sometimes exploding like a skyrocket in the heavens. Yet, they were largely scattered utterances wrapped in mundane matters, earthly crisis, and current events. They served their purposes so that when the wise men inquired about the birth place of the King, the correct answer was given by the chief priests and teachers of the law, *"In Bethlehem in Judea for this is what the prophet has written."*¹

Rays of light were seen in the darkness but the humble, loving person of the Messiah was missed, for they stumbled at the spiritual nature of the Kingdom was confusing and unacceptable to many.⁴

How amazing it is that the hidden things are now clear to us! With the coming of the light of the world,⁵ all things are made clear to Christians, for they were all written for us. *"written down as warnings for us on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come."*⁶ We can as it were put on gospel glasses and see in the Old Testament writings their real meanings. The infra-red rays of the cross brings everything to light, *"Many a prophet and king of old has longed for these days, to see and hear what you have seen and heard".*⁷

A. Bursts of Glory - *"I have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill. I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, 'You are my Son, today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.'"* - Psalm 2:6-8

The Psalms begin with a theme that runs throughout them - the glory of the Christ. What a beginning! The first psalm calling upon us to meditate, to study the word of the Lord day and night is followed by the second psalm pointing us to the Messiah. Through the gospel we must see the tremendous picture of Christ once hidden, but now fully revealed.

Though the governments of the world are appointed by God to maintain law and order, they always are filled with pride, thinking that they exist because of their own goodness and glory. They are jealous of the hold that the Anointed One has on the people of their king-

doms. We see now that in spite of the plans and fulminations of worldly governments and empires, the Christ came, was crucified, but God raised him from the dead, crowning him King of kings and Lord of Lords and offering him the nations of the world. This offer was not like the one Satan made during the temptation of Jesus, for he could never deliver on his deceptive promise. But God Almighty can deliver, and is now continuing to deliver Christ to the nations of the world even to the ends of the earth.

Christ asked for every nation and tribe on the face of the earth as his inheritance and has given us the honor of taking his authoritative gospel into all the world. Nothing can stop us. God laughs at efforts to prevent this and warns the world, *"Fall down before his Son and kiss his feet before his anger is roused and you perish. I am warning you, his wrath will soon begin."*⁸

One of the main themes of the prophetic psalms is that of world evangelism bringing the reign of Christ to all the earth through the proclamation of the gospel. His reign is not brought to the ends of the earth through the worldly, harmful violence of armies, but through the proclamation of the eternal good news - and the obedience of the nations to it.

*"Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth - to every nation, tribe, language, and people... Fear God and give him glory for the hour of his judgment has come."*⁹

B. Universal, Mass World Evangelism! - *"Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."* - Psalm 19:4

This definitely speaks of world evangelists, preachers, and teachers and missionaries of the gospel speaking to the lost. Paul quotes this in Romans 10:18, and explains it clearly as being accomplished by *"the beautiful feet of those who bring good news..."* those that preach the word of Christ.¹⁰

*"Proclaim among the nations what he has done."*¹¹ **Christians everywhere are to pray,** *"May God bless us and make his face shine upon us that your ways may be known on the earth, your salvation among all nations."*¹² **The result of God blessing his people is seen as giving universal blessings.** *"God will bless us and all the ends of the earth will fear him."*¹³

C. Evangelism will be Successful Everywhere! - "All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him... all nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed." – Psalm 72:12, 17.

No place, no authority, no people are to be left out. The blessings will be experienced everywhere by everybody. First his glory is to be proclaimed, "Declared his glory among the nations,"¹⁴ This is to be followed by response everywhere. "Ascribe glory and strength to the Lord, O families of nations."¹⁵ Herein is the promise to Abraham fulfilled.

As a result of Jesus dying on the cross, pictured in Psalms 22, "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the earth will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations."

D. Christ to Be Worshiped Everywhere as King of His Kingdom - "Sit at my right hand... The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion - you will rule in the midst of your enemies. Your troops will be willing in your day of battle... He will judge the nations, crushing the rulers of the whole earth." – Psalm 110:1-3, 6.

Here, Christ is given the right to sit on the right hand on the throne of God. And now his rule will be extended over all the earth. His word, his gospel will crush rulers who seek absolute control over the souls of men. Notice Christ's troops are to be willing to battle for him. Is this true of the church and the whole earth is to be filled with His glory! "Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen."¹⁷

E. God is God and Will Be Recognized as Such Among the Nations - "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 113:3. "Clap your hands all you nations... The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to God." Psalm 47:1, 8-9.

Though the Creator chose one man, one family, one nation through which the world's savior would come, he did not vacate his authority over all the nations, nor reject his love for them. The Christ would come with the appellation "Desired of the Nations" (NIV), " 'And I will shake all the nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will

fill this house with glory,' saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:7 (KJV). Though the peoples of the world were not always conscious of what they really needed their poverty of spiritual concerns produced a hunger, a desire for relief, for salvation.

God was always active among all the nations. His plan was always to keep mankind conscious of Him. After all they were His work living in his creation. The nobles and kings of all nations would give honor to him and to his Son, and would assemble before him as the people of the God of Abraham; because the promise given to Abraham was to be fulfilled, namely, through Abraham's seed "all the nations of the world would be blessed." Clap your hands with joy!

F. Strong Desires That God and His Salvation be Made Known in All the Earth - "May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us... that your way may be made known on the earth, your salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise you, Oh God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy for you ruleth peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth." - **Psalm 67:1-4.** "May all the kings of the earth praise you, Oh Lord, when they hear the words of your mouth." - **Psalm 138:4.**

Prophetic desire here reaches out to all peoples and envisages a response by which God is glorified. These prayers cross all racial and political lines. Though written long ago, the universality of the praise and worship of God is clearly foreseen. The one great unifying power among human races is the "desire of all nations." Thus, the clear implication is that circumstances would be such as to bring about the proclamation of the "words of God's mouth" to the kings of the earth with the resultant joy, singing and praise. Are not these verses ancient prayers to the Lord of the harvest to send proclaimers of his word to every land?

G. Worldwide Proclamation Urged - "Proclaim among the nations what he has done." - **Psalm 9:1.** "Declare his glory among the nations. Ascribe glory and strength to the Lord O families of nations!" - **Psalm 96:3, 7.**

World evangelism is not seen as just a matter of going everywhere to everybody and preaching, but as a matter of worship determined by the content of the proclamation. Jesus condemned the kind of world evangelism practiced by legalists in these scathing words, "Woe to you

teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son hell as you are!" (Matthew 23:15). A number of things to be noticed here. First, as prophesied above, proclamation must be concerning "what he has done." His glory is to be declared; glory and strength are to be ascribed to the Lord. The person of God is to be the center of the preaching. Hypocrites use God for their own glory. They also pass on to converts their own hypocrisies faking the message to trap people in their own illegalities. World evangelism that is flashy on the surface needs to be given the fruit test. Does it produce genuine converts or more hypocrites like themselves or worse? Whoever hears or reads the above psalms is urged to proclaim and declare the message among the nations. Also, the families of the nations who hear and accept the proclamations are urged to do the same, namely declare God's glory, and make proclamations themselves among the nations of the world. See how evangelism is encouraged to be done by families. God bless the great families who are soul-winners fulfilling this prophecy in the world today. notice further in the 96th psalm, the earth is to tremble before him and the reign of the Lord is to be taught "for He is coming; for he is coming to judge the earth... in righteousness and truth." (Psalm 96:9-10, 13)

H. Salvation Among All the Nations to Become an Accomplished Fact - "All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord. They will bring glory to your name. - Psalm 86:9. "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations." - Psalm 22:27.

Notice the universality of the success of the gospel proclamation, even to the most remote regions, "the ends of the earth." The nations will come to the Lord, worship before Him, bring glory to him, turn to Him and bow before Him. When we consider that these prayers and praises of David were written one thousand years before the coming of Christ at a time when Israel was engrossed in ethno-centric nation building; also with dire warnings from the prophets about inter-marrying with or having anything to do with the heathen around them, it is more marvelous indeed that such things would be written when they were.

Thus, we have seen in the Psalms the great world vision of the

coming of the universal Savior and his kingdom and the complete world-wide spread of his religion, and the massive response in all places on the earth.

CHAPTER 5

BURSTS OF SUNSHINE

"For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples, the nations shall rally to him." Isaiah 11:9-19. "All you people of the world, you who live on the earth when a banner is raised, you will see it, and when a trumpet sounds you will hear it." Isaiah 18:3.

After the Psalms of 1000 AD come sunbursts of glory through the prince of prophets, Isaiah, in 700 AD, as the time of the Messiah's coming draws closer. Once again, we will see the glorious predictions of the worldwide effect of evangelism and the moving and inspiring revelation that we can be a part of that historical onrushing tide of seeking and saving the lost all over the world. As in the Psalms, we will see in Isaiah the complete and marvellous victories of the gospel of Christ and the Church against which *"all the powers of hell shall not prevail."*¹

Jesus Christ, who is the "root of Jesse," is called also "the banner" that would be raised for all nations to see and rally to. When this occurs, the knowledge of the Lord would fill up and cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. World evangelism would succeed to such an extent that the gospel would be completely available to the whole earth everywhere. It is pictured as a pent-up flood let loose upon the earth rushing across its face like an irresistible tide!

*"From the west, men will fear the name of the Lord, and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory. For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the Lord drives along. The Redeemer will come to Zion to those in Jacob who repent of their sins."*²

The Christ comes first to Israel to save those who repent. This was the message of both John and Jesus, *"Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."*³ In this prophecy, forgiveness of sin was to be the outstanding earmark and blessing of the Redeemer's coming. Thus,

repentance and baptism are commanded as proceeding forgiveness.⁴

This would be followed, and the scriptures bear it out, by an evangelism explosion that would be felt by all the nations of the earth, not only in New Testament times and the then populated earth, but also throughout the ages to come.

*"This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, have become a servant."*⁵

This work of proclamation is to go on till Jesus comes again and the world ends.

*"And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*⁶

A. The Last Age with New Universal Worship - *"In the last days... chief among the mountains... all nations will stream to... many peoples will come... the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations... settle disputes for many peoples... nation will not take up sword against nation."*

- Isaiah 2:2-4.

Isaiah begins the glorious theme of the coming universal kingdom of the Messiah letting us know specifically about it. When? "In the last days." This period of the existence of man and his planet is pin-pointed for us in Hebrews 1:1 and is called the last days. "God has spoken to us in these last days through His Son." Where? "The law (the new one) will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Why? "To judge the nations," "settle disputes," "bring peace." The end result? "All nations will stream into it." This denotes the success of worldwide evangelism. Stream into what? The heavenly mountain above all mountains. The heavenly temple above all temples. How will all this happen? Why, when the word of the Lord goes forth from Jerusalem into all the world unto "many peoples." Actually, the book of Acts is the answer, the fulfillment of this and many other prophecies. It is said that Jesus fulfilled 333 Old Testament prophecies of his coming. I would like to add that the world evangelism of the New Testament church empowered by the Holy Spirit fulfilled dozens more including half a dozen in the passage just under consideration. Also, the church today has the glorious privilege of continuously fulfilling in its time the predictions given in the Old Testament and New. These prophecies envisage a blessed utopian age in which all barriers are broken down and a great family reunion of divided peoples and nations takes

place. Let us remember that many of these literal descriptions are figures of speech denoting a different meaning, mainly a spiritual meaning.⁷ This has been missed by Jews past and present and also by many Christians today. Too much materialism, too much politics, too much of world ambitions, too much of the flesh enters into our thinking and interpretations. The glorious age is upon us now - Christ is all in all now! Spiritual realities are ours to enjoy and can be fulfilled in us now for *"the kingdom of heaven is within you."*⁸ The deserts within now burst into radiant glory. The fruitfulness of the Zion within is energized and produced by the Holy Spirit indwelling Christians. The love of God, the compassion of Christ is within changing dead souls into live ones all over the earth. All become one family of nations in Christ. A holy eternal, blessed reunion occurs every time a person obeys the gospel of Christ and is welcomed by Him into his body the church.

Isaiah sings the joy of the redeemed of earth, the everlasting glory, and splendor of the Lord thusly:

*The desert and parched land will be glad;
The wilderness will rejoice and blossom...
Water will gush forth in the wilderness,
And streams in the desert.
The burning sand will become a pool;
The thirsty ground-bubbling springs."⁹*

B. A universal Signal Will be Given All Nations - *"All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a banner is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when the trumpet sounds you will hear it."* - Isaiah 18:3

What is the banner to be raised for all to see? What is the trumpet sound to be heard by all the peoples of the world? Make no mistakes about it. It is the Christ.

"In that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples, the nations will rally to him."¹⁰ Notice "him" - it is an individual. No man in Israel has ever become a signal for all the nations to come to him. No one but Jesus of Nazareth has been the Savior proclaiming to the peoples at the ends of the earth, "See your Savior comes!" "Raise a banner for the nations." The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion. See your Savior comes!" Not only that but, he himself declares to the peoples of the Gentiles saying,

*"See I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples."*¹²

There is no doubt that this refers to Jesus Christ the Messiah. The whole chapter is full with references to Christ who is God's servant and the designated one called "Israel." Notice, *"I will also make you a light for the Gentiles that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."*¹³

Simeon quoted this passage when the infant Jesus was brought to the temple by his parents for circumcision.¹⁴ It is also quoted by Paul when the Jews rejected his preaching at Pisidia of Antioch, *"Since you reject it... we now turn to the Gentiles..."*¹⁵

C. Resultant Conversions, Joy, Songs, Praise, Fruit, and Glory everywhere. - *"They raise their voices, they shout for joy; from the west they acclaim the Lord's majesty. Therefore, in the east give glory to the Lord, exalt the name of the Lord, the God of Israel in the islands of the sea. From the ends of the earth we hear singing: "Glory to the Righteous One."*

The New Age of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth was to be marked by universal joy and singing, and the central theme of it all would be the Righteous, Majestic, Lord God of Israel. No place would be untouched by the glorious celebration. No people neglected. The gospel of salvation would be carried in all directions, to even all the islands and to the remote and distant ends of the earth. Living almost 2000 years from the first advent of the Lord we have witnessed the spread of Christianity in successive waves across the face of the globe. From the resounding beginning recorded in the Acts of the Apostles to the continuing worldwide progress and presence of the gospel, and with Bible Christians, and vigorous missionary activities, we see these prophecies fulfilled in every way. *"Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise and wane, but the church of Jesus constant will remain."*¹⁶

The glorious joy of salvation, sins forgiven, reconciliation with God - heaven's door is now opened for all who will turn to the Lord! Listen to this wonderful event that we are now a part of:

*"On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples... he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, its sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth."*¹⁷

This definitely concerns Mt. Zion, the eternal abode of God; the

location of the New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City... The end of death occurs, it is swallowed up in great victory! God's people gather and eat at the "wedding supper of the Lamb"¹⁸ It is prepared for all peoples. Those present are from everywhere.

*"In that day they will say; we trusted in him and he saved us... let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."*¹⁹

Not only that those who carry the good tidings will "go out in joy and be led forth in peace,"²¹ and the results of their going will be the joy of all creation for "the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."²¹ Oh, the joy of salvation! Oh, the happiness of the forgiven! Onward, around with the good news! Bring the thankless peoples to their knees in gratitude. "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."²²

D. Now an urgent Invitation, Later Inescapable Judgement for All Nations - "Turn to me and be saved all you ends of the earth. For I am God and there is none other. I myself, I have sworn... a word that will not be revoked; before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. They will say of me, 'In the Lord alone are righteousness and strength.' All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame."

- Isaiah 45:22-24

In the fulfillment of all the prophecies concerning world evangelism we see God bringing all of the human race to accountability. We see also the seeking, saving love of God urging all nations and people to repent to return to Him. But the period of world evangelism shall come to an end at the Second Coming of Christ, and those that have raged against Him will be put to shame and every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess the righteousness and power of the enthroned Christ.²³ Another thing to be greatly considered is the responsibility of the church to be the "beautiful feet on the mountains proclaiming peace, bringing good news, proclaiming salvation."²⁴ There are places waiting for the word of the Lord. "The law will go out from me. My justice will become a light to the nations. My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in hope for my arm."²⁵

But how long must the islands wait? How long until his slothful neglect church arises needed for the harvest. The "household of faith,

the church of the living God," is to be a place where prayers continually arise to the Lord of the harvest petitioning Him to "send workers into his harvest."²⁷ The prophet said, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations," and "these will I bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer."²⁸ Continual prayers and sacrifices for the nations and in the nations are to be made in the holy, spiritual house of prayer. "Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar."²⁹

CHAPTER 6

INTERMITTENT SUNRAYS

"He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him."
– Daniel 2:22

Having travelled thus far through the Old Testament with the theme of world evangelism, I'm sure we have been impressed with the dynamic world view portrayed to a people who necessarily didn't have one. Namely, they viewed God as the God of Israel and not the God of the Gentiles. In the prophets, we find God portrayed as the sovereign Lord of all peoples, with a keen interest in the welfare of all nations, and with an authoritative involvement with all nations. We also find that it is God's declared intention from the beginning that Israel be the people to whom the Messiah would come and through whom He would be proclaimed throughout the whole earth. Although the Psalms and Isaiah speak often and dramatically about the worldwide religion of the Messiah, we find refreshing references in nearly all the prophetic books. They would appear to the concerned Jew like intermittent sunrays piercing clouds of darkness promising better confirmation of God's intent to make the gospel of the Christ the "light of the world"¹ available to everyone everywhere, and give a powerful stimulus to preaching the gospel to every creature. Let us now walk in the light of these intermittent sunrays!

A. A Smashing Success - "A rock was cut out but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them... but the rock that struck the statue then became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth."
– Daniel 2:34-35.

With these dramatic figures of speech, Daniel shows the whole superstructure of those governments that came against Israel and Judah will be brought crashing down and disappear from the face of the earth. The empires of the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans are seen by God as one temporary, transitory period of time to be swept away by the rock that becomes a mountain that fills the whole earth. Isaiah speaks of the judgement of God that will come upon the governments of the earth and also the spiritual satanic powers that overrule them. *"In that day the Lord will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings of the earth below."*²

And because all these political entities attacked Jerusalem, they were doomed to destruction. *"On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem."*³ With the curse of God upon them and after they had fulfilled the role that overruling Lord assigned them, they were smashed to pieces by the most unlikely of vehicles, the mustard seed of the word of God, the meek and lowly Jesus, and the spiritual non-political kingdom of God. Not only that, its influence and power would fill the whole earth becoming greater than all four worldly empires lumped together.

B. An Everlasting Dominion - *"There before me was one like a Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations, and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."*
- Daniel 7:13-14.

There it is. What a terrific description of what took place in Heaven when the Lamb of God arrived there after his ascension.⁴ Jesus called himself the son of man⁵ and was the first man to come before the throne of God in Heaven; *"and at his coronation sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high."*⁶ Daniel's *"like a son of man"* can be compared with John's *"like a son of man"* in Revelation 1:13; and 14:14. Jesus had stated before his ascension that he had been given *"all authority in heaven and on earth."*⁷ His dominion is complete over the face of the earth. Daniel's language is such as leaves no room for exceptions. His rulership in an everlasting kingdom is established in the hearts of all tribes and nations by that "eternal gospel." This gospel has to be proclaimed to *"all creation."*⁹ This was done by the apostle

Paul and others like him whereby he could say, "This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant."⁵

The Son of Man becomes the center of worship to all who believe, and that number envisaged here is not small. The relationship of the king and the subjects of the kingdom are an eternal one and therefore the message of the eternal gospel is of unestimatable value, and the work of proclaiming it of the greatest urgency in every generation of believers.

C. Peace and Security Will Reach the Ends of the Earth - *"But you Bethlehem... out of you... one whose origins are from old... He will stand and shepherd his flock... they will live securely for then his greatness will reach the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace."* - Micah 5:2,4

This is a famous passage concerning the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and familiar to us all. It focuses not on Bethlehem, but upon the ruler and shepherd that was to be born there. It goes on to state "his greatness" will reach the ends of the earth... We can ask the question how would the greatness of the Christ reach the "ends of the earth?" The answer we know and can give without hesitation is, by gospel preaching, telling the good news everywhere to everyone. What a joyful thing for the church to be appointed by Christ to do this work! Missionary endeavors are not aimed at creating confusion and upset but rather peace that God gives to praying Christians, the peace of love for one another, the peace that comes from loving our neighbors. This "peace of God that passes all understanding" is meant for the whole world. It is internal, spiritual, heavenly, and continuous. "Peace, peace to those far and near, says the Lord. And I will heal them." (Isaiah 57:19)

D. A Unique Day When the Lord Will be King Over the Whole Earth - *"I will pour out on the house of David a spirit of grace and supplication... They will look on me the one they have pierced... a fountain will be opened to cleanse them from sin and impurity... I will say they are my people ... Then the Lord my God will come... living water will flow out from Jerusalem... The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day, there will be one Lord, and his name the only name."* - Zachariah 12:10; 13:1, 9; 14:5, 8-9.

What a wonderful passage of Messianic promises! What an accurate description of what happened after the Holy Spirit was poured out on Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.¹³ Whenever the Holy Spirit brings grace into human lives, it is always accompanied by prayer. Yes, the gift of the Holy Spirit comes wrapped in prayer. It involves prayer before, during, and after.¹⁴

Looking on the crucified Christ, they that "pierced him" were really looking at the fountain filled with blood being opened up for the forgiveness and cleansing from all sin making all believers God's people. The living water bringing life to whoever would drink, began to flow from Jerusalem, the center of Jewry, "to the Jew first and also to the Greek."¹⁵ And as this stream became a mighty flood it is seen spreading over all the earth making the Lord Christ king of the whole earth and making his name the only name whereby mankind could be saved. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to man by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

And thus it is fitting to end our look at world evangelism as promised and prophesied in the Old Testament scripture, with a portion of the last book of the inspired prophets. "My name will be great among the nations from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offering will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations." Malachi 1:11.

Amen and Amen.

PART 2

What the New Testament Says

Introduction

Chapter 1: The Issue of Love and Hate

"God is love." - 1 John 4:16

"You loved me before the creation of the world... that the love you have for me may be in them." - John 17:24,26.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son..." - John 3:16

Chapter 2: Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise

"On... those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." - Matthew 4:16.

"Here is my servant (Son)... the one I love, in whom I delight... He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A Bruised reed he will not break... In his name the nations will put their hope." - Matthew 12:18-21.

"Come to me,... for I am gentle and humble in heart." - Matthew 11:28-29.

Chapter 3: The Sending of the Son

"For I proceeded forth and have come from God; for I have not even come on my own initiative, but He sent me." - John 8:42.

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." - John 20:21-22.

A. A Heavenly Setting

B. A Heavenly Love

C. Discussions in Eternity

D. Conversations in Eternity

E. The Spirit of His Coming

Chapter 4: Starburst of Glory

"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most high. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David... his kingdom will never end." - Luke 1:32.

"Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." - Luke 2:14.

"For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." - Luke 2:30-32.

Chapter 5: The Rising Sun

*"Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace."
- Luke 1:78-79.*

A. Jesus Christ, the First and Ultimate Missionary

"For we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the savior of the world." - John 4:42.

B. The Declaration of His Missionary Purpose

*"For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."
- Luke 19:10.*

C. The Relationship of Jesus to the World

"I am the light of the world." - John 8:12

D. The Example of a Soul-winner

"And he said unto them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." - Matthew 4:19

E. The Moving Power of Love

*"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that however believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
- John 3:16.*

F. The Compassion of Christ

*"And he came forth and saw a great multitude and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things." - Mark 6:31.
"And he had compassion on them and healed their sick."
- Matthew 14:14.*

Chapter 6: The Missionary Meaning of the Cross

*"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."
- John 12:32.*

Chapter 7: The Evangelistic Endeavor of Jesus Christ

"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me." - John 12:26.

A. The Missionary Zeal of Christ

"I tell you, open your eyes and look on the fields! They are ripe for harvest." - John 4:35.

B. The Unprejudiced Nature of His Work

"There comes a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." - John 4:7.

C. His Example of Devotion

"And after bidding them farewell he departed to the mountain to pray." - Mark 6:46.

D. His Ministry of the Word

*"... he went on from there to preach and teach in their cities."
- Mark 11:1.*

E. The Scope of His Efforts

"And Jesus... went through all the towns and villages teaching in their synagogues preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness" - Matthew 9:35.

F. His Audiences and Methods of Teaching

"And when he saw the multitudes, he went up on the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him; and he opened his mouth and began to teach." - **Matthew 5:1-2.**

G. The Place of Good works in His Evangelism

"Believe me when I say I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves."

- **John 14:11**

H. His Training Program

1. The Formation of a mission team *"As Jesus passed from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he arose and followed him."*
- **Matthew 9:9.**

2. The Training of Evangelists

"Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." - **Matthew 9:38.**

3. Christ's Relationship With His Fellow-workers *"No longer do I call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business; but I have called you friends, for everything that I have learned from my father I have made known to you."* - **John 15:15**

4. The Commissioning of Laborers

"You did not choose me but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last." - **John 15:16.**

Chapter 8: The Great Commission

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "Everything must be fulfilled which was written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and remission of sins will be preached in his name to all nations. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me; therefore go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. Preach the good news to all nations. Whosoever is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit be saved. But whoever does not believe will be condemned. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you and surely I will be with you always even to the end of the world. As the Father has sent me I am sending you." - **Combination of Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21.**

INTRODUCTION

Now for the fulfillment - now to be filled full! The fullness, is the overflowing of all the plans, promises and prophecies of God. What irrefutable testimony to the truth of the Bible. The magnificence of the one and only God of the Ages! But let us not miss the scope, the message, the heart of it all. The focus of the Old Testament was on the Messiah. The focus of the New testament is on Jesus Christ. World evangelism as such is the focus of this writing, but it is not the focus of the Bible. The focus of worldwide evangelism itself is on Christ the special Son of God, not on itself. For in Christ "*all things hold together*" (Colossians 1:17). They "cohere" or "consist." In other words, without Christ all things would come unglued. It is not just the flow of the Old Testament stream joining the flow of the New Testament river, as the root of the word implies,¹ but also the all pervading authority and supreme power and presence of the Christ over everything.²

But with the coming of Christ there is a great and marvellous change, a change with dramatic contrast. Old Testament prophecies speak through observable, physical figures of speech, such as the little stone crashing into the tremendous image of empires bringing it crashing down.³ But when Jesus came bringing the kingdom of Heaven, he said, "*You can't observe its coming visibly with your eyes.*"⁴ - a dramatic switch from the outside to the inside, from the flesh to the spirit.

We must now come to grips with the greater, more important spiritual realities of the universe. Not focusing on effects, but causes. Not on created things but the Creator. Not on a political entity but on a spiritual power. Not on the law that was weak through the flesh, but on grace and fullness of truth that is powerful through the gospel of Christ.

A new overview of the history of the heavens and the earth is given. A new and complete revelation now enlightens us concerning the real meaning of everything. A micro- and macroscopic view of what overriding supreme issue is seen as the love of God confronting a world of hate.

CHAPTER 1

THE ISSUE OF LOVE AND HATE

"God is Love" - 1 John 4:16. "You loved me before the creation of the world... that the love you have for me may be in them." - John 17:24, 26. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." - John 3:16

God is love more than anything else. This is what Christ reveals in the concrete way of the cross. His love is for everyone, as Jesus died for the sins of everyone. The issues of salvation, reconciliation, and eternal life are settled at the cross; and this becomes the compelling reason for the proclamation of the word of the cross around the world. God comes to us in Christ with a love never seen in all the world. Everything is narrowed down to and tied in with God loving us and calling on us to love him back. The religion of Christ finds its supreme motivation and meaning in the words, *"Love one another as I have loved you."*¹ Everything Jesus is and teaches is subordinated to one life-style, namely loving each other with the love of God. Without this Christianity is just another religion of the world and is reckoned in the eyes of God to be *"only a noisy gong..."* being "nothing" and gaining "nothing."² True Christianity is measured by the sincerity and purity of its love.

It was Satan that introduced hate into the world when he turned Adam and Eve against God and made them afraid of God. Thus the world became a battle ground between love and hate. Satan's hate for God and man produced the first murder and each one since. *"He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother."* (1 John 3:8, 12). *"You belong to your father, the devil... he was a murderer from the beginning... he is a liar and the father of lies."* (John 8:44). All of the violence, wars, killings, slaughters, murders are abundant proof of the hatred in the world that finds its source in the *"god of this world."*³ Those who turn to Satan will find themselves *"God haters,"*⁴ and they will turn against one another and become *"hateful and hating one another."*⁵

Into the lost, dark, hateful world comes the *"Light of the world,"*⁶ *"the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings."*⁷

CHAPTER 2

SOFTLY, AS IN A MORNING SUNRISE

"...On those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." - Matthew 4:16. "Look at my dear servant Son...¹ that one I love, in whom I delight... He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break... In his name the nations will put their hope." - Matthew 12:18-21. "Come to me,... for I am gentle and humble in heart." - Matthew 11:28-29.

No great fanfare! He slips into the dreary world with the silent, golden rays of the early morning. Very few really knew he was around for thirty years. He came quietly humbly into the glory and prominence that would be his. Even when he began teaching, it was not with shouting and loud oratory. He impressed people, but he did not seek to impress them. He sought only to humbly do the will of the Father. His manner was of gentleness, of meekness, of tender feelings for bruised and weak persons. We must notice that because Christ humbled himself God exalted him *"and gave him a name which is above every name,"² a name in which the nations would "put their hope."³*

CHAPTER 3

THE SENDING OF THE SON

"For I proceeded forth and have come from God; for I have not even come on my own initiative, but He sent me." - John 8:42. "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." - John 20:21-22

A. A Heavenly Setting

When Christ says he has not come on his own but was sent by God his Father and then tells the disciples he is sending them in the manner the Father sent him, he is in effect pointing us to heaven. We must go to the heavenly realms to find out what on earth is happening! namely, how did Jesus proceed out from the father? What caused him to leave Heaven and come to earth? The answer to these ques-

tions will reveal what in heaven motivated Christ to come, and what then becomes the motivation or manner for the disciples to go into the world to preach the gospel. What is the power behind the world evangelism that we find in New Testament times?

B. A Heavenly Love

Jesus said more than just *"I have come from God."* He said first, *"I originated in God; I came out from his presence and have come here."*¹ His own divine origin and the divine origin of his mission can be seen when he said, *"He sent me."* It was first the Father's idea and the Son acquiesced. (*"For God so loved the world..."*) Christ responds to God's agape love for mankind by turning himself over completely to the Father's will. He does this because he loves the Father. *"I love you, O Lord, my Strength..."* - Psalm 18:1

C. Decisions Made in Eternity

The scriptures reveal to us conversations that took place between the Father and the Son, giving us insight into the circumstances, manner, and will of God in sending the Son. Some of these conversations occurred in the heavenly realms of eternity before the creation of the present universe. As a result, decisions were made in heaven that effect us today. For example, out of the love of the Father and the Son, a love existed *"before the creation of the world."* Christ *"was chosen" before the creation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20), to be "the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world." (Revelation 13:8). And "He chose us in him before the creation of the world," and "predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 1:4-5). This would be through "a wisdom that has been hidden, and that God destined for our glory before time began;" that is, the gospel of the cross (1 Corinthians 2:2, 7). He also destined the sheep to "inherit the kingdom prepared... from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34 KJV). Let us look further at some of these conversations between the Father and the Son that relate to world evangelism.*

D. Conversations in Heaven

At the Creation, God said to Christ, *"Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Genesis 1:27). He later said to Christ "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands" (Hebrews 1:10; Psalm 102:25). Christ tells us, "The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was*

appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began... then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind" (Proverbs 8:22-23, 30-31). Here we see that Christ was present with the Father in Creation and, in fact, was the vehicle of all that was done. Speaking of Christ the Word, John says, "all things were made by him and without him, nothing came into existence."²

The Creation took place after the decisions involving the sending of the Son and all its consequences. Also, it is plain in Isaiah 42 that what the Father was saying to the Son occurred before the Son left heaven for earth, and in the sequence of time, it was given to Isaiah 700 years before the event. In other words, all this was decided and known in the pre-creation realms. The internal communication between the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit brought forth from their loving inter-relationships the statement concerning the servant, Christ. "I the Lord have called you in righteousness. I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles."³ the only begotten Son of God considered it an honor to be sent by the Father to earth and to be formed in the womb of a woman to be God's servant, so he says:

And now the Lord says - "He who formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself, For I am honored in the eyes of the Lord and my God has been my strength." he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant... I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the 'ends of the earth.'"⁴

It was not to Isaiah that he said, "That you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth," but rather to the Son. It is after this at the time of his imminent coming that the Son responded: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but my ears you have pierced... here I am, I have come... it is written about me in the scroll. I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart, I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips" (Psalm 40:6-9). It is pinpointed clearly by Paul in Hebrews as to when this conversation took place. He quotes Isaiah saying, "Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: 'Sacrifice and offering you did not desire but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.' Then I said, 'Here I am; it is written about me in the scroll I have come to do your will, O God.' " (Hebrews 10:5-7)

E. The Spirit of His Coming

What pleased the Father more than anything was that His Son, though equal with Him (for the generous Spirit of the Father had given everything cheerfully to the Son) returned everything to the Father and submitted completely to what the Father was seeking from him.⁵ Thus, the love of the Father flowed into the Son, and the love of the Son flowed into the Father, and the amazing, marvellous result was this love flowing into the world.

The Christ is called a servant. He in fact became a bond servant, earmarked for slavery. *"My ears you have pierced,"*⁶ and *"He emptied himself and took on the form of a slave"*⁷. He was in subjection to the Father, turning himself completely over to his will. *"Here I am,"* he says, willing to do anything the Father wants him to do - *"As the Father sent me."* Now we can understand how Jesus sent out his disciples into all the world. This is how he wants us to be and how he wants us to go. *"Into all the world"* in loving, trustful obedience. That's the key to world evangelism New Testament style. It is the way Jesus wants his workers to be, so he breathed on them and into them the same Holy Spirit by which he accepted his Great Commission to go into all the world. The same Spirit in which world evangelism began. The same spirit in which it is to continue. *"Your troops will be willing on your day of battle."* (Psalm 110:3)

CHAPTER 4

STARBURST OF GLORY

"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David... his kingdom will never end." - Luke 1:32. "Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." - Luke 2:14. "For my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the sight of all people a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." - Luke 2:30-32.

What a star that burst upon the scene! First in the heart of Mary as an angel announces to her that her child is God's child and God's Son her son, and that he will have a throne and kingdom that shall

never end. No matter how long the kingdoms of the world and Satan may last, none of them will match the kingdom of the Christ. It goes beyond the elements and temporal authorities of this life and carries its citizens into never-ending eternal glories.

When the star burst into glory in the darkness of the night leading wise men to their Savior, it brought together Jewish shepherds and Gentile astrologers, the high and the low heralding the coming kingdom that would embrace all men of all states and nations. When the child was brought to the temple old Simeon filled with the spirit of God at last cast his eyes upon the Lord's Christ and prophesying the universal Savior as the "light for revelation to the Gentiles" - Not just a star-burst but a rising SUN showing the wisdom, knowledge and glory that had been promised long ago to both Jew and Gentile.

CHAPTER 5

THE RISING SUN

"Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." - Luke 1:78-79.

How exciting it must have been for Zechariah, father of John the Baptizer, to prophesy concerning not only his son, but God's Son, saying the Sunrise has come! The dawning of a day that shall never end. A Sun that shall never go down, whose light shall gladden forever the hearts of those who dwell hopelessly in the darkness of ignorance and fear. Death to be driven away by the brightness of the glory dawning. *"The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world"* (John 1:9). As the light of the sun bathes the surface of the whole earth, so the everlasting light shining in the face of Christ would shine forever in the faces of all mankind who would look to Him. Christ was now in reality ready to fulfill the "Desire of all nations" the Light of God's love and salvation for all of lost mankind.

A. Jesus Christ, the First and Ultimate Missionary

"For we have heard for ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Savior of the world." - John 4:42.

No word or work treating the subject of world evangelism can

be commenced or completed without Jesus Christ. He is the inspiration and chief example for all missionary efforts. Whatever we do as Christians, whatever program of evangelization is launched, we must remember that Christ has *"left us an example that we should walk in his steps!"*¹ Without Christ and the work he did, there would be no such thing as mission work. In fact, there would be no Christians, no church of Christ, no religion called Christianity. What Christ has done upon this earth can be termed an effort for foreign evangelism. He came from the kingdom of heaven to a hostile and ignorant earth. He came with an unheard of message and lived an unusual life. He spoke a language filled with foreign ideas and did many things contrary to the ideas of the society in which he lived. He suffered in infinite patience with the foibles and faithlessness of his disciples. He was misunderstood, persecuted, and slandered. But he pushed ahead with his work in spite of overwhelming failures. In the end he laid down his life for the cause he believed in and practiced. In every way, Jesus Christ is our example, and no discussion of missionary work can be had without first considering the life of the "pioneer missionary."

B. The Declaration of His Missionary Purpose

"For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

– Luke 19:10.

The whole life of Christ was dedicated to the missionary purpose of saving lost souls. It was, so to speak, a dominating passion. Jesus knew what he came to do. His mission was clearly understood, accepted, and pursued. All his activities were hinged upon these two words, "seeking" and "saving." With these words the missionary purpose of Christ's life is made clear.

Here, we must make an important distinction between the pioneer missionary and those who later followed him. Christ was more than just a vessel used by God for the proclamation of the gospel. He was the gospel! Let us always bear this in mind as we consider the various movements of his life.

"For I came not to judge the world but to save the world." (John 12:47). Here the nature of the missionary purpose is stated. We must note its positive emphasis. In Christ, we find the "yea," the positive, aggressive, constructive mission. This does not mean that judgement is not needed, nor that there would not be any judgement for the

world, but it does point up the fact that the life of Christ was dedicated to building up, not tearing down.

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven... This bread is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51)

Here is his full devotion and sacrifice. Christ holds back nothing and proclaims that he is making his life available to the whole world by laying it down in complete sacrifice. The Christ embarked on a blessed life of giving, culminating in his death upon the cross.²

C. The Relationship of Jesus to the World - *"I am the light of the world." - John 8:12.*

Jesus Christ made very plain who he was when he presented his "i.d.," namely, his credentials on numerous occasions. When he presented himself as "the light of the world" all of the prophecies, all of the messianic "light" scriptures snapped into place. He was not as some pagan authorities of the present world say, "an itinerant, simple, Jewish, Galilean preacher, a product of his times." But rather, he was then what he is now, yea, what he has always been, *"the Savior of the world" (John 4:42).*

Though clothed in Jewishness he evidenced the divine in word and in deed, and he was to the shame of those who are not, a mission-minded world evangelist. Look at the following:

"Behold, the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." - John 1:29. "For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." - John 3:17. "Light has come into the world." - John 3:19. "For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." - John 6:33. "This bread is my flesh which I give for the life of the world." - John 6:51. "While I am in the world I am the light of the world." - John 9:5. "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ the Son of God, who was to come into the world." - John 11:27. "And when some Greeks wanted to see Jesus, he said, 'But I when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself.' " - John 12:32.

Jesus had world vision. Jesus knew that world evangelism would result from his death on the cross, and that the preaching of himself on the cross to all men, would be power that would draw all peoples of the whole world to him. *"I have come into the world as a light so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness." (John 12:46)*

Jesus knew that world missions would take place when he said of the woman who poured expensive perfume on him, "*Truly I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.*" – Matthew 26:13

D. The Example of a Soul-winner - "*And he said unto them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."* – Matthew 4:19.

When we look at Jesus Christ as revealed in the gospels, we must immediately consider his unselfish devotion to the redemption of sinners. Nowhere in all the activities and histories of man can we find such unparalleled devotion. All missionary endeavors must find their example in the consecrated Christ.

It is Christ who is our leader. It is Christ to whom we must look for direction. It is in Christ alone that we can learn how to live and work as evangelists of his. He is the Lord who makes us to stand or to fall. Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build.³ It matters not how skilled the craftsman may be, nor how great his wisdom, if he drinks not from the fountain of the water of life in Christ, his labor is in vain.⁴ For Christ has said, "*For apart from me ye can do nothing.*"⁵ With this in mind then, let us give our full attention to the nature of Christ's missionary work.

E. The Moving Power of Love – "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*" – John 3:16.

In this rich, well-known verse the source of God's whole missionary program is set forth, saving, creative, self-manifesting love. The coming of Christ was a gift of grace. God's love for the whole world brought forth the supreme sacrificial manifestation of itself in Christ his son. Love is not static. It continually seeks the good of others. In Christ, God is taking the initiative in saving men from destruction. The reason for God's love in the world cannot be explained. We can only declare "God is love," the kind of love we find in the cross.⁶ God desires that his children be like him, so in our giving and sending the true motivation should be one of love. Motivations less than this will not carry the work of salvation to the end. Without love it profits us nothing.⁷ We find the missionary purpose of God is to give eternal

life to those who accept his all-redeeming love revealed in the person of Christ.

There was no note of doubt in the mind of Christ concerning his mission. He spoke as one sent; one with a clear-cut mission. In the recorded conversation of Jesus he uses two Greek words translated "sent," 53 times. This confident sense of mission is essential to dedicated evangelism, and for this we have the supreme example of Christ. When the sense of mission is lost, evangelism comes to a halt. We must be confident like Christ that it is God's will that we "preach the gospel to every creature."⁸

This act of God in sending his son is pictured to us as a sacrifice. It is love giving up something for love's sake. It is difficult for us to understand all that was involved in the sending of Christ, but we can be sure as we view the suffering Christ that it was not a mechanical transaction that took place. In the heart of God's great love, He gave up everything for us.

"I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." - Mark 2:17. With these words Jesus defended his association with those termed "sinners" by the religious hypocrites of his day. By this he showed that God's love embraces the loveless, the outcasts and the ungodly. When God manifested his love, he included the whole world because none could merit this love, else it could not have been called the gift of grace.⁹ The missionary love of Christ broke down all preconceived notions of salvation originating in the pride of men. When Christ calls a man, he is calling a sinner. When God saves a man, he is saving a sinner. Thus, Christ ate with the Publicans and sinners, endured the reproach and misunderstanding of the self-righteous, in order to heal the sin-sick whom he loved.

"And he stretched out his hand and touched him." - Matthew 8:3.
"He himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases." - Matthew 8:17

This pure, heaven-sent one seeks contact with the despised and afflicted. In doing so he subjects himself to the scorn and fear of the proud and self-righteous. He associates himself with the weak and sick, the lowly and unclean. The missionary love of Christ goes all the way embracing the worthless and outcast. The incarnation takes place in an undignified stable, in a leper's den, in a house of sinners, on a shameful cross. In this humble condescension we see that the love of Christ avoids no one. This vicarious suffering of Christ stands as an

inspiring and compelling example for all who seek to join him in his work of saving and healing.

When God revealed his love it was not to the strong, but to the weak; not to the godly, but to the godless; not to the sinless, but to the sinful; not to His friends, but to His enemies.¹⁰ The extent to which one imbibes this free, selfless love determines the nature of his Christian life and the real success or failure as a missionary of the Cross.

F. The Compassion of Christ - *"And he came forth and saw a great multitude and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things."* - Mark 6:31.
"And he had compassion on them and healed their sick." - Matthew 14:14.

The missionary work of Christ in teaching and healing resulted from the continuous moving of his heart by compassion. He saw the lost nature of the shepherdless crowd and rose to meet that need and also healed their sick ones. His great tender heart was sensitive to the needs of others because He loved them. Oh, how we need to look upon others as Jesus did. Only then can we begin to have fellowship with him in his compassion for men in their sufferings. A cold, insensitive, hard attitude toward sinners stands as a great barrier to the missionary spirit of Christ. The twofold nature of Christ's work, teaching, and healing cannot be overlooked in a study of missionary methods, but behind it all we must see the heart of love seeking the good of others.

"The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life..." (Matthew 20-28). Christ had no profit motive, nor selfish ambitions of power behind his mission. He came to render service to men; to wash their feet, to slave for them.¹¹ He did not come begging but giving. He gave his very life for men. There is no reasonable explanation for this except that he loved them. This outgoing compassion was manifested in concrete deeds of service. Much of the service we render is for personal gain - not so with Christ. He had everything to lose and nothing to gain by loving sinners. Many of his quiet, personal deeds of kindness are recorded in the gospels for our learning. Christ's spirit of unselfish service shines as a guiding light to all who dedicate their lives to preaching the gospel.

"Come to me, all who are weary and are heavy laden..." (Matthew

11:28). It seems that one has enough burdens to bear without asking for others, but in the invitation of Christ, we find him willing to accept into fellowship all of the trials and hardships of men. There is no self-ish reasoning of the mind of the flesh in this invitation. It is the kind of love that rejects no one because he has problems. Amazingly, he asks for heavy burdens. It means that there are burdens that men cannot bear alone, that only hands of mercy will share.¹² It is this sharing of the burdens of others that marks the missionary zeal of Christ. An invitation like this will bring heartaches, betrayals, and the scars of the cross, but the love of Christ remains undaunted, and the example is bright to those who want to love as He loves.

"At once, Jesus realized that power had gone out of him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, 'Who touched my clothes?' " - Mark 5:30. It cost Jesus something to minister unto men. He felt the power proceed from him at the touch of this woman's hand of faith. How much Jesus felt as healing after healing took place, we do not know, but we do know that he made himself available to the world about him. His power and abilities were not hidden in a convent, nor selfishly protected. Here is love moving amidst the crowd seeking to do good, feeling the demands made upon it, and refusing to dam up its precious flow.

CHAPTER 6

THE MISSIONARY MEANING OF THE CROSS

"And if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."
- John 12:32

The climax of Christ's missionary journey into this world of sin and ignorance is found in his death and resurrection. It was determined by God that His Lamb should be offered for the sins of mankind.¹ Jesus came to take away the sins of the world by giving his own precious blood and life.² This lifting up of the Son of God on a Roman cross became the power by which men are drawn to Christ the Savior. This power is the power of love, of a supreme sacrifice. By this aggressive act of love, God reaches for the hearts of men. This cross is God proving what he is to men, showing how far his love reaches. It

is a practical, moving demonstration of God practicing what He is and what he preaches. The missionary initiative of the cross is God reaching out to others, and its power is found in the fact that it is a real, living, meaningful event. The missionary love of God is not found in empty words and lofty platitudes, but it is found taking upon itself all the suffering and shame of a sinners execution in order to atone for sins and bring men to repentance. The cross is not a do-good sentimentality, but it shows in real suffering the cold hard truth of sin and death and at the same time reveals the redeeming, open hearted, saving love of God.

"From that time Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

Matthew 16:21

Jesus was conscious of the cross that was to be his. He told his disciples about it; Peter opposed it; the disciples sorrowed over it and were afraid to ask anything about it.³ Jesus had counted the cost and in obedience threw himself upon the mercy and guidance of the father.⁴ I can think of no greater act of faith than when Christ subjected himself to suffering and death on the cross. Though his flesh cried out against it, he committed himself to God.⁵ In spite of all adverse circumstances that surrounded him, he did the will of God, knowing it was right and best, and in the end peace and joy. When the call comes to be fishers of men, it offers a cross and a resurrection, but first the cross, first the adverse circumstances and suffering. We must count the cost and then make our decision. Nor is it a one time affair, for the cross goes ever before us, leading us into its heartbreak, and sacrifice, and also into its tremendous victory.

And Jesus said, *"Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."* - Luke 23:24. No view of evangelistic work is adequate that is not rooted in the view of the cross. The cross is the supreme expression of how God views things in Christ. To miss this viewpoint of God is to miss everything. On the cross we find the culmination of Christ's missionary effort. He died for the world. As messengers of the cross, we are very apt at criticizing the world, at judging sinners, but have we learned what it means to die for them, to undergo crucifixion by them, for them? Until we grasp the meaning of the above scripture we will fail in learning Christ's view of evangelistic work or any other work of God. The sinfulness, ignorance, filthiness, cruelty, and ungodliness of the nations and individuals must not be looked down upon

from the ivory towers of smug superiority and self-righteousness, but from the suffering, shameful, and heartfelt love of an uplifted cross. We long to be like Jesus in his ethical purity and moral righteousness, but do we balk at being nailed with him on a bloodstained cross, at being misunderstood, criticized, and spit upon like him? Do we like the Pharisees desire the reputation of a righteous appearance and the cleanliness of a whited sepulcher rather than to eat with thieves, touch the lepers, and save the harlots? What can the debater say to the ignorant or the theologian to the poor? What can the philosopher say to the leper, or the school teacher to the whore, without suffering and dying for them on the cross? Let us go and learn what it means when the scripture says, *"I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me."*⁶

When a person stumbles and falls, we look upon him and judge him, but can we look upon him and save him? Only love is good news to the fallen. Telling him he is wrong and that he messed up his life is nothing new; it's old news. But the message and life of suffering for him and dying for him is good news, the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation.⁷ The greatest test is to do it when he does not know what it means and when he actually brings you the suffering Christ calls upon you to endure. It is then that we fill up on our part what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh.⁸ It is then that we have fellowship with the sufferings of Christ and can bear about in the body the dying of Jesus.⁹ This is the spirit of true evangelism. This is the real missionary spirit of Christ.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

- John 12:24

I believe that this principle should underlie every missionary endeavor and every good work. Even more, it is the spirit of the whole Christian life. Not only is the death of Jesus involved here, but the whole problem of discipleship: Whether or not one will lose his life in the service of Christ to gain it eternally, or keep it for himself and lose it. In order to preach the gospel to every creature, we must drop into the world and die with Christ in order to bear the fruit he desires. We can be in the world and try to live by the flesh and die spiritually and fail to let Christ bring forth fruit in our lives. We must remember in this connection that Christ gives the increase according to his will and not according to ours. The rate of growth and harvest time is also

determined by him.

We may die with Christ and never see the fruit in our lifetime. We must be willing to endure hardships, setbacks, and what appears to be fruitlessness, trusting that Christ will accomplish in us and through us his will at the appointed time. If we go into all the world and preach the gospel in this spirit, we shall indeed be messengers of the cross. We shall be able to work in hard places with patience and hope, for the time of its harvest may be in the providence of God hundreds of years from now. To follow Christ demanding immediate results, or in our impatience, propping up our work with supports of flesh may be impressive for a little while; but under stress and strain the shallowness shall be revealed, and in the end it will be seen that what we did was of man and not of God. As each one takes up his cross to follow Christ, let us remember that the cross is thorn-crowned, and the suffering real, and the dying a continual process, and that to endure to the end we must keep our eyes on the crucified Christ and his resurrection glory.

CHAPTER 7

THE EVANGELISTIC ENDEAVOR OF JESUS CHRIST

"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me." – John 12:26

In reflecting upon the evangelistic activities of Christ, we might well ask the question, "Is He our example?" Because Christ was a Jew living two thousand years ago in circumstances unrelated to us, can he be an example for us today? In addition, because he was the Son of God possessed of a supreme nature, can we look to what he did with any confidence of being able to follow him? Without going into a lengthy discussion, let us be assured that if the "Word of God made Flesh" is not our example, then pray tell who can be? Quite a lot has been written about the example of Paul and others, but their statements summed up must say, *"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."*¹

In the final analysis, we must find in Christ all of the riches of heavenly wisdom and not overlook what God would have us learn from him.²

A. The Missionary Spirit of Christ - *"I tell you open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."* - John 4:35

As Jesus looked upon the Samaritans coming to hear him, he saw them as a harvest of souls waiting for the reapers. He saw, in his love for them, an opportunity to save them. In this context, Jesus is trying to communicate to his disciples, the viewpoint of a reaper of souls, one who recognizes an opportunity and seizes upon it in order to bring them to God. The eyes of the disciples were focused on the immediate circumstances of their journey through Samaria, but Jesus called upon them to lift up their eyes and spiritually perceive the teaching opportunities around them. The narrowness of their Jewish upbringing kept them from considering the Samaritans as subjects for gospel teaching; their eyes were blinded to the opportunities around them. Jesus commanded them to be alert and sensitive to opportunity, to be ready and willing to wield the sickle at all times. To place natural limits upon our thinking and consider the harvest to be logically four months off can cause us to miss an unusual opportunity of service. Jesus calls us to be alive to his direction and look for harvest opportunities. Christ is Lord of the harvest and he must be approached prayerfully.³ We must remember that as we rejoice in whatever harvest there may be, there is no room for personal boasting. It is God who grants the harvest opportunities. We must not forget the sower who has proceeded us. The work is to be done in a spirit of cooperation and humility, that all may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, one sows and another reaps.⁴ What is the spirit of Christ revealed here? Is it not his zeal for lost souls, his vision of service, his sensitiveness to opportunities, and his willingness to work? Only an active love for men would make use of the opportunity. Only the heart willing to suffer the sweat and strain of the harvest field would grasp the opportunity presented. Let us catch the willing, living missionary spirit of the Lord.

B. The Unprejudiced Natures of His Work - *There comes a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."* - John 4:7

The coming of Christ into this world is of itself an act of uninhibited love. There was no prejudice in his great heart against man. When Christ initiated a conversation with the Samaritan woman, he broke through all the prejudicial barriers that man had erected against

man. Racially speaking, he entered into a fellowship relationship that was frowned on by all the Jews who considered themselves superior in all respects to the mongrel Samaritans. Socially speaking, he opened a conversation with woman of doubtful morals who was living in an adulterous relationship. It was considered unbecoming to a prophet and jeopardizing to a good reputation. Religiously speaking, he was condescending to speak with a people known as heretics, those who perverted the true faith, inviting misunderstanding and censure according to the accepted religion of the men with whom he worked. He compromised manly pride by asking in broad daylight a favor of an inferior woman. He could have waited for the return of his disciples. The woman herself was surprised at Jesus and was at first quite belligerent. It is not easy to cross established lines of prejudice. He understood it had to be done many times in the face of opposition from both sides of the line, but the great missionary did not hesitate nor compromise. He showed us that in order for the gospel to be preached to all the world, we must overcome prejudices and hatred. This can only be done by considering the salvation of souls above selfish interests. We must be willing like Jesus to accept all loss, for the greater good of others. If we allow ourselves to be limited by our own petty hatreds and the prejudices of others, we will fail to evaluate the opportunities and see the harvest fields. We must in a spirit of love be willing to suffer the reproaches, criticism, and ostracism of the narrow-minded and self-righteous, in order to do God's will and work in the harvest fields.

C. His Example of Devotion - *"And after bidding them farewell, he departed to the mountain to pray."*
- Mark 6:46

Another essential to bearing the everyday burdens of an evangelistic life is personal fellowship with God in prayer. The Son of God maintained a prayer life, not for pretense, but because it was needed. As he suffered in the flesh and felt the weight of busy days, he sought comfort and strength in prayer to God. In order to continue helping others, all workers in the vineyard are here taught to drink from day to day from the fountain of spiritual blessing. One will dry up spiritually without continual personal prayer. With Jesus and the apostles, prayer always preceded important decisions.⁵ To be missionaries in the world, we must *"devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*⁶ Prayer comes before the work of the preaching; else we can

become as "sounding brass or a clanging cymbal."⁷

To carry on the work of evangelization, we must follow the footprints of Jesus away from the "thunder of humanity" up the mountain of prayer. A spiritual, prayerful approach to the problems of missionary work is exemplified in the work of Jesus Christ.

D. His Ministry of the Word - "...He went on from there to preach and teach in their cities."
- Matthew 11:1

The work of the Lord is generally described in the gospels as teaching, preaching, and healing.⁸ In the gospels it is referred to by the verb "to teach" forty-four times, and "to preach" twenty times. This is what he came to do, that through him "all might be taught of God."⁹ He opened his ministry in Galilee by announcing in the synagogue at Nazareth "he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, to proclaim release, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."¹⁰ Jesus dedicated himself to the task of instructing by word of mouth wherever he went. This was his job, this was essential to his mission. In this Jesus is pointing the way to all who follow him. The missionary is a teacher of God's word, and the missionary program should be centered in this work. Faith must speak, and the faithful church and worker will be known by this emphasis in their programs.

E. The Scope of His Efforts - "Jesus went through all the towns and villages teaching in their synagogues preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness."
- Matthew 9:35.

The evangelistic work of Jesus was carried on in a rectangular area of 120 miles by fifty. This area was traversed many times in all parts as Jesus made his way to and from Galilee on the north to Jerusalem in the south. His teaching efforts were concentrated in two locations: the area surrounding the Sea of Galilee and Jerusalem and its environs. He walked over twelve hundred miles in his recorded journeys within three years. While in Galilee, he made his headquarters in Capernaum and made trips into the adjacent areas, and when teaching in Jerusalem, he stayed most often in the suburban town of Bethany. Most of the Jews were grouped in these two areas and all of them were influenced by what happened there.

His work was by no means established in any certain place nor

organized in any way until after Pentecost, for he worked within the Old Testament framework of Israel. As his was a preparatory work, its fulfillment is not found within the earthly period of Christ's life. Therefore, we must discern between that which is purely circumstantial and that which we should heed and imitate. The Jewish flesh of Christ, the clothes he wore, the customs he followed, and his means of travelling constitute the context of two thousand years ago in which the Son of God moved. Ours today is a different one, but the truth he taught and the righteous principles which were manifested in his deeds are part of the New Covenant which God makes with all who believe and follow Him in every generation. Therefore, the dedication of the Great Evangelist to preaching the word of God, his zeal in taking it wherever the people were, and his daily, tireless devotion to the salvation of lost souls is worthy of all acceptance and imitation.

F. His Audiences and Methods of Teaching - *"And when he saw the multitudes he went up on the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him; and he opened his mouth and began to teach."* - Matthew 5:1-2.

First of all, let us consider the people that the "master missionary" taught. We find that Jesus had access to every level of Jewish society and contacted every sort of person from the bottom to the top. He conversed with a young ruler and an old ruler, an adulterous woman and a righteous one, with the poor and the wealthy, with the common man and the politician. He taught students and scholars, religious leaders and Publicans, farmers and fishermen, soldiers and city-dwellers. He helped the sick without distinction, healed slaves, women, children, and lepers. He worked on behalf of widows and officials, helped individuals and groups, the criminal and infamous, sincere seekers and hypocrites. Jesus was able to associate with and teach all kinds of people and penetrate all level of society. Needless to say, for the missionary to be this flexible is a blessing indeed, for their doors of opportunity are increased and the gospel can be preached to every person.

In connection with this, it would be well to note the places where Jesus taught. He frequented the accepted places of learning, such as the synagogue and the temple, but we also find him reaching out into all areas, going to where the people were. For instance, he taught in private homes, on the mountain-side, in the desert, on the beach, beside a well, from a boat, and wherever he met people.

The times that Jesus taught varied also. He would speak of the things of God while walking along and riding in a boat, while eating a meal, or resting day or night, while sight-seeing, or on the trail, while under stress by persecutors or suffering on a cross.

We find Jesus using all of the opportunities that the natural course of events presented to him. Also, we find him creating opportunities by the works that he performed. In these ways, Jesus got the attention of people, that the word of God might enter their hearts.

In a similar way, we find the Christ using a variety of teaching methods. For example, he taught by the question and answer method, by illustration, by use of current events, and in parables, through quotations, by privately and publicly, by exhortation and command, by warning and with praise, by short answers and long speeches, by silence, and by deeds.

Every word and movement of Christ is full of teaching and great examples for us. He is indeed the "master missionary."

G. The Place of Good Works in his Evangelism - *"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves."*
- John 14:11

The works of Christ were performed to encourage faith, for they were concrete demonstrations of his divine personality and identity. His publicly wrought miracles produced exclamations of wonder as to who he was: *"What kind of man is this?"*¹¹ And also forthright conclusions: *"Surely, you are the Son of God."*¹²

Jesus appealed to his works as testimony of his divine origin, *"The very works that I do bear witness of me; that the Father has sent me."*¹³ The messenger of God demonstrates in concrete terms the nature of his mission. Jesus was not too busy teaching and preaching to do deeds of kindness and works of helpfulness. Although faith comes from hearing the word of God, the power of good works in confirming what is spoken must not be overlooked.

The motive behind good works should be as Christ exhorted, to *"glorify your Father who is in heaven."*¹⁴ Those who witnessed what Christ did were caused to give glory to God and thus encourage faith in the hearts of many. *"And amazement took hold on all, and they glorified God."*¹⁵

Now in considering the reasons why Jesus did these works, we

must not overlook the great love that prompted him to respond to the needs of others. Christ did good works because God is love. Some miracles were performed personally by Christ without him revealing himself to the one healed, without witnesses, and without the disciples present. One such act of love is found in the healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda.¹⁶

"But he who was healed did not know who it was; for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in the place."¹⁷

Good works within themselves are good and it is lawful to do them anywhere, at any time. If we draw back from doing good because someone might think we are trying to "buy Christians," of others may be tempted to become "rice Christians," we are refusing to love as Jesus loved and walk as he walked. When Jesus fed the multitudes, he gave them "something for nothing" and caused them to come seeking a free meal the next day.¹⁸ Jesus fed them because they were hungry and in need in a desert place. This was reason enough for doing a good work, love responding to need. If Jesus had performed this miracle to increase his following, he would have contradicted himself by refusing to perform another the following day. Not only that, but the miracle brought them to him seeking bread.¹⁹ They did not appreciate the meaning of the miracle in any spiritual sense, and it became an occasion for presenting the bread of eternal life which resulted in a sharp decrease of disciples. From a standpoint of methodology, it would have been better to refrain from performing such a miracle at that time, but here love entered in and upset logic by responding to the need of the multitude at the time, out in the desert place. So here, in considering good works, in spite of all the planning, criticism, and logical reasoning that may sometimes be to the contrary, it is lawful to do good! To view the works of Christ purely from a standpoint of the exploitation of an opportunity is to miss the spirit of love that caused him to scatter abroad, give to the poor, and bless the just and the unjust.

H. His Training Program

Christ has chosen earthen vessels through which to reveal the gospel of grace and through which to proclaim it unto all the world. Therefore, the preparation of these vessels is very important to the accomplishment of this purpose. Let us now study the ways in which

the "master missionary" trained his disciples to become laborers in the harvest fields.

1. The Information of a Missionary Band

As Jesus passed from there, he saw a man called Matthew, sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him.

– Matthew 9:9

We must first mark the fact that Jesus worked with a group. There is very little of his recorded life that finds him moving by himself. It is always within a framework of fellowship that the Lord teaches, preaches, and heals. From the commencement of his ministry we find him drawing disciples to him, calling them to give up their present occupations to become fishers of men. To receive their special training for service, they are asked to separate themselves from hindering influences. They gave themselves to study of the teachings of Christ in special sessions he held for them and traveled with him, partaking in the actual experiences of gospel preaching.

We should notice also that Jesus chose them; they did not choose him. They did not come asking to work with him, but rather, he chose them to be his fellow-laborers.

What were the qualifications of these men to enter such an important work? About this, the scriptures are silent. Their qualifications are not obvious to the reader of the gospels, but we can deduce that they had responsive hearts of faith. They were called from humble walks of life with no educational or social advantages, and it has always pleased God to so reveal His grace and glory. We must not in pride overlook the "Nazareths", the lowly walks of life in our consideration of workers for the Kingdom.

2. The Training of Evangelists

"Pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

– Matthew 9:38

In this connection, Jesus had just been described as "going about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. And when he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion because they were as shepherdless sheep."²⁰ He had just been engaged in the work of becoming the shepherd of Israel, "but" it was not a "one-man job." Other laborers were needed for the harvest. This the Lord now points out to his disciples and calls upon them to see the

harvest of souls, then to pray that the laborers may be increased. After this he calls the twelve and tells them to go and then sends them forth.

Let us learn from the Lord that we cannot do it all. Only when this realization is ours will we begin seriously to consider the training of fellow laborers.

As we saw before, Jesus formed a band of student workers from the outset. From the beginning they studied with Christ and learned with him in the hard school of experience. From day to day they lived with him and travelled with him. He gave them special explanations of his teachings and were informed of his purpose and mission. They helped him in directing the crowds and serving the multitudes. They handled finances, purchased the supplies, and advertised and arranged meetings.²¹

After they had been with him a while he sent them out two by two to preach, giving them advice and comfort, exhortation and courage for their mission. In this way, they gained valuable experience, and when they returned the Lord helped them to interpret it correctly.²²

The Lord not only sent them out but he went himself, practicing what he preached, and giving the disciples a living example to follow.

3. Christ's Relationship with His Fellow Workers

"No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knows not what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from my father I have made known to you." – John 15:15

Because Christ is the Lord of all, there is a relationship that all Christians have with him that they cannot have with one another. In this passage we have an insight into what the Christ thought of his disciples. In giving them their training he did not treat them as slaves to be ordered around but respected them as individuals. He treated them as his friends. This fellowship of friends is an exemplary one for us to follow. By loving them as friends, Jesus prepared them for responsibility and leadership. He gave them opportunity to partake of the Father's plans and interest and provided them with an incentive to grow as responsible individuals and leaders.

Many are the resentments and repercussions among young churches and their workers when missionary evangelists fail to show confidence in them or fail to treat them with love and respect. Reactions sometimes of the vilest kind can result from a dictatorial and

dogmatic attitude when decisions are made without consultation with the brethren involved. The Lord did not treat them with contempt nor drive them like cattle, nor look down upon them with a prejudiced and critical eye. We must learn from Jesus to sustain friendly relations with those with whom we work, loving them and respecting their individuality.

4. The Commissioning of Laborers

"You did not chose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last."
– John 15:16

Giving motivation and direction to fellow-workers is revealed in the above passage. To lose purpose and meaning in missionary endeavor is catastrophic. Here Jesus reminds the disciples that they have an appointed task to perform, that they have a mission to achieve, fruit to be borne. They were chosen for a work, a busy, meaningful work. Christ's commission to preach the gospel has been a source of inspiration and direction for worldwide gospel preaching for two thousand years. It is a definitive order to get to work.

The response to the commission of Christ must come from a prayerful heart: *"... pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send..."*²³

CHAPTER 8

THE GREAT COMMISSION

"He said to them, 'Everything must be fulfilled which was written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and remission of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me; therefore go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. Preach the good news to all nations. Whosoever is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit shall be saved. But whoever does not believe will be condemned. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you and surely I will be with you always even to the end of the world. As the Father has sent me I am sending you."

– **Combination of Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21.**

This Great Commission is the last commandment that Jesus gave before leaving the earth. It is the last thing that Christ left on their minds. This has been the rallying cry for missionary endeavors down through the centuries. There is no mistaking what Jesus wanted his disciples to do upon his departure. The promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is about to be completely fulfilled.

"You are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."²⁴

PART 3

ACTS OF WORLD EVANGELISM

Introduction: Massive Explosion of Light

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"
– Acts 1:8-9.

Chapter 1: The Kingdom Comes from Heaven to All the Earth

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." – Luke 24:49.

- A. *"To the ends of the earth... to the uttermost parts of the earth"*
– Acts 1:9.
- B. **The Universal Significance of Pentecost**
"The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God shall call" – Acts 2:39.
- C. **The Right Time and Place**
"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law" – Galatians 4:4
- D. **A Big Image and a Little Stone - a Smashing Success**
"A rock was cut out but not by human hands. It struck the statue on the feet of clay and smashed them" – Daniel 2:34.
- E. **Opposition Spreads the Gospel**
"Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went" – Acts 8:4
- F. **How Did They Do It?**
"It grew in number" – Acts 9:31.
- G. **More Fruitless Opposition**
"Now these who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch telling the message" – Acts 11:19.

Chapter 2: On the Verge of Great Expansion

"Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles" – Acts 9:15

"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation" – Acts 10:4

- A. **Getting Ready for the Conversion of the Gentile world.**
"When they heard this they had no further objections and praised God saying, "So then God has even granted the Gentiles repentance unto life" – Acts 11:18
- B. **The Clincher with Cornelius**
An angel speaks, Acts 10:3,4; a voice from heaven speaks three times, 10:13, 15, 16; the Spirit speaks 10:22; Cornelius speaks 10:30; Peter speaks, 10:34.
- C. **The First Church to Sponsor World Evangelists and World Evangelism.**
"So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off" – Acts 13:3. "But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth" – Daniel 2:35.

Chapter 3: Message and Messengers Go Forth!

"Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth to every nation, tribe, language, and people" – Revelations 14:6.

- A. *"He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors" – 2 Corinthians 5:19-20.*
- B. *"And reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" – Acts 14:27.*
- C. **Highlights from the First Mission Report.**
- D. *"Light for the Gentiles" – Acts 13:47.*
- E. **The Jewish Brethren Agree with What God has Been Doing Among the Gentiles.**

Chapter 4: On With World Evangelism - The Macedonian Call!

"And so the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers" – Acts 16:5.

Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" – Acts 16:11.

Chapter 5: And Also to the Greeks

- A. **Paul and the Greeks**
"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of

God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" – Romans 1:16

B. Jesus and the Greeks

"We would like to see Jesus" – John 12:21.

Chapter 6: How the Church Began and Grew in Europe

"From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samathrace, and the next day on to Neopolis" – Acts 16:11

Chapter 7: Evangelizing in Greece

"Those men who accompanied Paul brought him to Athens... after this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth... Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time" – Acts 17:15; 18:1, 18.

Chapter 8: Continued Evangelization

A. More traveling

"Sailed to Ephesus... Caesarea... down to Antioch... Galatia... Phrygia... Ephesus" – Acts 18:18, 23; 19:1.

B. More Victories

C. Back and Forth to Macedonia.

*"Paul... set out for Macedonia. He traveled through that area speaking many words of encouragement... and finally arrived in Greece... then he decided to go back through Macedonia"
– Acts 20:1-3.*

Chapter 9: The Mission of Paul as Accentuated by Christ is now Fulfilled

"Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles" – Acts 22:21.

INTRODUCTION

Massive Explosion of Light

We have traveled thus far, from a crack of light shining into the immense darkness that had descended on the world to the unimaginable explosion of light that would burst upon the world scene in the Spring of 33AD. The build-up had been climaxed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ followed by the Great commission. Now in the twilight between, the disciples wait prayerfully for the powerful coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus the book of Acts begins pointing not so much to what the Apostles did (the book is a misnomer) but to what God did through the Holy Spirit, who by the way is mentioned by name 52 times.

But now looking ahead over the next 33 years, we will see that marvelous spread of the gospel among all the nations of the world. The prayer of our Lord, "*Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*" is fulfilled. The disciples praise - prayer is answered, "*for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*"¹

Acts is the first history of Missions. It was written by a medical missionary, Luke, the companion of Paul. Except for Jesus, Paul was the greatest pioneer missionary of New Testament times, and maybe for all time. It is Paul's work that soon comes to the fore covering fifteen chapters.²

An outline of the major events to come is given by Jesus in Acts 1:8-9 and the power pointed out through whom the evangelism of the world would be accomplished. "*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*" Chapters 1-7 in Jerusalem; 8-12 in all Judea and Samaria, and 13-28 to the ends of the earth.

CHAPTER 1

THE KINGDOM COMES FROM HEAVEN INTO THE WORLD

"I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" – Luke 24:49.

I have never met a missionary yet who did not want to do a powerful work for Christ. Unfortunately, many plans and methods have failed to produce powerful Christians in powerful churches. The problem seems to be a neglect of the power source. There is no use plugging a light cord into a wad of money, or into somebody's mouth or ears. Nothing will happen. We still won't have light. The power source of evangelism is not found in the head, ears, and mouth of any person, nor in any amount of financial resources. The power comes from the Holy Spirit who clothes disciples in such a way that they become powerful witnesses throughout the earth. In other words, the net result of receiving this "uniform" of the Lord's army would be powerful worldwide evangelism. From the context of the passage cited, we find the disciples still had grave misunderstandings concerning the coming kingdom. They were thinking politically and ethnocentrically when they said, *"When will you restore the kingdom (political entity) to Israel (a race)."*¹ They did not understand the spiritual nature of the kingdom. The kingdom - church came with the power of the Holy Spirit and was meant to continue to the end of time. Paul said, *"The gospel of the kingdom came not unto you in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance."*²

For world evangelism, you can have a beautiful limousine with the latest improvements, but if it is not fueled, it is not going anywhere. It is useless except as a fancy chicken coup. It was the fire and power of the Holy Spirit that fueled New Testament Christians and empowered them to take the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. It is only when we can say with Christ, *"Zeal for your house (church) has consumed me"*³ that we will do what needs to be done in seeking and saving the lost. This zeal and power came to a praying group of disciples, as prayer preceded Pentecost. Also, when Christ cleansed the temple, he declared, *"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations"*⁴ Cleansing - zeal - power - prayer must be the package for

successful world evangelism.

We can pray today that our tattered rags of helplessness be replaced with the powerful, beautiful uniform from on high. We are commanded in Ephesians 5:18 to be *"filled with the holy Spirit."* He is the power-source! Praying in him daily is the way to have powerful Christians and powerful churches evangelizing the world. Let us pray to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inward man,⁵ and, as our Lord, go forth *"in the power of the spirit."*⁶

A. *"To the ends of the earth... to the uttermost parts of the earth!"*⁷

Hear it? Let it run to the end of all the ages. The witness of the gospel is to go to the extremities of the earth. How many times have we heard from Kingdom prophecies in the Old Testament the universal references to *"the world"* (56), *"the earth"* (586). In spite of the intense ethnocentricities of the Israelites, the viewpoint God transmitted to them was a world viewpoint. The New Testament is not behind in the least with 201 references to the world and 154 to the earth. But what was about to happen would not originate in the world for it was being sent from Heaven, originating in the holiness and love of the Trinity. The power would be from above.

B. The Universal Significance of Pentecost - *"The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God shall call"*
- Acts 2:39.

Once a year for one day, Pentecost was the Jewish feast of Harvest-home, the Thanksgiving Day of the Jewish Calendar. Two loaves of the first fruits of the wheat harvest were offered signifying that the harvest was given to God by a holy people in the holy land. How fitting that after the offering of the passover lamb, the Son of God on the cross and his victory over the grave, that the first fruits of the preached gospel should be offered to the glory of God. It is of great importance that the Holy Spirit should be revealed in tongues of fire on the heads of all to stir up the church for world evangelism. This is demonstrated more graphically when as a result of the coming of the Holy Spirit, the first thing they did was preach, and to do it in seventeen foreign languages. This was the signal, the trumpet, the banner on the mountain that made it clear that salvation is for all. That it was to be preached in the languages of the hearers, and that it was not to

be limited to the Jews only but would go to all that were "far off," and could be received by anyone whom God would call.⁸

This first preaching of the gospel as in all subsequent sermons relies heavily on the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The beginning of the reign of Christ, the King of glory, is initiated by his Holy Spirit sent from heaven to dwell in the hearts of all believers. Thus Peter begins by referring to Joel 2:28-32. Notice, the Spirit will be "poured out on all people" as a free gift to all (see also 2:38), and that salvation is made available to "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord." This was later dramatically illustrated when Paul, the greatest of sinners, was told to "arise and be baptized, calling on the name of the Lord."⁹

We see now that from the beginning, God's love is for all lost mankind and for all the following generations. Also that the major impact and work of the Kingdom of heaven, the church, from its prophecies and inception was to proclaim the gospel to all men everywhere, bringing salvation to them and they to salvation.

C. The Right Time and Place - *"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law"* - Galatians 4:4.

There is no doubt that in the plan of God the coming of the Kingdom of heaven took place at the right time, the right place. It was the time when all that had been prophesied concerning the Savior of the world would come to pass. Pentecost in the morning was the time and day in the right place. That great Messianic prophecy of Isaiah said, "The law will go out from Zion (heaven), the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."¹¹ Context confirms this as Isaiah wrote in the first verse "concerning Judah and Jerusalem," and then described what would happen there in the "last days" when "all nations would stream into the new Temple." Paul tells us that the mystery of God's will is God turning over the stewardship of the fullness of the times to Christians in partnership with him to sum up all things under Christ.¹² This time of fulfillment begins with Jesus Christ. All things were to be fulfilled by him. All things written, spoken, and given as sayings by the prophets (stated as "fulfilled" 35 times in the gospels).

Jesus brings it right down to the hour with the statement, "The hour has come." "Now is the time."¹³

Jesus had promised the kingdom to the disciples saying, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your father has been pleased to give you the king -

dom."¹⁴ Also, he told them to stay in Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high"¹⁵ The kingdom was to come with power in the lifetime of those Jews he was teaching, for he said, "Some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom come with power."¹⁶ We know for certain then that the kingdom prophecies were fulfilled by the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, in Jerusalem in 33 AD. Jesus emphasized that "entering the Kingdom" and "seeing the kingdom" would be experienced by a new, spiritual birth of water and the Holy Spirit whereby one would not look for the kingdom in a particular geographical location but would find it within the new spiritual nature where Christ is enthroned in the hearts of believers. His coming was for this purpose. "But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, no doubt the kingdom of God has come upon you."¹⁷

D. The Big Image and a Little Stone - A Smashing Success -

"A rock was cut out but not by human hands. It struck the statue on the feet of clay and smashed them"
- Daniel 2:34.

With the Kingdom of Heaven now among men, and its first citizens preaching the full gospel a great conflict of universal significance begins. We have already noted from the beginning of our study the animosity that exists between God and Satan and the battle that continually rages in the upper realms. It is not surprising then to find the Devil, who promised the kingdoms of the world when tempting Christ, resisting the kingdom, the church. He marshals his forces, first against the prophets of the kingdom. As Jesus said, the prophets received continued persecution by those in the religious-political center of Jerusalem. "In any case I must keep going... for surely no prophet can die outside of Jerusalem. Oh Jerusalem... you who kill the prophets and stone those that are sent to you."¹⁸ Satan used the ruling classes to badger Jesus continually, and then in conjunction with the Roman authorities, "the rulers of this world" crucified him. The unreasonable hatred of those in power ("they hated me without a cause.")¹⁹ is transferred to the new church with diametrically opposed conflicts from the beginning. First, Peter and John are arrested.²⁰ When released they reported to the Christians what had happened, and they all prayed together and quoted from the second Psalm, "Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and his anointed One."²¹ There is jealousy on the part

of those that resist the truth when wholehearted allegiance is given to Christ. They feel threatened for no reason at all. The disciples were not trying to take over their positions. At the same time, Christ is asserting his authority over all powers as is his right as newly crowned King seated on the heavenly throne of the universe. Thus, the inevitable conflict. Gospel preaching must be done with the expectation of opposition from many quarters. The church and its missionaries must understand that they are not necessarily welcomed everywhere and can expect all kinds of overt and covert resistance. The world is filled with cultures, customs, religions, and practices that are evil and false. There is something uncompromising about Christ and the gospel which is boldly stated in this first persecution of the New Testament church, namely, *"Salvation is in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*²² This same assertiveness is evident again when all the apostles are put in the public jail, released by an angel, rearrested the same day and flogged.

Standing before the Sanhedrin, they boldly stated, *"We must obey God rather than men."*²³ This kind of uncompromising position would lead to more confrontations. Those in authoritative positions are warned by the scriptures to disrespect the Anointed Son at their peril, for God has given the King of heaven and earth power to *"dash them to pieces like pottery."*²⁴ They are urged to *"serve the Lord with fear and rejoice in trembling."* This is no empty threat, for as Daniel prophesied: *"There before me was one like the Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his essence. He was given authority, glory, and sovereign power; all peoples, nations, and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."*²⁵ King Nebuchadnezzar lived by eating grass like a beast for seven years until he acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.²⁶

Jesus teaches us clearly and warns us dearly concerning what can be expected from the world saying:

"The world cannot accept the Spirit of truth... Jesus does not show himself to the world... My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives... The world has its own prince... The world must learn that I love the Father... If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first... You do not belong to the world... I have chosen you out of the world... If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also... They do not know the One who sent

me... They have no excuse for their sin and they hate God... The prince of this world now stands condemned... The world was glad to get rid of Christ... In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart, I have overcome the world... Those whom you gave me out of the world... I pray for them. I am not praying for the world... I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world... As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." ²⁷

The purpose of the missionary endeavor is to go into all the world and redeem souls out of the world. For "my kingdom is not of this world... my kingdom is from another place." ²⁸

E. Opposition Spreads the Gospel - "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went" - Acts 8:4.

The opposition of religious and civil leaders failed miserably in their attempts to put down Christ and the gospel and stop the growth of the church. Note the instance of all kinds of resistance. The arrest and trial and martyrdom of Stephen, followed by "a great persecution of the church which was at Jerusalem." but this only assisted in the spread of the gospel as "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." ²⁹ The resulting missionary work that now occurred has rung down through the ages. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there and many people became Christians "both men and women". ³⁰ It is worthy of notice here that the hated Samaritans accepted the gospel and that we have the first record of women doing so.

Not only that, but Philip also was directed to teach the first Gentile who is named as becoming a Christian. ³¹ The Ethiopian eunuch becomes the father of obedience to the gospel, and the prophecy is fulfilled. "Ethiopia will stretch out her hands quickly to the Lord." ³² This comes out of the context of numerous messianic prophecies in Psalm 68. For instance, the Ascension of Christ in verse 18, his Coronation in verses 24-26, a resultant universal freedom from wars, verse 30. By Ethiopia's early acceptance of the Lord, there is joy in the world. "Sing to God O kingdoms of the earth. Sing praise to the Lord." ³³

Though Saul with murderous threats pursued Christians and made them prisoners, he himself became a Christian, "then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace." ³⁴ At this

place, we need to pause and ask an important question about what caused the growth of this new religion called Christianity.

F. How Did They Do It? - "It grew in numbers..." - Acts 9:31.

The answer has already been given in the verse above; it was strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit. Because we are always looking for ways and tools for doing world evangelism, we get the idea that success comes from methodology, that is, our use of ways and means. This implies that success in evangelism centers on us, as the method users, the toll handlers. We forget that it is the Holy Spirit who handles the tools, who empowers men, not methods. Successful world evangelism was accomplished in New Testament times without all of the diagnostic evaluations, comprehensive analysis, effective ministry methods, comparative demographic studies, batteries of psychological testing, and all the trappings of our hi-tech age. The essential element of world evangelism is not centered in man's methods but in the power of the Holy Spirit. We have seen not what the power is that starts churches, but rather, who the power is. In preaching, in movement and direction in spiritual and numerical growth, it is the Holy Spirit who is central. Without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the church cannot grow and be what God wants it to be, even if you have numbers. Unless the sanctifying work of the Spirit³⁵ is done by the Holy Spirit, the result will not be from God, blessed by him, or be to his glory. The church from the beginning is not a man-made institution, but a divinely created one. Not of human flesh but of the Holy Spirit be sought, received, and depended upon for God-pleasing world evangelism. Notice:

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit... The Spirit enabled them... I will pour out my Spirit" (two times)... Received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit... You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit... Peter filled with the Holy Spirit... You spoke by the Holy Spirit... They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly... You have lied to the Holy Spirit... We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him... Seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit... Stephen a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit... They could not stand up against... the Spirit by which he spoke... You always resist the Holy Spirit!... The Spirit told Philip, Go... The Spirit of the

Lord suddenly took Philip away... That you may be filled with the Holy Spirit."36

Enough for now... more later.

G. More Fruitless Opposition - "Now those who had been scattered by the persecutions in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, telling the message" - Acts 11:19.

Another benefit of persecution is seen as the fire of the Holy Spirit is kicked maliciously but is scattered and starts numerous fires. "Traveled" - that's a good word for missionary activities. One becomes well-traveled. This kind of travelling whether planned or forced does not keep devoted preachers from carrying in their hearts the word of Christ. Churches spring up here and there, and one of the more famous ones is Antioch of Syria. Here the missionary spirit of Christ is transmitted to this church which becomes the church from which Paul and Barnabas are sent on their first great missionary journey.

None of the persecutions could stop the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Though Herod Agrippa instigated a persecution against the apostles, killing James³⁷ and arresting Peter, he was brought to nothing, being reduced to worms. Is this not true of all rulers who oppose God's Anointed One? Satan's world system is now falling apart. Civil governments are maintained by the Christ of God³⁸ not by the devil. Satan and his system is a dying lame duck government soon to disappear. His death throes may be impressive but they don't fool the saints.

Was not Pilate brought to nothing for his part in the crucifixion of our Lord, killing himself in Vienna after being from Rome? Herod Antipas got his come-uppance when Caligula deposed him and banished him to Lyons in Gaul. The "*wisdom of this age*" and "*the rulers of this age*" are "*coming to nothing.*"³⁹ How they weary themselves seeking from Satan that which only Christ can give. All the rulers of this age and any other must be warned by the grass-eating Nebuchadnezzar that they will always "*come to nothing*" until they "*acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes.*"⁴⁰ Every persecution Rome has brought against the Kingdom has failed miserably. Glory to the Christ! Christ, who has been glorified in Heaven must be glorified on earth. Heed the warning all you haughty rulers, all you killers and abusers of the

church and mankind. "Kiss the Son lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way" for he rules you with a rod of iron and can dash you to pieces like pottery.⁴¹

CHAPTER 2

ON THE VERGE OF GREAT EXPANSION

"Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles" – Acts 9:15

I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation" – Acts 10:4.

As the new church prays to the Lord of the Harvest, the Lord readies reapers for the harvest fields. From the beginning the church and all its doing is wrapped in prayer.

While waiting for the Holy Spirit, for ten days, "They all joined together constantly in prayer... They did their work prayerfully - Then they prayed, "Show us which of these two you have chosen"... The new church "and they continued steadfastly... in prayers... At the release of Peter, "they raised their voices together in prayer to God... " After they prayed..." they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly..." When distracted by too much to do, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word... When appointing men to serve, "they presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them."¹

It is no accident that after the foregoing prayers and activities that "the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith."² A build-up of spiritual devotion and power is taking place which was soon to be felt all over the world. Great things are now taking place by prayer.

"While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, Repent of this wickedness" ... "Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord, perhaps he will for -

give you..." Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me..." When Paul is called, "He is praying"... In performing miracles, "then he got down on his knees and prayed... For Peter in jail, "but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him... Many people had gathered and were praying."³

A. Getting Ready for the Conversion of the Gentile World -

"When they heard this they had no further objections and praised God saying, 'So then, God has even granted the Gentiles repentance unto life' "

- Acts 10:18.

The personal mission of Jesus Christ who was a Jew, was to the Jews, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁴ Samaritans were told by Christ that "salvation is from the Jews," but he did not mean for the Jews only. Because of laws of God and their own customs, Israelites did not have any social contact with other peoples and were warned against having anything to do with their idolatrous practices. For this reason severe ethno-centrism resulted and is the general attitude and practice of the race even to this day. Therefore, even though the Psalms and Prophets declared the universal spread and acceptance of the Gospel of the Messiah, it was not immediately perceived by the early Jewish Christians. To make it clear to the Jewish Christians that the gospel was for all nations a series of spectacular events were set in motion by the Holy Spirit with prayer playing a great part.

B. The Clincher with Cornelius - An angel, (Acts 10:3,4) a voice speaks, (10:13, 15, 16) the Spirit speaks, (10:19) men sent speak, (10:22) Cornelius speaks, (10:30) Peter speaks, (10:34).

An unbroken line of communication between Heaven and earth, earth and Heaven, earth and earth, intermixed with prayers seals the matter concerning whether or not Gentiles can be subjects of the gospel. An Italian centurion named Cornelius "prayed to God regularly," (10:2) His "prayers and gifts have come up as a remembrance before God," (10:4) "Peter went up on the roof to pray," (10:9) Through prayer and praying men the scene is set and Peter is told specifically by the Spirit, "Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them," (10:19).

The first thing Peter said to those gathered at the house of Cornelius was concerning the custom of the Jews not associating with Gentiles, but that he had learned from the thrice repeated vision that

"I should not call any man impure or unclean" (10:28). Speaking thus, Peter preaches the good news about Jesus Christ and concludes, "Everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (10:43). Then to make it clear that Cornelius and all Gentiles could be saved, the Holy Spirit is poured out on all hearing the message, and the brother Jews who had come with Peter were surprised at what happened and all had to draw the conclusion that Gentiles should be baptized in water and become Christians like they themselves had done.

There were critics in the church in those days too, and when they heard what Peter had done, he was confronted with it in Jerusalem. Fortunately, he had witnesses on earth and witnesses from Heaven and the total impact was irrefutable. So, "if God gave them the same gift as he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who am I to think that I could oppose God!"⁵ God had opened the door to the Gentiles and no man would ever close it.

C. The First Church to Sponsor World Evangelists and Their Evangelism - "So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off" - Acts 13:3. "But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth" - Daniel 2:35.

A new irrevocable and irreversible era of the expansion of the church began. International universal world wide Christianity! How did it come about? What brought about this springboard into all the world? What motivated the evangelists and the evangelism? We have already referred to the persecution in Jerusalem that brought about the movement of refugees north to antioch of Syria.

It seems they drifted into the great metropolitan center of Antioch, a city founded by Seleucus Nicator, one of Alexander's generals who named it after his father, Antiochus. It was populated by Syrians, Greeks, Romans, and Jews with a total of about a quarter of a million people. Called the "Queen of the East" it was considered third in the Roman world next to Rome and Alexandria. A center of trade and commerce, its port city was called Seleucia. Jewish preachers scattered from Jerusalem, filtered north up the coast of the Mediterranean, preaching only to Jews "Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus." The effect here was outstanding as a

*"great number of people believed and turned to the Lord."*⁶

It would do well here to note a few things. Apparently, Peter's testimony had affected some of the brethren in the Jerusalem church to the point of not hesitating to associate with Gentiles, and freely telling them about Christ. Also, it is obvious that this was not evangelism planned by the Jerusalem church, but rather, planned by the Lord, for the whole thing came about because *"the Lord's hand was with them."*⁷ In this age where it seems world evangelism depends upon "correct" missiology and a multitude of institutions and methodologies, planned evangelism and heaps of money, it can be difficult to find the Lord's hand in it all. Nevertheless, if we understand anything of the world evangelism pictured in the New Testament, and particularly the book of Acts, it is the fact that it was moved by and directed by the obvious intervention of the Holy Spirit in the affairs of the church. Successful world evangelism in the sight of God must bear the marks of the instigation, interference, and providential "accidents" performed by our Lord. It would seem that the home church of Jerusalem was handicapped by the Jewishness of its environment and were slow to understand that the gospel was for all. It took persecutions to move them and some special instructions by the Lord to bring them to a realization that the whole world was to be evangelized. This was not the case with the Gentile church at Antioch. When the news of many Greeks turning to Christ came, they sent Barnabas to look it over. Barnabas himself was from Cyprus and as the Antioch church had been started by the teaching of Cypriots, Barnabas, delighted by what he found, gave his encouragement, resulting in *"much people being added unto the Lord."*⁸

Now we have the information of a radiating center similar to Jerusalem. The Jews first, add then the Gentiles. The new churches have reached a critical mass. The firebrand is added to the tinder and soon the whole sky will light up! - Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Paul. So many new disciples to be taught, so many new Gentile disciples! Barnabas and Paul work together for a year and great numbers of people are taught. The fire is stoked. The Lord is about to release unobtrusively the flood that will sweep across the whole earth.

*"From the West men will fear the name of the Lord and from the rising of the sun they will revere his glory. For he will come like a pent-up flood that the breath of the Lord drives along."*⁹ The flesh point for world evangelism has been reached. The Lord is marshalling his forces, *"Your troops*

will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty from the womb of the dawn, your young men will come to you like the dew."¹⁰ What a sight! What a glory! To some what may seem to be a trickle, as two men are called by the Holy Spirit, sanctified by prayer and fasting and sent off, must take into account the flood that followed. This holy, precedent setting, example opened the flood gates and encouraged Christians to take the gospel to Gentiles everywhere. It is no accident that the disciples were given the new name of Christians. For from now on, they will not just be called learners but they will become known as Christ's men and women, Christian followers of Christ not "disciple-ized" but "Christ-ian-ized", not just an assembly, or gathering, but the very body of Christ, assembly of Christ, church of Christ bringing glory to Christ with this name, "praising God that you bear that name." A new name of people "evangelized," "gospelized," "good newsed" by Christ, into Christ.¹¹

"The nations will see your righteousness and all kings your glory; you will be called by a name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow." To this day, all over the world believers in Christ are called Christians. *"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch"* Acts 11:26. The root word in the Greek has the meaning of being "divinely called or commanded, to teach from heaven or be divinely admonished or instructed."¹²

It is through this first great Gentile church that the new religion came to be called Christianity. From now on *"the breath of the Lord will drive it on."*¹³ We know this "breath of the Lord" is the Holy Spirit. As the father sent me, I am sending you. And with that he breathed on them and said, *"Receive the Holy Spirit"*, the Pneuma, the life-giving air breath, wind Spirit!¹⁴ There is the real "divine wind" the "wind of God" that ensures total victory over all the face of the earth.

*"Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain... they came to life and stood up on their feet a vast army... I will put my Spirit in you."*¹⁵

From chapter 13 on, we become involved in missionary journeys, new converts, new churches, a trail of evangelizing back and forth across the Roman Empire. A picture of the growth of the spiritual kingdom of Heaven, fulfilling all the prophecies, all the dreams, all the love of Christ, reaching out to a lost world.

CHAPTER 3

THE MESSAGE AND THE MESSENGER GO FORTH INTO ALL THE WORLD

"Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth to every nation, tribe, language, and people"
– Revelations 14:6.

Now they go forth "sent on their way by the Spirit," sent by the church.¹ The Spirit and the bride working together bringing the loving invitation to all, "Come." "Whoever is thirsty let him come."² The messengers are as angels proclaiming the gospel to all peoples. They are "sent ones," missionaries, sent on the greatest mission ever entrusted to human beings. "How can they preach unless they are sent?"³ The word "sent" refers to those being commissioned or ordered to go. Hence, we get the term, "The Great Commission." Also it means to be sent on a mission, from which we understand "commission." It is from this that we get the term missionary. It is nice to say, and I have said it many times that every Christian is a missionary. This is true, but we must recognize that the Spirit and the church did not separate everyone to go on a missionary journey. What we have, specifically, is the Holy Spirit deliberately calling Barnabas and Paul for missionary work in climates foreign to them for the distinct job of preaching the gospel. Thus, we have designated messengers, being sent out with the designated gospel! The terms "mission" and "missionary," though not found as such in the New Testament, are scriptural synonyms for the work of spreading the gospel, calling authoritatively for "all people everywhere to repent."⁴ It was made very clear by the Holy Spirit that the church was to "separate," namely to set aside or dedicate these men for the special work to which the Spirit had already called them.⁵ In other words, it was a new work, but it was one in harmony with what these two men had previously been called to and were already doing. Namely, they had already been called to preach the gospel; and now, they are to be sanctified (commissioned) to do it somewhere else. Therefore, to say they were missionaries to be sent on a new mission is terminology in harmony with the words and context of the scriptures.

A. The Great "Commission" – *"He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors"* – 2 Corinthians 5:19-20.

I'm sure that Barnabas and Paul went out with the conviction stated above. We always seem to get things twisted around by talking too much about "our commitment," and we need to have more commitment to world evangelism, and we say this as if the matter is within our control, that "it is up to us to do it," ad nauseam. Who is in charge here? Masterminds? Master professors? Master missionaries? We are tools not toolwielders. We are vessels to be used or discarded. Paul had it right when he said, *"He has committed to us..."* We get our orders from him. We are sent by him. To go out committed is one thing and to go out committed by God is another. The right order of things will determine the Spirit in which the work is done and the results of such. "Quickening" things ourselves and being "quickened by the Spirit" is not the same. God first lays hold on us and then we lay hold on Him. *"But I press on to take hold of that for which Christ took hold of me."*⁶

B. Humble Partnership - *"And reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles"* – Acts 14:27.

Here we see at the end of their first journey what was prominent from the beginning - that of God being in charge. They did not glory in themselves but emphasized *"all that God had done."* They understood that the doing was of God and that they had been instruments intimately used by God in opening a *"door of faith"* to the Gentiles. Thus, we must look at this first journey as a watershed for world-wide evangelism. It was the first clincher, the door opener for the universal proclamation of the gospel. What happened then on this great fore-runner of all missionary journeys across this planet?

C. Highlights from the First Missions Report⁷ -

1. The arduous travels: they sailed, arrived, proclaimed.
2. Their hard work: they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues. They met a sorcerer who opposed them, John left them, but *"they sailed on;"* *"standing up Paul... answered opposition boldly: shook the dust off their feet; they spoke; spent considerable time there; fled, but "con -*

tinued to preach;" they preached in that city; "we must go through many hardships;" appointed elders for them in each church, preached in Perga.

3. What they preached: the word of God; teaching about the Lord; a message of encouragement; "we tell you the good news," the word of the Lord, the message of his grace; they continued to preach the good news; the living God; the good news; preached the word.

4. The results: the proconsul believed; many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas; the word of the Lord spread through the whole region; a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed; disciples at Lystra; won a large number of disciples, disciples in Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, churches with elders.

D. "Light for the Gentiles" - Acts 13:47

This is the first recorded sermon of Paul delivered to Jew and Gentile alike. Though delivered in a synagogue, its rejection by the Jews marked the turning point of the mission of Paul and realizing this he says, "We now turn to the Gentiles." It didn't signify that they would no longer preach to Jews, but it made plain that from now on the greater burden of their attention would be given to the Gentiles. They realized that "this is what the Lord commanded us." It was what the Lord commanded Ananias to do, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles."⁸

The record changes from the last mention of "Barnabas and Saul" to "Paul and Barnabas" After this sermon, Paul takes the leading role and is mentioned first. Later in the council at Jerusalem, it reverts to Barnabas and Paul, as they are among Jews where Barnabas is better known. When they return to the Gentile church at Antioch, Luke again writes "Paul and Barnabas."

In this landmark sermon, Paul quotes Isaiah 49:6 saying the prophet spoke about Christ saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." It was the Lord's intention that the gospel of salvation "be brought to the ends of the earth." Paul and Barnabas understood this by their knowledge of the scripture, and their own experience. They had world encompassing vision so "when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord."⁹ Gentile adherents to the Jewish religion who stood in the outer courts under the Old Covenant could now come in to the center of things in the New. What joy has been opened to this whole world

now. What all embracing love from God now freely flows, without discrimination, into the hurts of any human being, anywhere, who puts his trust in Jesus Christ!

E. The Jewish Brethren Agree with What God has Been Doing Among the Gentiles - *"That the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name"* - Amos 9:11, 12.

The meeting of brethren in Jerusalem with all the apostles and elders present settled forever on earth what had already been settled in Heaven. The evidence of God's acceptance of the Gentiles into salvation in Christ, presented by Peter, Barnabas, and Paul, was so overwhelming. When James brought the obvious fulfillment of prophetic scripture to bear on the matter, it was completely settled. Troublemakers who came to Antioch tried to force the law of Moses on the Gentile Christians, but their attempts were perfectly refuted in Jerusalem. There was no hesitancy among Jewish Christians in Phoenicia and Samaria as Paul and Barnabas visited them on the way to Jerusalem. They accepted the news with gladness. Barnabas and Paul were also welcomed at Jerusalem.

James said it all, *"God has taken from the Gentiles a people for himself."*¹⁰ In essence, "Let us get on with world evangelism. Gentiles are not to be burdened with Moses' law or Jewish customs." A letter was sent down to Antioch and the church *"was glad for its encouraging message."*¹¹

CHAPTER 4

ON WITH WORLD EVANGELISM - THE MACEDONIAN CALL!

"And so the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers"
- Acts 16:5.

"Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us"
- Acts 16:11.

There is no doubt what was done when people became disciples. They were organized into assemblies, of churches that met regularly

and maintained fellowship. They were not neglected by the preachers that established them as we have Paul and Barnabas initiating a plan to "visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing."

We must note that their dispute though unfortunate resulted in two teams of workers that freed Paul and his new partner Silas to range farther into unevangelized areas. Also, the purpose of both teams was to "strengthen the churches," and as a consequence, the churches were strengthened in the faith." Not only that, but the churches themselves became evangelistic and "grew daily in numbers."¹

Another great event takes place, the consequence of which have been realized continually for 1900 years. The gospel goes west into Europe. Paul was a planner and used "all means to save,"² but he was not in charge. He needed lots of help from the Holy Spirit of the Lord as does anyone who seeks his guidance in evangelistic endeavors. It was the Holy Spirit that intervened to show Peter and the Jerusalem church that the gospel was for Gentiles too. "The Spirit said to him... go with them, for I have sent them;" "the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message." "The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles."

Now also in the case of Paul, the Holy Spirit started them out on their first journey.³ Now the Holy Spirit interferes with their plans to go west to preach in the province of Asia and then blocks them again from going north into Bithynia sending them through Mysia to the northwest coastline port of Troas. It must have been disconcerting for Paul's group (they had picked up Timothy in Lystra) to be ignorant of what was going on, but their puzzlement came to a finish when Paul was given a vision calling them to the lost in Macedonia. Here we find lost souls represented in the vision as begging for them to come. The intervention of an urgent need upsetting all the previous plans as God works with this missionary band. They got the message and did not hesitate to carry it out. "We got ready at once to leave for Macedonia." Luke, the writer of this wonderful missionary history is now also a travelling companion of Paul.

CHAPTER 5

AND ALSO TO THE GREEKS

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"

– Romans 1:16.

A. Paul and the Greeks

Up to this time, Greeks had become Christians here and there but from now on Paul and his companions will be spending a lot of time preaching to the Greeks in Greece. Now the term Greek is also used to represent all Gentile nations. Thus, Paul writes recognizing that *"salvation comes through the Jews,"*¹ and the gospel must be preached first in Jerusalem and Judea and among all the Jews scattered around the Roman Empire. For this reason, Paul and others began their preaching in a new place first at a Jewish synagogue, or wherever Jews might congregate. But it is obvious that the Jewish Dispersion was providential in preparing the way for the spread of the gospel.²

"The influence of the dispersion on the rapid progression of Christianity can scarcely be overrated. The course of the apostolic preaching followed in a regular progress the line of Jewish settlements. The mixed assembly from which the first converts were gathered on the day of Pentecost represented each division of the Dispersion."³

Through it was the time of the Roman Empire, it was Hellenistic (Greek) civilization that ruled the day in language, education, culture, philosophy, and science. This was foreseen as such as in 700 B.C. Isaiah wrote in the conclusion of his scroll, *"I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of them that survive to the nations, to Tarshish (Spain, Paul's final goal for evangelism), to the Libyan (remember Simon of Cyrene) and Lydians (Lydia was the Jewish proselyte, the first convert in Europe) to Tubal (Galilean areas) and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of any fame or seen my glory among the nations. And they will bring all your brothers from all nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the Lord."*⁴

Thus, when Paul speaks of Jew and Greek, he means "Jew and Gentile." He means all the nations influenced at that time by Greek culture that are not Jewish. It was the Antioch brethren that first preached to the Greeks, *"However, men from Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling the good news about the*

Lord Jesus."⁵

On the first journey, the first mention of Greeks comes at Iconium. "There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed." KJV says "Greeks" and the original says "Hellenes." A large number of God-fearing Greeks are converted at Thessalonica. In Ephesus Paul taught "for two years so that all the Jews and Greeks heard the word of the Lord," and later when speaking to the elders from the church in that city he summed up his ministry of evangelism saying, "I have declared both to Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus."⁶

B. Jesus and the Greeks – "We would like to see Jesus" – John 12:21.

When Jesus was told by Philip and Andrew that Greeks wanted to meet him, Jesus immediately said, "*The hour has come.*"⁷ The presence of these Gentiles and their wanting to personally talk with him took the thoughts of Jesus right to the cross where he would die for the sins of all mankind.

*"A grain of wheat must fall and die... My followers must not love their lives... Now my heart is troubled. Save me from this hour?... But I when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself..."*⁸

Christ sees the gospel of his cross calling and drawing all men to himself. After his validation as the promised Messiah of the Jews, he will become the Savior of the World. This was not the first contact that Jesus had with Gentiles. Early in his ministry he marvelled at the faith of a Roman Centurion in Capernaum, saying, "*I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.*" And again when he entered the Gentile region of Syro-Phoenicia and met the Canaanite woman, whom Mark describes as "*a Greek born in Syrian Phoenicia.*" He declared after the discussion and healing of her daughter, "*O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*"⁹

And also Jesus taught the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and all the people of the Samaritan town of Sychar, and they all concluded, "*Now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man is the Savior of the World.*"¹⁰

So we see that although Jesus was "*sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,*"¹¹ he in essence laid the groundwork for the great response of the Samaritans to Philip's preaching in Acts 8:4-13; and the great response to Peter's evangelism in Acts 9:42, "*and many people*

believed in the Lord."

It is no accident that in mentioning the order in which the super-
scription was written in three languages, Luke puts the Greek before
the Latin and Hebrew. He, himself, was in the forefront of the world
evangelism of Paul, and it has been remarked by students of Luke that
his gospel is "*the gospel to the Greek.*"¹²

CHAPTER 6

HOW THE CHURCH BEGAN AND GREW IN EUROPE

*"From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next
day on to Neopolis"* – Acts 16:11.

This is the fourth of approximately eleven sea voyages of the
Apostle Paul. I think it may be the most important one, though one of
the shortest. The longest was his final voyage to Rome, described in
Acts 27-28.

The first convert was a business woman Lydia, who was proba-
bly the leader of a women's prayer meeting held outside the city of
Philippi. As this meeting was on the Sabbath, it is supposed she was
a Jewess but most likely a Gentile proselyte. We do know that later
there was a church established at her hometown of Thyatira, an
ancient city of Lydia, to which John addressed one of the seven letters
recorded in Revelation.¹ She gave them a warm welcome, housing
them and thus encouraging them as many have done for travelling
emissaries of our Lord. The whole household became Christians,
being baptized at the same time as she.² Whether the church met in
her house or not, we do not know, but apparently, the "*place of prayer*"
became a regular teaching spot for Paul and his companions.

The first of Paul's imprisonments takes place here which brought
about the conversion of the jailer and his household. After the dra-
matic events at the city jail, they met with the brethren at Lydia's
house, encouraged them and then went on their way.

A special bond was forged between Paul and this first European
church that lasted all his life. This church became organized with bish-

ops (elders) and deacons, and continually supported Paul throughout his missionary career.³

*"Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving except you only... you sent me aid again and again when I was in need... I am amply supplied now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent."*⁴

This letter sent from Rome, finds Paul who was in prison in Philippi in 52 AD, again incarcerated ten years later. Throughout those ten years of energetic, tumultuous, and fruitful evangelism, this church is commended as no other, and was the recipient of *"a genuine and simple letter, the warm, spontaneous, loving effusion of a heart which could express itself with unreserved affection to a most kind and beloved church."*⁵

Forced out of Philippi, persecutions move the apostle along the important Roman highway called "Via Equatia" which connected Rome with Constantinople, to the major metropolis of Thessalonica, which even until now has remained a highly populated and important city called Salonika. *"Some Jews and a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women"* became Christians.⁶ It is here that the evangelists were given the famous appellation of "turning the world upside down. As the gospel grows, Satan is beginning to build up cruel persecutions that will soon bathe the Roman world with the blood of martyrs.

As later church history unfolds, it is from this area of Macedonia that the gospel was taken to the Slavonians and the Bulgarians. Berea, also on the Roman road, was the next target city for evangelism. Here in contrast to Thessalonica, they are well received by the Jewish synagogue where eager scripture study took place, and for the first time many of the Jews believed as did the Greeks (men and women). Paul's trips to the synagogues almost always ended in violent rejection. Even so, many Jews believed.

We must note here that a number of times prominent women are specifically mentioned among those obeying the gospel. In Berea *"a number of prominent Greek women."* Greek in this case could mean Gentiles. In Thessalonica, *"not a few prominent women"*, in Athens *"a woman named Damaris and a number of others."*⁷ We have already referred to the first convert, Lydia. At the time, Roman and Greek

women were afforded freedom and active participation in the affairs of society, more so than their mid-eastern and oriental counterparts, at least in the upper classes. A number of women worked side by side with Paul in evangelism and are referred to as "true yokefellow."⁸ Eudia and Syntyche of Philippi, who were possibly from the same prayer group as Lydia. Also in Paul's greetings to the church in Rome, he mentions twelve women and gives five of them special commendation. Phoebe, a deaconess of the Greek church in Cenchrea, who apparently was entrusted with Paul's letter to the church in Rome. "She has been a great help to many people, including me." "Priscilla, along with Aquila, who risked their lives for me... all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them." "Mary, who worked very hard for you." "Typhena and Tryphose, those women who work hard in the Lord." "My dear friend Persis," another woman, "who has worked very hard in the Lord."⁹

It is certainly a well-known fact that many women, some of prominent, travelled with the Lord and supported Him and his work financially¹⁰ It is also a fact that women were deeply involved in the work of Paul and his group, but whether any of them travelled with them is a matter of conjecture. We should note here that world evangelism, from the beginning, involved women of the church and is no different today, as female personnel outnumber males in the mission fields.

CHAPTER 7

EVANGELIZING IN GREECE

"Those men who accompanied Paul brought him to Athens... after this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth... Paul stayed on in Corinth for sometime"

- Acts 17:15; 18:1, 18.

This is the first time Paul has entered Greece. The country as such is distinguished from Macedonia and is found only once in the New Testament and mentioned four times in the Old Testament., But in the New Testament, the whole country of Greece was referred to by its two provincial divisions, Macedonia and Achaia, four times, Achaia separately eight times.¹

The experience of Paul and the team of evangelists is contrasted in Greece by a relatively poor reception in Athens and a tremendous harvest in Corinth. Paul was "*provoked to exasperation*" if not to "*burning anger*" by the overwhelming number of idols in this center of science, education, democracy and great learning.² Athens for years was the reputed home of self-centered sophisticates, and the man-centered superstitions and self-worship of prideful men that the idols represented. Not unlike some of our centers of learning and culture today.

The apostle, following his custom, seeks first for Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in the beginning of his evangelism here. He also bears witness in the midst of the best the world had to offer to the real and true God of which they were profoundly ignorant, delivering the famous and exemplary sermon on "The Unknown God." Here it was made clear for all time that God "*now commands all men everywhere to repent,*" and that all mankind will be held accountable to the justice of Christ on the appointed day of judgement. This authoritative command in effect says, "*No one will get away with anything.*"²

We must note in passing here that Paul made it a point to reason not only in religious and philosophical meeting places, but also where common men and women gathered, in the market place. This he did "*day by day,*" not idling away his time as tourists do but giving attention to the reason he was really brought there. One of the members of the Philosophical Society became a believer, Dionysius. Also one woman of note, Damaris and some other women, and just "*a few men.*"³

Turning west forty miles, Corinth was next on the Holy Spirit's agenda for Paul's evangelism. It was a populous, wealthy commercial center, with two ports. It was well known for its profligate and licentious worship of Venus. Paul joined with a Jewish couple driven out of Rome by an edict issued by Claudius against all the Jews there.

The occasion for meeting them was Paul's practice of supporting himself whenever he needed to by plying his trade of tent-making. Priscilla and Aquila became Christians at this time, it seems. Paul never rested from teaching the gospel under any circumstances, converting even his employers. These two became famous workers for Christ becoming the nucleus of churches, not only in Corinth, but also in Ephesus and Rome. Their love for Paul as well as their bravery brought them a commendation from the apostle and mention of the debt of gratitude owed them by all the churches of the Gentiles.⁴

Once more after teaching in the local synagogue and being rejected he declared, *"From now on I will go to the Gentiles."* Such collisions of Paul with leaders of Jewish synagogues added to his undeserved reputation declared by a mob in Jerusalem, *"This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place."*⁵ But Paul out of a sense of love and duty always went *"to the Jew first"*. His compassion for his Jewish brothers went far beyond his own personal good as seen by these statements.

*"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved." "I speak the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit - I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers those of my own race, the people of Israel."*⁶

When Silas and Timothy joined him from Macedonia, they apparently brought financial aid with them so Paul could give full attention to his mission. He *"devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ."* We must note here that whether he was a vocational missionary or a "paramissionary" or not, he was always a missionary, sticking to his calling of testifying to all that Jesus Christ was the Savior of the world.

The value of his getting back to full-time teaching can be judged by the results. *"Crispus, the synagogue ruler and his entire household believed in the Lord, and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized. And when Paul was threatened by the Jews, the Lord spoke to him in a vision saying, "Do not be afraid, keep on speaking, do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one is going to attack or harm you, because I have much people in this city." Because of such an influx of new Christians, Paul stayed a year and a half in Corinth teaching them the word of God.*⁷

Again we see the nature of what was taught by the evangelists. Paul declared in a later letter to the Corinthians reminding them of the emphasis, the center of his teaching and preaching, *"But we preach Christ crucified" and again, "For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."*⁸ No matter what the approach may be, no matter where we start in missionary work, the subject and the object must always be Christ on the cross. This gospel is the power of God to save the lost. Ignoring it, or passing over it lightly is the greatest error a missionary can make in his ministry.

The importance of the ministry of Paul in Corinth cannot be

overestimated. It is the center piece of his missionary travels and work. His publishing work, namely the epistles he wrote, are dominated by the two letters to the Corinthians. Counting the verses written by Paul (688) compared with the total of the Apostles (1874) shows that almost half what he wrote was prompted by his relationship to the Corinthians. If you believe in Paul's authorship of Hebrews (302 verses) then the amount is less than half but still a significant number. We must also reckon that the letter to the churches in Rome was written while he was still in Corinth and was brought to Rome by Phoebe, a deaconess of the church in the Corinthian port of Cenchrea.⁹ The major content of this most famous epistle amply demonstrates the gospel that Paul was teaching and preaching in Achaia and Macedonia.¹⁰ Any departure from preaching the gospel of God is a betrayal of the cross and the basic mission of the ministry and a resulting stumbling block to world evangelism. Neglect of the gospel brings the inevitable result of a petrified and putrefied Christianity, well attested in Subsequent histories of the religion around the world. Though benevolent and kindly services to needy people are a fruit of conversion to Christ, they must never constitute a substitute for, or a preeminence over, gospel proclamation as seen in the apostle Paul and his noble evangelists.

CHAPTER 8 CONTINUEDEVANGELIZATION

A. More Traveling

"Sailed to Ephesus... Caesarea... down to Antioch... Galatia... Phrygia... Ephesus" – Acts 18:18, 23; 19:1.

The purpose of these journeys is stated thus, *"Paul... traveled from place to place... strengthening all the disciples..."*¹ Whether the apostle was a hardy traveler or not is open to conjecture. We know he bore a painful sickness in his body, supposed by many to be the result of his stoning in Lystra.² We also know that his bodily presence was consid-

ered weak,³ and as he stated, *"I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling."*⁴ I get the impression that Paul traveled hard in spite of all the drawbacks, whether spiritual or physical. Those who think that missionary journeys are great vacation trips and exotic holidays are mistaken. Though not worthy to be mentioned in the same breath as Paul and many pioneer missionaries, I can testify to some of the hardships and dangers and sickening experiences of missionary travels. I am subject to seasickness, air sickness, diarrhea and fever associated with changes of climate and general exhaustion. Nervousness and fears because of dangers, storms and threats, frustration, failures, and the boredom of crossing the Pacific at least 45 times. Traveling was not the easiest thing to do in those days. We must admire the commitment of Paul to go anywhere, anytime, any way for Christ. There is not much rest for him when he gets where he is going because of the teaching, the advising, the visiting, and in Paul's case especially, the recurrent persecutions he faced almost everywhere. Oh, how Satan hated him, Oh, how many times Paul defeated him - this was in harmony with the apostles calling, *"I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan to God."*⁵

B. More Victories

In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power"
- Acts 19:20

Ending up at Ephesus this time, Paul spends two years there in daily teaching discussions. By this time Paul realizes that certain population centers lend themselves to a proliferation of the gospel in surrounding areas. This is the case in Ephesus where Paul finds twelve men who knew only the baptism of John the Baptizer and knew nothing about the Holy Spirit and his gifts and activities. After being baptized and having the Holy Spirit come upon them, they immediately began teaching. Paul then speaks boldly for three months in the synagogue and is forced out, but the believers go with him, and we now have the nucleus of the church of the Ephesians. Consequently, with a daily Bible study going on in the lecture hall of Tyrannus, *"all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord."*⁶ At least seven of these churches in Asia are well known to us, having received special attention of our Lord in the sending of letters to them

by the Holy Spirit and the hand of the Apostle, John.⁷ The first one was to the church at Ephesus. It is a well known fact that the Apostle John spent his latter years in Ephesus.⁸

Through the machinations of Demetrius the silversmith, a riot precipitated the departure of Paul to Macedonia.⁹ Perhaps the beating administered to Paul's traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, who were from Macedonia influenced the decision to go to Macedonia. Possibly it was for their recuperation and encouragement. At this point, we need to understand Paul's love and appreciation for his companions. He worried about them, *"Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found the Lord had opened a door for me, I still had no peace of mind because I did not find my brother Tutus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia."*¹⁰ But how happy he was when he met Titus and got the good news about the repentance going on in the Corinthian church, which had been riddled with so many problems. *"But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphant procession in Christ."*¹¹

C. Back and Forth to Macedonia – *"Paul... set out for Macedonia. He traveled through that area speaking many words of encouragement and finally arrived in Greece... then he decided to go back through Macedonia"* – Acts 20:1-3.

Why all this hard travel back and forth? Paul answers, *"Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches."*¹² Corinth had lots of problems besides Jewish plots, and the beating of Sosthenes. There was a giant riot in Ephesus, threats and upsets in nearly every place a church was started. Paul feared that the pressure of persecutions would tear the churches apart so thus his movements back and forth to encourage the brethren and shore up the weaknesses.

Luke now names the workers that accompanied Paul who went on ahead of Paul to Troas while he and the apostle stopped over at Philippi. These men were converts from nearly all of the centers of Paul's evangelism. Sopater from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy from Lystra, and from Asia where Ephesus was Tychicus and Trophimus.¹³

Now from Troas, Paul begins the longest most arduous journey of his missionary career.¹⁴ He begins by walking from Troas to Assos

about twenty miles, probably accompanied by many brethren while the others sailed forty miles. Then on by ship to Caesarea and up to Jerusalem. Paul becomes a prisoner there and now goes from trial to trial, prison to prison and finally reaches Rome. Whether he traveled any more or not is a matter of conjecture. There is no proof that he went to Spain, a long-held ambition, or ever visited his beloved brethren in the eastern Mediterranean any more. He in one sense goes into semi-retirement; it is now about 58 A.D. There is a postulated outline that has the apostle being acquitted in Rome, then preaching in Spain and North Africa, journeying back to Macedonia, being arrested again and sent back to Rome where he was beheaded during the persecution of Nero in about 68 A.D.

As the purpose of this study is not the book of Acts itself, or a history of the life and times of the Apostle Paul, I have skipped over a number of important events, some of which will be covered as we pursue the subject of world evangelism in the remaining books of the New Testament.

Before finishing with Acts I want to draw our attention to the calling and mission of the apostle as revealed by him in his last address to the elders at Miletus, and his defenses during trials before rulers.

CHAPTER 9

THE MISSION OF PAUL AS ACCENTUATED BY CHRIST

"Go, I will send you far away to the Gentiles" – Acts 22:21.

These were the last words spoken by the Apostle Paul to the mob in Jerusalem. Words of Christ. Words of his commission to save the lost Gentile world! These words enraged the mob even more as they sought to take his life. Though Paul continued his work and testimony in captivity, these are probably the words of his last public speech. If not absolutely so, they are certainly such as far as that part of the world is concerned. Now Christ indeed is sending him far away on the longest journey of his career. The historical record of Acts comes to an abrupt end in Rome. But regardless of our desire to know more

about Paul in Rome and whether or not his ministry continued in other places, we do see a fitting fulfillment and conclusion of the commission Christ gave him. He had already met with James and all the elders of the Jerusalem church and "reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry."¹ Also, he had completed the job of helping the famine-stricken saints in Jerusalem and Judea, and referring to this while on trial before Felix said, "After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings."² **The best statement of his commission from Christ is found in the longest speech recorded of his courtroom appearances.**

"Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."³

Added to this is what was said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."⁴

Ananias did as he was commanded and told Paul, "The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."⁵

We must add to this the outstanding purpose of his journey to Rome, spoken to him by an angel! "Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar."⁶

It is fitting at the conclusion of this marvelous account of world evangelism to note that all that Christ called him to do was done. He did fulfill his "Apostleship to the Gentiles," which was stated in Jerusalem and recognized by Peter and the church leaders. "They saw that I had been given (entrusted with) the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been given the task of preaching the gospel to the Jews. For God who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles."⁷

He also was a witness to the Jews, as we have already seen him preaching in the synagogues wherever he went. It was God's will stated in the prophets before hand that Israel be scattered among the

nations with the result that they would become also a "light to the Gentiles."⁸

In the place where this was taken from the prophet Isaiah, referring to the Christ as Israel personified, it says, "You are my servant Israel... he formed me in the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself... to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept... I will also make you a light for the Gentiles that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth... see, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders."⁹

Paul with a double edged sword of the Spirit reached out over the world, the Jews first and also the Gentiles:

"Many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul... A great number of Jews and Gentiles believed... Some of the Jews were persuaded... Many of the Jews believed... "All the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord... For even Moses wrote, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."¹⁰ This was confirmed by Paul in Romans 15:10.

As far as we know, the last testimonial made by Paul was before the Caesar who condemned him to death. Throughout all his journeys, Paul was made conscious of the fact that he would stand before Caesar and bear witness of to the majesty and kingship of Jesus Christ. Before this supreme authority on earth, Christ was proclaimed as the Supreme authority in heaven and on earth. The Satanic forces behind the governments of the Jews first, then the Gentiles, who heaped scorn and fierce persecutions upon Jesus and his faithful followers, were told who really rules over all mankind and were given opportunity to be "rescued out of the dominion of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of the son he loves."¹¹

PART 4

**FROM THE LETTERS
OF THE WORLD
EVANGELIST**

Chapter 1:

A. Rome at last!

"So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also" – Romans 1:15 KJV.

B. The Gospel is For All

"by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him" – Romans 16:26.

C. The How of Saving the World

"Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world" – Romans 10:18; Psalm 19:4.

Chapter 2: The World Mission and Vision of the World Evangelist

"So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum. I have fully proclaimed the gospel" – Romans 15:19.

"I will go to Spain" – Romans 15:28.

"It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known" – Romans 15:20.

Chapter 3: The Missionary's Defense - What If Costs to Be One

"We were under pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life" – 2 Corinthians 1:8.

A. Misunderstanding by Those They Brought to Christ

"This is my defense to those who sit in judgement on me" – 1 Corinthians 9:3.

B. Severe Discipline to Remain Effective

"I beat my body and make it my slave" – 1 Corinthians 9:27.

C. Opposition from Every Quarter

"A great door of effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me" – 1 Corinthians 16:9.

D. Hardships of Every Kind

"I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then am I strong" – 2 Corinthians 12:10.

Chapter 4: The Work of Paul and the Missionaries

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction" – 2 Timothy 4:2.

"Do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry" – 2 Timothy 4:5.

A. Evangelizing

B. Planting, Edifying, and Organizing Churches

"To the churches in Galatia" - Galatians 1:2. "Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church, and with prayer and

fasting committed them to the Lord" Acts 14:23 - Lystra, Derbe, Iconium.

C. Churches Multiplying Churches

"So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers" - Acts 16:5. "Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, And Samaria... was strengthened... and grew in numbers..." - Acts 9:31.

D. Families Multiplying Churches

"Concerning Aquila and Priscilla "who had recently come from Italy." Paul "stayed and worked with them..." - Acts 18:1-3.

Paul "sailed for Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila... they arrived at Ephesus where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila"

- Acts 18:18-19.

"When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, (Apollos) they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately" - Acts 18:26.

"Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house" - 1 Corinthians 16:19.

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila... greet also the church that meets at their house" - Romans 16:5.

"When she (Lydia) and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her house" - Acts 16:15.

"Gaius whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy" - Romans 16:23.

Chapter 5: Missionary Motivation for World Evangelism

"For God so loved the world that he sent..." - John 3:16.

For Christ's love compels us..." - 2 Corinthians 5:14.

"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me..." - 1 Corinthians 15:10-11.

A. God So Loved That He Gave

B. Christ's Love and the Grace of God

C. "Since we know what is the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade men"
- 2 Corinthians 5:11.

Chapter 6: The Final Victory of World Evangelism

"The Kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." - Revelation 11:15.

CHAPTER 1

A. Rome at Last – *"So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also"* – Romans 1:15
KJV.

With these words, Paul expressed his earnest desire to preach to the populace of Rome. *"I planned many times to come to you but have been prevented from doing so."* He felt this way because as the specially chosen "apostle to the Gentiles," he wanted to honor Christ and *"have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles."*¹ This was a legitimate desire and stated the purpose of his apostleship to them from the beginning of this letter which was *"to call people from among the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith."*²

The driving force in Paul's missionary life was the obligation he felt because of the grace he had received as *"chief of sinners,"*³ to let all other sinners hear as he heard, and believe as he believed. *"I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians."*⁵ To everyone and anyone *"to the Jew first and also to the Hellenist."*⁴

Paul's total commitment to saving the lost of any stripe is expressed up front, humbly in the first three words of this letter, *"Paul, slave of Christ."*⁵ He does not come on as one exercising authority but as one who was given the title of under-rower when the Lord first called him. *"I have... to appoint you a servant."*⁶ This word "servant" in the original means "attendant" or literally *"one who rows underneath, a rower, one of the ship's crew."*⁷ He speaks as one who can identify himself with the millions of slaves in the Roman Empire.

When Paul finally got to Rome, he was a prisoner in chains, but in spite of this, he was able to have visitors and he welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ so that even some of the household of Caesar became saints.⁸

But the fruits of his evangelism in the east were already in place to welcome him to Rome. So many who were already active and meeting in household churches. How marvelous that fruit preceded fruit! *"Priscilla and Aquila my fellow workers were there... Epenetus, who was the first convert in the province of Asia was there... Andronicus and Junias my relatives... Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ and my dear friend Stachys... Herodian my relative... Tryphena, Tryphosa, and my dear friend*

Persis, women who worked hard in the Lord... the mother of Rufus who has been a mother to me."⁹

B. The Gospel is for All – *"By the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him"* – **Romans 16:26**

An honor roll of Paul's influence being felt in Rome before he got there! Praise the Lord! Through this letter Paul argued the universality of the gospel and salvation for anyone who accepted it by faith. Legalistic Jewishness was being a great hindrance throughout the world. In all the places where Paul preached there was rejection and persecution by Jews. This was a real drag on Gentiles becoming Christians "as it is written: *God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you*" (law-breaking Jews). Also there was no basic difference in the spiritual condition of all mankind. *"We have already made the charge, that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentiles, the same Lord is Lord will be saved."* Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through the same faith."¹⁰

C. The How of Saving the World –

"Their voice has gone out into all the earth" – **Romans 10:18, Psalm 19:4**

In a word it is "the word of faith we are proclaiming." What is involved here is the way in which God saves the world. Right standing with God comes by faith when the word is heard. Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message. It is believed by the heart, then confessed by the mouth. We can be sure of our salvation by the evidence of our faith and confession.

Now the dead serious import of this is the connection between faith and proclamation. The word of faith is near us when we hear the preached word of Christ, that is "the word of faith" we are proclaiming and it occurs in our hearts and mouths and witnesses our salvation in this way. Therefore the importance of world evangelism, the universal proclamation of the gospel of Christ, cannot be over estimated. It all comes down to this: what a joy, what a blessing to be saved by trusting in the Lord? *"Everyone who trusts in him shall not be put to shame,"* and *"everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* What a

wonder that this unbreakable, everlasting word of truth has come through the generations witnessed first by the prophetic writings of the Bible, The Book of the Ages, then in fulfillment preserved entire by the Holy Spirit in the writings of the apostles and New Testament prophets!

Now what involves us all so deeply grips us in the following verses of this scripture. Namely how the faith and salvation come about. We must answer Paul's questions:

H How can they (all Jews, all Gentiles) call on the one (Christ) they have not believed in? They cannot!

H How can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? They cannot!

H How can they hear without someone preaching to them? They cannot!

H How can they preach unless they are sent? They cannot!¹¹

Now we see that salvation for the lost of the whole world depends upon sending and preaching. Oh, how little Christians understand this! Oh, how little churches really care about this! May the Lord open our eyes to the beauty of the feet of those who bring the good news of salvation. As Isaiah puts it, "*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation!*" Why is there any part of the world (and I mean people, not geography) left unevangelized? Why does it seem that the workers are so few?¹² Why do Christian parents almost always object to their children becoming missionaries? Why are they themselves not mission minded and involved in soul-winning world evangelism? Oh, I cannot cease thanking Christ for the feet of those who came to me and taught me the gospel of Christ. Oh, how much I want to do the same to others with every breath of my being!

Hear it! Let us hear it!

"*Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.*"¹³ They did it in their generation. We can do it in ours. The Lord will do it! And how will he do it? Sending - preaching - sending - preaching. This is the holy command, the holy mission of the church. Let us do all that we can and save the lost at any cost! Amen. I cannot think of anything I'd rather work for, anything I'd rather do than world evangelism. Nothing I would rather live for! Nothing I would rather suffer for! Nothing I would rather die for! I only want my Lord

to say of me, "His feet were beautiful upon the mountains." How about you?

CHAPTER 2

"So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel" – Romans 15:19. "I will go to Spain" – Romans 15:28. "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known" – Romans 15:20.

The major motivating factor in the work of Paul was the expressed here to preach where Christ was not known. Namely to pioneer the gospel. To go where no other preacher had gone. The word translated "ambition" is a word involving "honor" literally "loving the honor" of doing something first.¹ Not that he was a self centered glory seeker. This could not be because of the terrible pressures, sufferings and rejection that he experienced. No, the glory he sought was glory for the Lord. But he did seek the honor from Christ to be first with the gospel to all the Gentiles. Now when "Gentiles" is used, it means those not Jews, expressly, all the nations of the whole world. That is why we see here the all consuming ambition of the apostle to preach in Spain after stopping in at Rome. As much as he desired and planned to get to Rome, he lets them know that there is a vast unevangelized area beyond them which would be the first goal of his journey. He breaks out in song when he writes about Christ becoming a servant of the Jews so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy. Paul takes joy in the fulfillment of 2 Samuel 22:50 that has the Christ praising God among the Gentiles. *"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name."* All the Gentiles nations are also called upon to rejoice and praise the Lord. Paul sees the vision here of Christ's universal reign over all the nations, which the apostle is facilitating by this extensive evangelizing. *"From the root of Jesse will spring up one who will arise to rule over the nations and Gentiles will hope in him."*

Paul not only considered himself an evangelist but also a priest with the duty on earth to minister the gospel in such a way as to offer up the Gentiles as a priestly sacrifice pleasing to God and made holy by the Holy Spirit.² How great it would be if every Christian in the temple of his body would offer daily, and nightly as priests in the old

tabernacle did, a sacrifice of a souls saved out of every nation under heaven. Is not this implied when we too are called priests on the earth? *"From every tribe and language and people and nation, You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."*³

Paul, who planned ahead his work for Christ, planned to go by Rome saying, *"I plan to do so when I go to Spain,"* had finished his work in the regions stretching from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Yugoslavia) and felt that there was no more place for him to work, and thus his plan for the western parts of the Mediterranean.⁴ Truly a man of world vision committed to evangelizing the whole world!

CHAPTER 3

THE MISSIONARY'S DEFENSE: WHAT IT COSTS TO BE ONE

"We were under pressure, far beyond our ability to endure so that we despaired even of life"
– 2 Corinthians 1:8

A. Misunderstanding by Those They Brought to Christ –

"This is my defense to those who sit in judgement on me"
– 1 Corinthians 9:3

Though Paul and his fellow missionaries pioneered the gospel in Corinth and sacrificially laid the foundation of the church there, they suffered from comparisons with those who later followed them even to the point of being despised. How could this happen? We might as well ask how can people forget the depths of sin they were saved from? Probably by becoming self righteous and resenting the memory of those who knew them then, and pulled them through. The Corinthian Christians now considered themselves high and mighty and so Paul writes, *"For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena."* We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe lot from the world's standpoint and the Corinthian brethren had taken a high and mighty viewpoint of them. Here is how low down they appeared as

in reality they "condescended to men of low position." "Fools weak, dishonored, hungry and thirsty, in rags, brutally treated, homeless, working hard, cursed, persecuted, slandered, scum and refuse of the earth."¹

All this they endured, blessing others and answering kindly. Further on, Paul says in effect, "don't we have any rights at all?" Then he answers saying "Yes, we have the same rights as other apostles and Peter, to have a wife and bring her on our journeys, to be supported by those being served. But we have waived those rights to concentrate on preaching the gospel and to be able to maintain self-support to be proud of."² In this way Paul remained free and not under obligation to any man.

B. Severe Discipline to Remain Effective –

"I beat my body and make it my slave" – 1 Corinthians 9:27.

Besides not using rights and privileges granted by the Lord to gospel preachers, he made himself "a slave to everyone." He felt the heavy obligation of "discharging the trust committed to me" and the blessed duty to preach the gospel to save the lost... this compelling necessity³ was placed on him and failure to carry out the mission would bring a divine penalty on him.⁴ Thus, the apostle is dedicated to one thing and one thing alone. He is entirely single minded about it, namely, soul-saving: "To win as many as possible... to win the Jews... to win those not having law... so that by all means I might save some."

Because of this driving force and goal in mind, Paul stayed in strict training... beating my body making it my slave, so as to "not be disqualified for the prize... I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."⁵

C. Opposition From Every Quarter – "A great door of effective work has opened to me and there are many who appose me" – 1 Corinthians 16:9.

Paul's experience in Ephesus was one of the worst of his career. He was maligned publicly by the Jews. Demetrius the silversmith organized opposition against companions were beaten and Paul's life threatened. ... "And as for us why do we endanger ourselves every hour? I die every day - I mean that brother... if I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained if the dead are not raised?"⁶

This is the place and time when the pressure of the opposition

was so great, they feared for their lives every day. Their enemies were like wild beasts stalking them daily. But none of this deterred them in the work of Christ, and in dependence on God, they said, "He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us."⁷

D. Hardships of Every Kind – "I delight in weaknesses, in insults in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. "For when I am weak, then am I strong"
– 2 Corinthians 12:10.

Though Paul felt like a fool doing it, he wrote a list of what he had been through for the gospel's sake. Others had been boasting and putting Paul down in the eyes of the Corinthians, so in his own defense he felt like engaging in a little foolishness, though he was glad to bear in his body the marks of Jesus, but really he rejects fleshly boasting saying, "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁸

But what was the nature of Paul's hardships and what have they to say to us? He "worked much harder" than anyone else.

"I worked hard than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me... Been in prison more frequently... been flogged more severely... been exposed to death again and again... five times I received from Jews the forty lashes, minus one... three times I was beaten with rods... once I was stoned... three times I was shipwrecked... a day and a night in the open sea... constantly on the move... in dangers from rivers, bandits, my own countrymen... from Gentiles... dangers in the City, country, sea... from false brothers... labored, toiled, gone without sleep, hunger, thirst, hungry, cold, naked... and to be cut in many pieces, drawn in many directions with anxiety for all the churches."¹⁰

When I compare my missionary experiences with Paul's I am embarrassed into silence. What a love for Christ he had! What a love for the lost! What a love for the brethren! What a wonderful commitment to the 'Great Commission! What a wonderful commitment to his own commission.

What happened to him, is to happen to us. The path he cut, we are to walk in:

"I urge you to imitate me... follow my example as I follow the example of

*Christ... join with others in following my example you became imitators of us and of the Lord... for you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example... we worked night and day, laboring and toiling... we did this... in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow."*¹¹

In Christ, in Paul, in them, in us! Pardon me, I have no right to judge, but I will complain a little. I have been preaching the gospel for fifty years, and it never ceases to amaze me that we allow trivial matters to stand in the way of risking all for Christ. It has been said that the average life of a missionary on the field in these days does not surpass two and a half years. For the brethren I am associated with, I was told 1.9 months. We don't even approach the difficulties that forced the first missionaries, yet why does it seem so hard to stick to missionary work? Instead of refusing to endure what these pioneer missionaries endured, why don't we glory in hardships for Jesus and the gospel? What is wrong getting sick for Christ's sake? What's wrong with dwelling in harm's way to reach the lost? What's wrong with dying or being killed in action as soldiers of the cross? Why can't we "endure hardship... like a good soldier of Christ Jesus?" Paul says, "Endure hardship with us." Do these scriptures fall on deaf ears? Are we soft so as to become worse than useless? Can it be said of us "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world?"¹² Oh brothers, unless we "cast our bread upon the waters... we will not find it again"...¹³ "and he who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son."¹⁴

CHAPTER 4

THE WORK OF PAUL AND THE MISSIONARIES

"Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction"

– 2 Timothy 4:2.

At this point, as we travel with Paul through his letter it is good that we look at the kind of work they were doing what was the focal point of their efforts and what were their attendant responsibilities.

A. Evangelizing

"How can they preach (proclaim, herald) unless they are sent (as apostles, messengers)... how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news." Those announcing good news, one doing good-newsing, or broadcasting, evangelizing) Here we have three terms wrapped together that are definitive of the work of all gospel preachers, namely, preaching as missionaries (ones sent on an appointed mission) evangelizing the hearers. This means getting the gospel, or good news across to hearers. This work of evangelizing was first done by the apostles (especially appointed sent-ones) as in Acts 5:40-42. "They called the apostles in and had them flogged... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming (evangelizing) the good news that Jesus is the Christ." This kind of work was carried on by Paul and Barnabas in Antioch where they and many others taught and preached (evangelized) the word of the Lord.¹ So we see that the English word "preach" is used to translate two Greek words, one meaning "proclamation," the other "evangelizing." In both cases, putting across the gospel by public and private teaching is meant. This is where the term "world evangelism" comes from. Paul defines this work further by saying, "I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you." Namely, "the good news" which I preached (verb) "good newsed" to you. Then again he says, "By this gospel (good news) you are saved if you hold firmly to the word (logos) that I preached (good-newsed) to you."² Obviously, literal translations make for some strange English, so an appropriate synonym is chosen. In this case "preached." The two words combined are best conveyed to us by the expression "gospel preaching." Now those who do this work as their major occupation are called gospel preachers, which the New Testament calls "evangelists." This work is listed third along with apostles and prophets as essential to building up the body of Christ.

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, and some to be evangelists."³ Paul calls himself an ordained, or appointed "preacher" or "herald" of the gospel, and urges Timothy to do the "work of an evangelist," representing the first and foremost activity of his "ministry." It is no accident that Paul lists preaching the gospel ahead of his apostleship and his work of teaching.⁴

Philip, whose activities we have already given attention to bore the work description "evangelist."⁵ We should note here another use of the term "apostle or apostles." We know the major use is in reference

to the especially chosen, appointed twelve. Which apostleship Paul had.

But a further usage is seen when aside from the description given the apostles, others are called by the same name. For instance Barnabas, who was not numbered among the twelve, but is referred to in Acts 14:14, "*But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this...*" And also representatives of the churches were called "*apostles.*"⁶ This would include Titus who is mentioned in the same verse. Also Paul, refers to fellow evangelists traveling with him to Philippi "*as apostles of Christ.*"⁷ These men are all named by Luke in Acts 20:4-5,...., Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy also (who was called an evangelist. We referred to this earlier.) Tychichus and Trophimus. These brothers, including Luke, were more than Paul's traveling companions. They were themselves evangelists and therefore called "sent ones" (apostles), namely missionaries - men sent on the mission of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. "*How can they preach except they be sent (apostello in the Greek).*"

B. Planting Edifying and Organizing Churches - "*In the churches in Galatia*" (Galatians 1, 2) Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and with prayer and fasting committed them to the Lord. (Acts 14:23)

As a result of evangelizing believers individually; and as whole households and large groups became Christians, being called by Christ out of the world system of sin, darkness and Satanism, the called out ones immediately met together doing what the first church (called out assembly)⁸ did, namely, "*They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to prayer.*"⁹ This involved the evangelists or missionaries in travelling among the churches teaching, comforting, organizing, advising, and making disciples of the new converts.

"Church" is found 80 times and "Churches" 35 times for a total of 115 times in the New Testament. Samples from the book of Acts show their multiplicity following the gospel preaching of the evangelists: "*then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified and multiplied.*" "*He went through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches... So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.*"¹⁰

It is no surprise to find the "church" or "churches" mentioned more in the letters to churches written by Paul and others, than in the book of Acts. Paul writes, "all the churches of the Gentiles, all the churches of CHrist, the churches of God, the churches in the province of Asia, the churches of Macedonia, Galatia, Judea." ¹¹

Organizational work was necessary and this was carried out by apostles, elders, deacons, and evangelists. Spiritually qualified people were appointed as the churches took on an efficient and orderly system.

The first instance of this was necessitated by the need to oversee daily feeding of destitute persons. The church chose seven men who were then appointed by the apostles. Later, elders were appointed. This pattern was followed by Paul and Barnabas, who appointed elders for them in each church. Also bishops and deacons in Philippi, elders in Ephesus, and elders in every city in Crete. ¹²

C. Churches Multiplying Churches – "so the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers" – Acts 16:5. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria... and multiplied" – Acts 9:31.

In these passages I believe we can see that as churches were strengthened in faith and had relief from severe opposition, they "grew daily in number," or multiplied. Churches on fire with the gospel will multiply themselves. Churches start churches. Churches grow churches. Churches multiply churches. This is the New Testament way. I believe churches die or lay dormant if they are not working to multiply themselves. Here is the key to world evangelism, to have churches, assemblies meeting and purposing to grow, to reach out to others in the Holy Spirit of the love of Christ for the lost.

D. Families Multiplying Churches – "Concerning Aquila and Priscilla "who had recently come from Italy." Paul "stayed and worked with them..." - Acts 18:1-3. Paul "sailed for Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila... they arrived at Ephesus where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila" - Acts 18: 18-19. "When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, (Apollos) they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately" - Acts 18:26. "Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house" 1 Corinthians 16:19. "Greet Priscilla and

Aquila... greet also the church that meets at their house" - Romans 16:5. "When she (Lydia) and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her house" - Acts 16:15. "Gaius whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy" - Romans 16:23.

From the preceding passages we can see that families, households began churches in their homes or allowed churches to meet in their homes. Aquila and Priscilla are outstanding for starting churches in their dwelling places in Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. Wherever they went the church went, not just in the sense of themselves as individual members of the body of Christ, but as a church planting household. With the early church not having church buildings for a number of years, it seems that it was the common practice for Christians to meet in the homes of members. Thus we have the first church in Europe meeting in Lydia's home. As also the warm hospitality of Gaius who cared for Paul and the church in his home. Possibly the church at Cenchrea of which Phoebe was a deaconess who carried Paul's epistle to Rome.¹³ I believe that faithful families had more to do with multiplying churches than possibly any other methodological factor. The gospel was carried by them; taught by them; church growth promoted by them; places of meeting provided by them; evangelists entertained and supported by them. John mentions Gaius, saying, *"They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. It was for the sake of the name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth"* 3 John 6-8.

CHAPTER 5

MISSIONARY MOTIVATION FOR WORLD EVANGELISM

"For God so loved the world that he sent..." - John 3:16. "For Christ's love compels us..." - 2 Corinthians 5:14. "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me..."
- 1 Corinthians 15:10-11.

Although there are many reasons enumerated in scripture for getting into soul winning, I would rather deal with the mother of them all, or probably better stated, the Father of them all. Although many helps and factors are involved in the movement of an automobile, I believe all would agree that without an engine it is going nowhere. We might get out and push the vehicle along, but we would soon tire of travelling that way.

The engine is found in the foregoing scriptures and is definitely elaborated on throughout the whole New Testament. The key power is stated in the words, "*God loved, Christ's love, the fear of the Lord,*" and three times, "*grace.*"

A. God So Loved That He Gave...

No doubt about it, the love of God is the greatest of motivations for not only world evangelism, but for a total and complete response to God in all things. Although God is pictured as a God of loving-kindness, found 30 times in the Old Testament, 27 of them in the Psalms, the full revelation of what that meant was hidden. The revealing of God as Father with a love that surpasses human intellectual grasp, who is decided as being more than anything else love. "*God is agape-love,*"² was, to say the least, the most outstanding event in the history of mankind. What caused God to stoop down out of his holiness to rescue us and make us holy is the theme of ten thousand times ten thousand songs of joy and praise from the hearts and lips of repentant men and women for the past 2000 years. What He gave and the way he gave becomes the next expression.

B. Christ's Love and the Grace of God

The sending of Christ, the gift of God's love in concrete human form, "*full of grace and truth,*" with the revelation of "*God's own love*" in the dramatic and mind-boggling death on the cross is almost more than lost sinners can believe.² Yet, believe we do, and how sweet it is! The deeper and darker the sins that this light of love penetrates, the greater the response, the greater the gratitude. It becomes to us "*amazing grace.*" Paul, the "*chief of sinners*" cannot talk about what happened to him, or about his response to Christ without using the term "*grace:*"

"Saved by grace," "by the grace of God I am what I am," "the grace of God was with me."⁷ **All of Paul's epistles begin with a blessing of grace.** "Grace... to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." **They end with the same:** "the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you." "I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."³

Paul worked harder than anyone else out of his gratitude for the grace given him. "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord... I was shown mercy (he didn't get the punishment he deserved)... the grace of our Lord (giving him what he didn't deserve) was poured out on me abundantly." ...Christ Jesus came to save sinners, of whom I am the worst... I was shown mercy."⁴

Paul's letters reflect the central theme of his heart, life, work, and teaching using the words love 128 times, grace 97, and mercy 26. His emphasis in teaching and preaching was always the gospel of Christ, 80 times; the cross or crucifixion of Christ, 22; the resurrection, 57 times. He preached Christ as the embodiment of all God's love and grace to the lost.

"This Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ... but we preach Christ crucified... I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel... For we preach not ourselves but Christ... that I might preach him among the Gentiles... because he preached unto them Jesus... Christ is preached... the preaching of the cross..."⁵

It is clear what the subject of preaching in world evangelism was and what it is to be now. Preaching any other gospel is not only poor methodology, it is a cursed sin! "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel... but even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!..." **the KJV has the accurate translation saying,** "Let him be accursed!"⁶

The central theme must be "Christ and him crucified" as Paul said, "For I am determined to make known nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." **And the glory he had was only in the cross.** "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."⁷ **The gospel teaches us and all believers to understand that we are crucified with Christ and our lives are committed wholly to him. This has to be true of any evangelism that Christians or churches participate in. It must be centered on the cross and resurrection of Our Lord where the power of**

God's love and grace produces salvation in anyone that believes it.

C. "Since We Know What is the Fear of the Lord, We Try to Persuade Men"
– 2 Corinthians 5:11.

The gospel is good news to the lost because of the terrible danger they are in. It rescues them from fiery judgement that is coming on the world because of sin and unbelief, and allegiance to Satan and his kingdom of darkness. In other words, those in Satan's power are in danger of a devil's Hell! The final Judgement Day is coming on all mankind when Jesus shall say, *"Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."*⁸ The motivation of fear is valid and sane. Fear is positive in that it moves us to protect others and ourselves. God's love will save believers from the danger of perishing. Christ and the whole New Testament teaches that only believers will be saved. *"He that believeth not shall be condemned."* Understanding that the world is lost can move us to persuade men to repent, for Jesus said, *"Unless you repent you too will all perish."*⁹

Paul understood that the fear of the Lord teaches us to heed his warnings, and reverence for him teaches us to respect and obey his words. His love is the basic motivator for our faith and obedience, but fear for the welfare of a lost world is also a part of it. We must understand that the worst thing that could happen to a person in this world is losing his own soul. *"What good is it for a man to have the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"* The Bible teaches that the world is already lost. Its doom is sealed unless the gospel is heard and obeyed. The sheep was lost. The corn was lost. The prodigal son was lost.¹⁰ Jesus came to seek the lost. Those who do world evangelism New Testament style have an overriding concern for the lost. It is a rescue operation. It is a matter of saving people.¹¹

"But he that stands firm to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come, that the world through him might be saved, shall be saved from wrath through him..."

Every scripture that calls Christ or God "Savior" testifies that saving is done by them (24 times in the New Testament). World evangelism is the effort by the church to save souls... *"and others save with fear pulling them out of the fire."*¹²

CHAPTER 6

THE FINAL VICTORY OF WORLD EVANGELISM

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever" – Revelation 11:15.

The prophecies concerning the kingdom - church picture for us complete devastating victory.

*"It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever... But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth... It will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever... For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea..."*¹

How wonderful this is the whole earth to be filled, covered, forever. Forever here may not mean eternally on this earth, but it certainly means as long as this earth shall stand. The first fulfillment took place in the first century. Paul declared, *"This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul have become a servant."* Paul had finished the charge given him to take the gospel to all the Gentiles. It does not mean that he preached personally to everyone but it certainly means that the accumulative effect of his ministry had accomplished the goal. Concerning prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem which took place in 70 AD Matthew wrote, *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*² The end meaning the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. The following verses warn Christians what to do when that occurs. Mark also envisions the gospel being *"preached throughout the world."*³

Final victory in which world evangelism is a definite contributing factor is declared in Heaven and written by John around 90 AD, which declared the dominion of the Kingdom of God and Christ, over the kingdoms of the world.⁴ It also states that this victorious domination of Christ and his kingdom would continue throughout all the ages. In the Greek here literally, "the ages of the ages." Not only has the Kingdom on earth succeeded in spreading everywhere, but it says that it will continue that way, that as the populations grow and

migrate all over the earth, the kingdom will grow also, so that wherever mankind may be the gospel will be preached. Therefore each generation of the Kingdom - church has the solemn and glorious duty and mission to *"preach the gospel to every creature."*⁵ This is the will and work of the King and he has done it and will continue to do it through those who are willing in every age of the existence of man on the face of the globe. Christ's reign over all the earth is forever, perpetuated forever by servants of the gospel like Paul and his kind. Revelation begins by declaring Jesus Christ as ruler of the kings of the earth. Then it proceeds to say that whoever is victorious will reign with him having authority over the nations. *"To him, who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery, just as I have received authority from my Father."*⁶

Here Christ is quoting the second Psalm which talked of his coronation saying, *"I have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill, and God declares his joy, "You are my Son; today I have become your father." And then as a kind of coronation present he says, "Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession." This was the will of the Father and became the will of the Son, who received, "All authority in Heaven and on earth." and then gave the Great Commission, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations."*⁷ Therefore the linkage between Christ *"possessing the ends of the earth"* and the Great commission of world evangelism is made clear.

Unless these matters are approached spiritually and understood spiritually, Christians can be deflected from the unseen and much more important warfare with Satan and his hosts of wickedness, and become enmeshed in the reasoning of the flesh concerning the outward politics and goings-on of the heathen world.

Continuing, Christ's authority would be such that he would *"rule them with an iron scepter"* and *"dash them to pieces like pottery."*

It is important that we understand that Christ began exercising this authority after his ascension on high and has been doing so until this very hour. Else why are the kings and rulers of the earth warned and told to tremble and *"kiss the Son in order to avoid destruction?"*⁸ They can continue to rule, and rule well if they *"serve the Lord"* and rejoice in Him and *"take refuge in him,"* which things are to take place as He *"inherits"* and takes *"possession"* of the nations. Let us not fall into the hands of those who say that this is all in the future, yet to be

fulfilled. The battle is now, the spiritual war is on now. We are soldiers of Christ now. Don't wait until the war is over to trot out our numbers and weapons when Christ comes again. There won't be a battle field for the present earth, and heavens will be no more.

The passage in Revelations 2:26-27 though attended by some difficulties fits into the plain teachings of the New Testament. When Jesus says "*hold on to what you have*",¹⁴ he is talking about the battle, about victories over Satan, about taking back ground (souls) by the authority of Jesus, and by the authority he shares with us until he comes again. Therefore, in the next verse (26) he promises to give authority to the ones overcoming and doing his will. Present active participles.¹⁰ This authority is to be given to them as they overcome and do his will. In other words, he gives a firm scepter to Christians now. His blood has made us "*a kingdom and priests to serve his God...*" Also "*You have made them to be a kingdom and priests... and they will reign on the earth.*"¹¹

Reigning or ruling on the earth is done together with the exercising of priesthood. Peter calls Christians 1900 years ago a "*holy priesthood and a royal priesthood.*"¹² The blood of Christ in the preceding passages has "*freed us from our sins*" (past tense) it also at the same time "*made us to be a kingdom and priests.*" (also past tense). What can this mean but that Christ is sharing his throne and his priesthood with us. How? Also that this has been going on for many centuries?

It is essential for Christians to hear the call to arms, the call to authoritative prayer, to powerful intercession, that will bring down upon the earth the blessings of the reign of Christ! We can have a part in bringing about the rise and fall of earthly authorities! Changes can be brought about by prayer. Not only that, but more importantly, changes can be made "*against the rulers, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*"¹³ Whenever souls are saved by the "*gospel of the kingdom*": the power of Satan's forces is weakened, their territory invaded, their authority lessened. It is to the casting out of Satan that we are committed. "*Now is the time for judgement on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out...*" How will this be done Lord? "*But I, when I am lifted up from the earth will draw men to myself.*"¹⁴ It is the death of Christ and the preaching of the cross that does it. This is what strikes at the heart of the devil's power. Victory over sin and this Sinner! Victory over death and this killer! The gates of hell shall not prevail against the

onslaughts of the church of Christ.¹⁵ The kingdoms (principalities) of Satan and the world have been, now are, and will be dashed to pieces by the body of Christ, by the armor of his forces. Where are the opposers of the gospel? Where are the persecutors of old? Where are the critics of the Bible? The accusers of Christians? Where are you Satan? *"All your pomp has been brought down to the grave along with the noise of your harps (old time guitars); maggots are spread out beneath you and worms cover you. How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!"*¹⁶

Christ is taking away your authority and it will soon be gone. He has taken your place. He is the Morning Star!¹⁷ He is giving himself to us completely. He said to the Christian with the authority to cast out the demons and dash the rulers to pieces, *"I will also give him the Morning Star."*¹⁸ Let us hear what the Spirit says to the churches and get on with demolishing arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God and take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.¹⁹

Let us get on with destroying the evil power that Satan and his angels have over the world through deceit and manipulation. *"You dear children are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."*²⁰

*"We give thanks to you, Lord God almighty who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. The nations were angry..."*²¹ Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his anointed one."²² Can we answer the question? Why all this rage against God and his Anointed One? Why did they join together to crucify Christ? The record answers. *"For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him."*²³ They were jealous and hatred? Does not the enormous red dragon represent Satan in Revelation 12? Is he not filled with hate against *"the child who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter?"* He tries to devour the child through that vicious evil man Herod the Great at Bethlehem. This reciprocates a war in the heavenly realms of authority and the Dragon and his angels lose. As a result a loud voice in heaven says, *"Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ."*²⁴ The devil is filled with fury because his time is short. He ini-

tiates a war against the church, a terrible persecution by the two beasts of Satan a political one and a religious one.

It is Satan behind all the persecutions of the book of Acts by Jewish and Roman authorities, all the bloody martyrdoms that lasted 250 years. *"Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring, those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus."*²⁵

In spite of this, the gospel was preached everywhere. *"Then I saw another angel flying in mid-air and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth to every nation, tribe, language, and people."*²⁶

Also, all the beasts turned loose by the city of Sin, Babylon the Great, that place where Satan lives, and from where he sallies forth to try to frustrate the Church against whom the very gates of Hell cannot conquer. The harvest must be reaped and the Lord of the harvest is pictured, thusly.

*"I looked and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one "like a Son of man with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on a cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. So he that was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested."*²⁷

What a wonderful picture of the Lord of the harvest, harvesting the earth. "The time to reap has come." This is the watchword of world evangelism. This is the challenge to the whole church, to every Christian. We have sure victory ahead. The great vision goes on. *"Great and marvelous are your deeds... King of the ages... for you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."*²⁸

In the final chapter of Revelation the river of life is flowing out from the throne of God and the Lamb, the tree of life is there and its leaves are *"for the healing of the nations"* The gospel of the Lamb triumphs. The slaves of God and the Lamb see his face. They are at home. The "unfinished task" is finished, and they shall dwell in the light and they reign for ever and ever.²⁹

I can think of no more fitting ending for this writing than the last verses of Paul, that great world evangelist and father of all missions and missionaries, given at the end of the letter to the churches of Christ in Rome. *"Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the*

proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him - to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen. " Rom. 16:25-27

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PART 2

What the New Testament Says

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PART 3

Acts of World Evangelism

INTRODUCTION: Massive Explosion of Light

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3. John 2:17
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9. Romans 16:3-15
10. Romans 2:24, 3:9, 10:11-13; Joel 2:32, 3:29-30
11. Joel 10:8, 17, 9-10, 11, 13, 14-15
12. Isaiah 52:7; Matthew 9:37
13. Romans 10:18

CHAPTER 2

1. A linguistic key to the Greek New Testament. Rienecker, p. 96.
2. Romans 15:8-16
3. Revelations 5:9-10
4. Romans 15:23, 24

CHAPTER 3

1. 1 Corinthians 4:9-13; Romans 12:16
2. 1 Corinthians 9:3-15
3. Ibid. 9:11-19
4. Thayer, ouai woe, "a divine penalty threatens me," p. 461.
5. 1 Corinthians 9:19-27
6. Acts 19:9, 23-41; 1 Corinthians 15:32
7. 2 Corinthians 1:10
8. Galatians 6:17; 14
9. 2 Corinthians 11:23; 1 Corinthians 15:10
10. 2 Corinthians 11:22-28; 15:10; "merima" for "the pressure of concern," Thayer, p. 400.
11. 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 9
12. 2 Timothy 2:3, 4:10
13. Ecclesiastes 11:1
14. Proverbs 10:5

CHAPTER 4

1. Acts 5:42
2. Ibid. 15:35
3. 1 Corinthians 15:1
4. Evagellion
5. Evagalizo, Thayer, p. 256
6. 1 Corinthians 15:2
7. Ephesians 4:11
8. 2 Timothy 1:11; 2:7
9. Acts 8:4-40; 21:8; 14:14
10. 2 Corinthians 8:23 apostoloi, Thayer, p. 68
11. 1 Thessalonians 2:7
12. Ekelesia - from elc meaning out of and kaleo meaning to call forth. Green, p. 56.
13. Acts 2:42
14. Acts 9:31, (KJV), 15:41; 16:5
15. Romans 16:4, 16; 1 Corinthians 11:16, 16:19; 2 Corinthians 8:1; Galatians 1:2, 22; Acts 6:2-6; 11:30; 14:26; Philippians 1:1
16. Philippians 1:1
17. Acts 20:17
18. Titus 1:5
19. Romans 16:1-2

CHAPTER 5

1. Ephesians 3:19; 1 John 4:16.
2. John 1:14, Romans 5:8
3. Ephesians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Romans 1:7; 16:20; 1 Thessalonians 3:17-18
4. 1 Timothy 1:12-16
5. Acts 17:3; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 2:12; 4:5; Galatians 1:16; Acts 17:18; Philippians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 1:18
6. Galatians 1:8-9
7. 1 Corinthians 2:2; Galatians 6:14
8. Matthew 25:41
9. Mark 16:16; Luke 13:5
10. Mark 8:36; Luke 15:4-32
11. Luke 19:10
12. Matthew 24:13-14; John 3:17; Romans 5:9; Jude 23

CHAPTER 6

1. Daniel 2:44; 2:35; Ezekiel 37:26; Habakkuk 2:14
2. Matthew 24:14
3. Mark 14:9
4. Revelation 16:15
5. Mark 16:15
6. Revelation 1:5; 2:26-27
7. Matthew 28:18-19
8. Psalm 2:10-12
9. Revelation 2:2:25
10. "Nikon" and "Feron" the one overcoming, and doing Rienecker 472
11. Revelation 1:6; 5:10
12. 1 Peter 2:5
13. 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Ephesians 6:12
14. John 12:31-32
15. Matthew 16:16-18
16. Isaiah 14:11-12
17. Revelation 22:16
18. Ibid. 2:27-28
19. 2 Corinthians 10:5-6
20. 1 John 4:4
21. Revelation 11:17-18
22. Psalm 2:1-2
23. Matthew 27:18
24. Revelation 12:10
25. Ibid. 12-17
26. Ibid. 14:6
27. Ibid. 14:14-16
28. Ibid. 15:3-4
29. Ibid 22:1-5
30. Romans 16:25-27