

CrossRoads Baptist Church  
December 6, 2006 6:30 pm  
Acts 1:8  
Neighbor Series #8

## “Loving My Neighbor...Across the World”

As we unpack that verse tonight, I want to look at....

### I. The person of missions.

In Genesis 1:1, the Bible begins with God or man? So then, then the Bible is all about God.

The purpose statement of the Bible:

God is the Center of all things and He desires and has designed for all the people of the world to know Him through Jesus Christ and worship Him.

The Bible is about God and His purpose, not about us.

“...all things were created by Him and for Him.”

Colossians 1:16

“The Bible is a God book, not a me book.”

Look at Genesis 12: 1-3. Who is that passage is going to bless Abram, bless the nations? Over and over it is “I.”

In I Kings 8: 60 the purpose of God’s working among his people is revealed: “...so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God and that there is no other.”

Oswald Chambers in “My Utmost for His Highest” says, “the key to the missionary’s work is the authority of Jesus Christ, not the needs of the lost. We are inclined to look on our Lord as one who assists us in our endeavors for God. Yet our Lord places Himself as the absolute sovereign and supreme Lord over His disciples. He does not say that the lost will never be saved if we don’t go—He simply says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations ... .” He says, “Go on the basis of the revealed truth of My sovereignty, teaching and preaching out of your living experience of Me.”

If I want to know the universal sovereignty of Christ, I must know Him myself. I must take time to worship the One whose name I bear. Jesus says, “Come to Me ...”—that is the place to meet Jesus—“all you who labor and are heavy laden ...” (Matthew 11:28)—and how many missionaries are! We completely dismiss these wonderful words of the universal Sovereign of the world, but they are the words of Jesus to His disciples meant for here and now.

“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the Church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever....” John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*

Henry Blackaby spoke at the Baptist Convention of New England’s Nov. 9-10, 2006. He led the convention through a scriptural interpretation of Act 1:8, including the need for revival in the church. “Acts 1:8 is an announcement by God telling us what He was going to do, not a mandate for us to do something,” Blackaby declared. “Our challenge is to be obedient in joining Him when He calls.”

### II. The purpose of missions.

Psalm 67: 1-2 “God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, That your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations.

Psalm 46:10 Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.

Isaiah 66:18 For I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see My glory.”

Haggai 2:7 And I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of the Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory, says the Lord of Hosts.

The story of Jonah serves as perhaps the best OT example of God’s compassionate heart

for the people of the world and how He expects to use His people to fulfill that purpose.

Jonah 4:11 “Should I not be concerned about that great city?”

#### Look at the plan of God in Jesus

“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.’” Luke 2:10

International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin spoke during the missions week October 24-26, 2006 at New Orleans Seminary. He said in assuring the audience that missions was no easy task:

“God is not primarily concerned about your safety and your comfort and your security,” Rankin said. “God’s primary concern is His glory among the nations.”

“We are living in a time of probably the greatest mission advance in history, but our news is just filled with chaos, disaster, warfare, violence [and] political upheaval,” he said. “It’s a time when God is moving as never before.”

Since the turn of the new century, Rankin said, IMB missionaries have reported an average of more than 1,000 new believers per day who are being saved and baptized. This year, IMB missionaries already have baptized nearly a half-million new believers, he said, and more than 100 unreached people groups have been engaged with the Gospel for the first time.

During the last decade, opposition to the Gospel also has become more fierce, with Rankin noting that in the past four years alone, eight IMB missionaries have died in violent attacks. Three were murdered in a hospital in Yemen, a church planter in the Philippines died during a terrorist bombing and more recently, four workers were killed in Iraq.

### **III. The plan of missions.**

1. The target is people groups.

The Old Perspective of missions focused on nations that had boundaries and political systems. The new perspective of missions is focusing on people groups that have no boundaries.

People groups are defined as a homogeneous group of individuals, families and clans sharing a common language and sense of ethnic identity.

This is the word for “nations” in Matthew 28: 18-20

Genesis 10 gives a listing of 70 groups that descended from Noah.

Matthew 24: 14 “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then shall the end will come.”

Does this mean that every person will just hear the name of Jesus? NO.  
Does this mean that every person will necessarily even hear the gospel?  
Does this mean that every people group will hear the gospel?

Romans 16: 25-26

Revelation 5:9-10

Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

If we are God-focused, then we will be globally-focused because the heart of God beats for the people of the world.”

Tom Eliff shared a list of staggering statistics. Six and a half billion people are living today, with the world’s population growing by 100 million per year. Of those 6.5 billion, 1.7 billion people have no access to the Gospel, he said. Another 2 billion have only limited access to the Gospel, while more than half the world’s people have little or no access to the Gospel.

Or you can give the reason for missions like this: According to the rigorous statistical efforts of the [Joshua Project](#), there are 15,988 distinct ethno-linguistic peoples in the world. Of these, they count 6,572 as unreached, that is, fewer than two percent of them are Christians. 2.6 billion people live in those unreached people groups. Just to give you a flavor: Of the 100 largest unreached people groups, 44 are in India, 8 are in China, and 7 are in Indonesia and Pakistan. The three largest are the Japanese in Japan, the Bengali in Bangladesh, and the Shaikh in India. Of these 100 largest unreached peoples, 43 are Muslim, 36 are Hindu, and 9 are Buddhist. 22 of

them have populations over 20 million. In other words, there is a great work to be done in obedience to Jesus. And Jesus has all authority to get it done.

Our response

1. Pray for God to permit you to go overseas before you die.
2. pray for God to raise up someone in your family to be a vocational missionary.
3. Pray for God to raise up someone in our church family to be a vocational missionary.
4. Pray for God to lay on your heart a people group of the world. Get a world map and pray over it until God burdens your heart with a place.
5. Pray specifically for that group and find out as much as possible about mission work there. Communicate with the missionaries. Someone say once if you really want to get the “spirit” of a nation then listen to its music. Buy music from that country and play it while you pray.
6. Give sacrificially.

Oswald Chambers said “to go simply means to live.”

“The light that shines the farthest shines brightest at home.” Frances Gerald Ensley

“You can’t shoot a \_\_\_\_\_ out of a \_\_\_\_\_.”