

THE GREAT COMMISSION & WILLIAM CAREY: A PASSIONATE GLOBAL VISION

August 16, 2009

FELLOWSHIP TIME 10 Minutes

Spend the first ten minutes of your time together speaking with one-another, greeting any guests, and enjoying the refreshments.

OPENING PRAYER

Open the meeting in prayer by calling upon someone to pray, by asking, “*Does anyone feel led to lead us in prayer?*” or by praying yourself.

ICEBREAKER 10 Minutes

To get the discussion started, ask the following “*Icebreaker*” question:

Has anyone been on a mission trip overseas...in the United States...worked in the Blessing Baskets Ministry...worked in the clean-up of the ice storm this past winter...or any other ministry experience that would be considered a missions project? Describe your experience and share how this ministry impacted your life. Discuss.

SCRIPTURE READING

Ask a volunteer to read **Matthew 28:16-20** aloud to the group.

Matthew 28:16-20: “*Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’*”

INTRODUCTION

This passage of Scripture is often called the “*Great Commission*.” We believe it is “*great*” because of the One who gave it—Jesus Christ. It is also “*great*” because of its scope—we are to

go into all nations and to every person. The task of taking the “good news” of the Gospel has been God's plan since the Garden of Eden (*Genesis 3:15*). From the “all families of the earth” of the Abrahamic Covenant (*Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:8*) to the “all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues...” of the book of the Revelation (*Revelation 5:9*)—we are given a missionary mandate to take the Gospel to all nations.

WILLIAM CAREY: A PASSIONATE GLOBAL VISION



5 Minutes

William Carey (1761-1834) is certainly one of the greatest missionaries since the time of the Apostles. He has been affectionately called the “father of the modern missions movement.” Cary was born in 1761 in England and left his native land in 1793 to spend the next 41 years of his life in preaching the Gospel to the continent of India.

The Great Commission (*Matthew 28:19,20*), became the passion of Carey’s life. Later in life, he would write: “*I care not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls for Christ. While I was asleep I dreamed of these things, and when I awoke the first thing I thought of was this great work. All my desire was for the conversion of the heathen, and all my hope was in God.*” In a journal entry dated March 29, 1794, Carey wrote: “*O what is there in all this world worth living for but the presence and service of God—I feel a burning desire that all the world may know this God and serve Him.*”

In his book *A Bunch of Everlastings*, Frank W. Boreham writes the following about William Carey: “*There he sits...the Bible spread out before him, and a homemade map of the world on the wall! In the Bible he saw the King in His beauty; on the map he caught glimpses of the far horizons. To him the two were inseparable; and, moved by the vision of the Lord which he caught in the one, and by the vision of the limitless landscape which he caught in the other, he left his shop and made history.*” William Carey had a passion for souls! To the person with a passion for souls, no trip is too far, no expense too great, no suffering too intense, and no sacrifice too great if it means someone's salvation.

Ask the following questions:

What are you passionate about? Sports...your family...your job...a hobby (fishing, hunting, boating, etc.)...a vehicle? (car or motorcycle) Why are you passionate about this particular thing? How did you develop a passion for this particular thing? Discuss. How do you think that you can develop a passion for the souls of men and missions? Discuss.

- Read the Scriptures.
- Pray and ask God to ignite a passion in your heart for the lost.
- Read the biographies of great missionaries.
- Correspond with missionaries presently serving on the field.
- Talk to members of our church who have been on a mission’s trip.
- Talk to our mission’s pastors.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TEXT



15 Minutes

I. ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HE HAS ALL POWER (*Matthew 28:16-18*)

The “*eleven disciples*” minus Judas (*Acts 1:25*) traveled north from Jerusalem to Galilee “...to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go” (*Matthew 28:16*). Although the Scriptures do not record when Jesus told them to meet Him on this unidentified mountain, the Scriptures do record Jesus telling the disciples to meet Him in Galilee (*Matthew 26:32; 28:7,10*).

- ◆ Worship Him (*Matthew 28:17*).

Suddenly, the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the disciples. Upon seeing Jesus, some of the disciples fell on their faces to worship the resurrected and glorified Messiah. Worship is always the appropriate response to Jesus!

On his deathbed, William Carey weakly whispered to Scottish missionary Alexander Duff: “*When I am gone, say nothing about Dr. Carey. Speak only of Carey's Savior.*” Until his dying day, Carey worshipped the Savior!

- ◆ Hear Him (*Matthew 28:18*).

Jesus then told His disciples, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*” (*Matthew 28:18*). The authority of all earthly governments as well as the authority of heaven has been given by the God the Father to Jesus Christ! Because this sovereign authority is absolute and universal, we are under a divine mandate to “*hear Him*” and then obey Him!

II. OBEY HIS AUTHORITATIVE PLAN (*Matthew 28:19,20*)

The words of Matthew chapter 28 are the last record recorded words of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel. Christ intended these to be “*lasting*” words and the churches’ marching orders until He returns. However, in Carey’s day in England, there was no passion among the pastors to reach the lost of other lands. In 1789, Carey asked the respected pastor John Ryland Sr. if Jesus’ command to teach all nations obligated all ministers to the end of time. Ryland snapped back at him, “*Sit down, young man...when God wants to convert the world, He can do it without your help or mine.*”

This rebuke did **not** deter Carey or his passion for souls. Later Carey would write: “*I question whether all are justified in staying here [in England], while so many are perishing without means of grace in other lands.*” Carey believed that the Great Commission was binding upon all people for all time!

The Great Commission begins with the word “*Therefore,*” which links the command to “*go and make disciples*” with the “*all authority*” that Christ possesses (*Matthew 28:19*). Jesus was literally saying, “*Because I am sovereign Lord of the universe, I have both the authority to command you to be my witnesses and the power to enable you to obey that command.*” We are

to obey the command to “*go and make disciples*” with the assurance that all the authority of heaven and earth is behind us.

- ◆ Make disciples by going (*Matthew 28:19*).

The main verb of this passage is not “*go*” but “*make disciples*.” The text literally says, “*as you are going, make disciples of all nations*.” The verb “*make disciples*” means that we are to lead others to become followers of Christ in salvation, doctrine, and manner of life. The words “*go*,” “*baptize*,” and “*teach*” are actually present participle verbs that tell us what we are to be doing as we “*make disciples*.” From the Greek word translated into English as “*nations*” we derive the word “*ethnic*.” The “*Great Commission*” is universal—we are to preach the Gospel to every “*ethnic*” group which can only be accomplished by “*going*” into all the world.

- ◆ Make disciples by baptizing (*Matthew 28:19*).

The second participle tells us that we are to baptize those who trust Christ as their personal Savior. Baptism is an act of identification with Christ (*Romans 6:3-5*) and a means of publicly confessing Him as our Savior (*Matthew 10:32,33*).

- ◆ Make disciples by teaching (*Matthew 28:20*).

The third participle tells us that we are to make disciples by “*teaching*.” “*Teaching*” is the life-long process of discipleship. As we teach disciples, the question arises, “*What are we to be teaching them?*” In Jesus’ own words, we are to teach them to “*...obey everything whatsoever I have commanded you*” (*Matthew 28: 20*).

III. TRUST HIS AMAZING PROMISE (*Matthew 28:20*)

There are more than six billion people alive on our planet at the present time. If you led 1,000 people to Christ each day and the population never changed, it would take you more than 16,438 years to win the world to Christ. But if you won one person per year to Christ and discipled that person so that they could reproduce themselves, and everyone led to Christ did the same thing—in a little over twenty-eight years the world would be won to Christ! “*All nations*” is our goal and we will reach that goal by winning and discipling people one at a time.

When concluding the Great Commission, Christ promised His abiding presence until the end of the age. In 1801, Carey asked his friend John Williams, “*Pray for us that we may be faithful unto the end*.” And William Carey was faithful until the end because of Christ’s “*amazing promise*” to be with the believer constantly (“*always*”) and continuously (“*unto the end of the age*”) who obeys the Great Commission by taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth!

CONCLUSION

The *Great Commission* does not say, “*Come and hear*” but “*Go and tell!*” Lost people cannot find the Lord for the same reason that a criminal cannot find a policeman—they aren’t looking for Him! We cannot wait for lost people to come to us—we must go to them!

In summary, the *Great Commission* is more than a single command to evangelize the world. It is a step-by-step process by which we win the unsaved and disciple them so that they are able to reproduce themselves in the lives of others (*II Timothy 2:2*). Through this God ordained process,

the world will be reached for Christ. When commenting on the Great Commission, the late Dr. Adrian Rogers wrote: “*We are all to bring all men by all means to Jesus by any cost.*”

Ask the following question:

As you reflect upon the Great Commission (*Matthew 25:19,20*), what can you and your family personally do to obey this command? Discuss.

- Develop relationships with the lost at work, in your neighborhood, etc. for the purpose of introducing them to Jesus Christ.
- Go on a short-term mission trip.
- Get involved in our church’s local mission projects.
- Visit with our mission’s pastors for ideas.
- Correspond with missionaries, send them letters or emails of encouragement, send them care packages, etc.
- Pray specifically for missionaries, people groups, mission fields, and for yourself that God will help you to become a Great Commission Christian.
- Read books on missions.
- Research people groups on the Internet.

BECOMING A WORLD CHANGER



10 Minutes

William Carey is known for changing the world by taking the Gospel of Christ to India. When Carey became a Christian he felt compelled to share that news with others. His journey towards Christ started when a coworker shared that same good news with him. While not everyone is called to go across the globe to spread the Gospel, all believers are called to fulfill the Great Commission. You can begin your Great Commission journey right here locally in Northwest Arkansas!

Did you know that just in Washington and Benton counties we have 66 different nationalities including: Iranian, Iraqi, Swedish, Bosnian, Bangladeshi, Turkish, Marshallese, Mexican, and El Salvadorian? You can be a part of reaching the nations by driving just minutes from your own home. Currently we are reaching into our communities to minister to many of these people groups through a ministry known as IMPACT (Indigenous Mobile Platform Announcing Christ’s Truth). This ministry fulfills the Great Commission weekly by simply building relationships through conversations, playing games, sharing snacks, and teaching lessons.

An IMPACT club can meet on any day of the week. Currently there are sites running on every day except for Friday. The typical club is at 6 pm. Volunteers can serve in registration, playing games, teaching lessons, counseling, or serving snacks. By giving just over an hour a week you can have an impact on an entire family in a Multihousing community.

However IMPACT is more than just a straightforward family ministry. We also have mobile food and clothing distribution, life skills clinics, mentoring programs, tutoring, and much more. If you have a skill, IMPACT ministry can find ways to use it for the furthering of the Gospel in

Northwest Arkansas! Remember - we cannot wait for the lost to come to First Baptist Church Springdale or the Church at Pinnacle Hills in Rogers. We must go to them. IMPACT is a ministry that will allow you to use the skills that God has blessed you with to fulfill your Great Commission calling.

Currently IMPACT is running in 9 sites in our two counties. This is just a small percentage of the vast number of multihousing communities that are available to ministry. We have openings in several more areas. The fields are ripe for harvest. God is calling the workers right now. You can be a part of living the Great Commission in Northwest Arkansas by working through IMPACT ministry. Whatever gift you have been given it can be used for the glory of God and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Call our mission office for more information about how you can be used in this exciting ministry or visit <http://springdale.reachforlife.tv/missions/nwa/impact-ministry>.

Ask the following questions:

At the age of 72, William Carey said, “Few people know what may be done till they try and persevere in what they undertake.” Share with the group something in your life that you thought that you could never do but later learned that you could. How difficult was it to do this particular thing the first time? What convinced you to finally do it? Do you enjoy this activity now? Discuss.

What principles that you used to learn new behaviors can you apply to learning to be a Great Commission Christian this week? Discuss.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Matthew 28:19,20: *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Receive prayer requests and then close the meeting in prayer.

THE GREAT COMMISSION & WILLIAM CAREY: A PASSIONATE GLOBAL VISION

MARKED FOR DEATH, MESSENGERS OF LIFE: ADONIRAM & ANN JUDSON

August 23, 2009

FELLOWSHIP TIME 10 Minutes

Spend the first ten minutes of your time together speaking with one-another, greeting any guests, and enjoying the refreshments.

OPENING PRAYER

Open the meeting in prayer by calling upon someone to pray, by asking, “*Does anyone feel led to lead us in prayer?*” or by praying yourself.

ICEBREAKER 10 Minutes

To get the discussion started, ask the following “*Icebreaker*” question:
During the times in life when you have struggled, what was it specifically that strengthened you? Encouraged you? Discuss.

INTRODUCTION

Adoniram Judson (1788-1850) was America's first foreign missionary and thought by many to be its greatest. He left for the mission field in India as a Congregationalist and during the voyage he carefully studied the New Testament and came to believe that the Baptist Church was the true New Testament church. Arriving in India in 1812, Judson was baptized into the Baptist church by an associate of William Carey. One-year later, Judson went to Burma where he would labor for 37 years, bury two wives and five children, spend 21 months in prison where he was beaten and starved, and where his body would be ravaged by disease again and again. He died at the age of 62 and because he was buried at sea, no earthly grave marks his life. However, there are multiplied tens of thousands of believers in heaven whose lives are “*marked*” forever because of the sacrificial living of this tremendous man of God!

SCRIPTURE READING

Ask a volunteer to read Romans 8:28 aloud to the group.

Romans 8:28: “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*” (KJV).

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TEXT



15 Minutes

Dr. Danny Aiken states that there are four lessons in this Scripture text, each marvelously lived out by Adoniram and Ann Judson.

I. WE HAVE HIS PROVIDENCE (*Romans 8:28-32*)

Romans 8:28 is a favorite verse of Scripture for many believers: “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*” (*KJV*). In this verse, the Apostle Paul affirmed that there are no “*accidents*” in the life of a child of God. All believers are given a: certain promise (“*we know*”); comprehensive promise (“*that all things*”); comforting promise (“*work together for good*”); chosen promise (“*for the good of those who love God*”); and clear promise (“*who have been called according to his purpose*”).

We can marvelously see God’s promise to believers worked out in the lives of Adoniram and Ann Judson:

◆ Adoniram’s conversion.

Adoniram Judson, the son of a Congregational Church pastor, entered college at the age of 16 as a lost man. He soon became friends with James Eames, a brilliant unbeliever who was a confirmed Deist and who persuaded Judson to abandon the faith of his father and mother.

After graduating from Providence College (*today it is named Brown University*), Judson traveled in search of adventure. One night, while lodging at a country inn, a man was dying in the room adjacent to his. The man moaned and groaned all night long which kept Judson awake. All night long his thoughts troubled him: “*Was this dying man prepared to die? Where would this man spend eternity? Was he a Christian?*”

The next morning as Judson was leaving the inn, he was told that the man in the adjacent room had died and when he asked the name of the man, the innkeeper replied, “*He was a brilliant young person from Providence College. Eames was his name.*” Jacob Eames, the man who had destroyed Judson’s faith, was dead. When recounting the experience, Judson said that he came under deep conviction concerning his own soul and the word “*lost*” reverberated over and over again in his mind.

Adoniram immediately ended his traveling, returned home, and entered Andover Theological Institution (*Seminary*) in Andover, Massachusetts. On December 2, 1808, Adoniram Judson repented of his sins and trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior.

God providentially used the death of the man who led Judson away from the Christian faith to bring him to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Only God could do that!

◆ Andover Missionary Society.

During his years at Andover, Adoniram and six other students formed the *Andover Missionary Society* and met at night beneath a haystack in a field near the seminary where they prayed that God would save the heathen. These men also dedicated their lives to serving the Lord on the foreign mission field. It was the divine providence of God that brought these like-minded men together in the same seminary at the same time. Four of these six men went to India as missionaries with Judson.

◆ Ann Judson.

The providence of God also led Judson to choose the right companion. Adoniram met and fell in love with Ann (*Nancy*) Hasseltine. Adoniram wrote a letter to Ann's father asking for her hand in marriage. A portion of the letter said: "*I have now to ask whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next spring, to see her no more in this world? Whether you can consent to her departure to a heathen land, and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of a missionary life? Whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean; to the fatal influence of the Southern climate of India; to every kind of want and distress; to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps a violent death?*" Only the providence of God would move the heart of a father to sacrifice his daughter upon the altar of missionary service. Ann's father did consent to allow his daughter to marry Adoniram Judson and they were married on February 5, 1812.

There were no accidents in the life of the Judson's. God providentially guided them every step of the way. And there are no accidents in our lives either!

Ask the following questions:

As you reflect back upon your life, can you now see the providential hand of God moving? In what ways? Discuss.

II. WE HAVE HIS PRAYERS (*Romans 8:33,34*)

Believers are doubly blessed in that we have the Holy Spirit interceding to the Father on our behalf (*Romans 8:26,27*) and we also have the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, who is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, interceding on our behalf (*Romans 8:34*). The Holy Spirit intercedes to God on our behalf when we are at a loss as to know how to pray (*Romans 8:26,27*) and Jesus intercedes on our behalf when we sin (*I John 2:1; Luke 22:32*).

In 1823, the king of Burma invited the Judson's to live in Ava, the capital city of the country of Burma. It wasn't long until the Anglo-Burmese War of 1824-25 (*A war between England and Burma*) broke out and all white foreigners residing in Ava were looked upon as possible spies.

Judson was arrested on June 8, 1824 and thrown into the Oung-pen-la Prison in Ava, commonly called "*the death prison*." The dimensions of each cell were 40 x 30 feet x 5 feet high, with no window for ventilation. In this cell were confined up to 100 people of both sexes and all

nationalities, nearly everyone naked, and starved almost to death. The prison was never washed or swept. The overwhelming heat, indescribable stench, and cruel torture was more than most people could bear. Judson lay in that cell 24 hours a day—7 days a week with five pairs of iron fetters on his legs and ankles. To prevent prisoners from escaping during the nighttime hours, a bamboo pole was placed between the prisoner's legs and drawn up by means of a pulley to a height which allowed only the prisoner's shoulders to rest on the floor of the cell. Judson endured 19 months in this prison, nearly dying on several occasions. Of the British POW's, only Judson would survive.

At the time of his arrest, Judson was carrying the only copy of the manuscript of his translation of the Bible into the Burmese language. He hid the manuscript in a pillow and the government officials did **not** find it throughout the almost two years of imprisonment. Finally, Judson was released from prison in December 1825 and spent two more months under house arrest.

Without his wife Ann's constant care, and provision of food and medicine, Adoniram would have died in that Burmese prison. However, on October 24, 1826, at the age of 36, Ann Judson died as a result of the personal hardship she suffered during the war, her body greatly weakened by smallpox and spotted fever.

After his release from prison, Judson continued his missionary work of planting churches in Burma and his translation work. On April 24, 1827, a few months after the death of his beloved wife, Adoniram's infant daughter Maria, who was born during his imprisonment, died of smallpox at the age of 27 months.

The prayers of God's people but perhaps even more so, the prayers of the Savior sustained Adoniram Judson during the darkest hours of his life.

Ask the following questions:

How has your prayer life sustained you through the trials of life? How have the prayers of fellow believers encouraged you? When you heard that the Holy Spirit and Jesus are both praying for you, what is your initial reaction? Discuss.

III. WE HAVE HIS POWER (*Romans 8:35,37*)

For a period of months after Ann and Maria's deaths, Adoniram was plunged into despair and depression. He fled the city to live as a hermit in the jungle where he would question himself, his calling, and even his faith. He demanded that all his letters to America be destroyed, he renounced the D.D. degree that Brown University had bestowed upon him, gave all his private wealth to the Baptist Mission Board, and requested a cut in his salary.

Judson dug a grave for himself and sat beside it staring into it for days. On October 24, 1829, the third anniversary of Ann's death, he would write in his journal, "*God is to me the Great Unknown. I believe in him, but I find him not.*"

But God's love did **not** fail him. He did emerge from the “*valley of the shadow of death*” and would later write, “*There is a love that never fails. If I had not felt certain that every additional file was ordered by infinite love and mercy, I could not have survived my accumulated sufferings.*”

In Romans chapter 8, the Apostle Paul, who from personal experience knew that life is filled with untold suffering (*II Corinthians 11:23-33*), assured believers that we will face many trials in this life but they cannot conquer the child of God. In order to express the beautiful meaning of the Greek text, we would like to share with you a paraphrase of this passage:

Romans 8:35,37: “*Is there anything that I can do to cause Christ to stop loving me? If I am crushed or emotionally distressed by the circumstances of life—if my enemies persecute me—if I cannot afford to buy enough food to eat and I am gradually starving to death—if I am wearing an Armani suit or just my birthday suit—if I face many ‘dangers, toils, and snares’—or if the executioner separates my head from my body—not a single one of these things can steal from me my eternal salvation...³⁷ In all of these things that I have just mentioned, in everything that life can throw at me—I am certain that I will overwhelmingly conquer them and not just merely limp into heaven but I will make a grand and glorious entrance into heaven!*”

In everything that life can throw at us “*...we are more than conquerors through him who loved us*” (*Romans 8:37*). Adoniram Judson needed to know that and so do we!

Ask the following questions:

This week, have you felt more like a conqueror or the conquered? Why have you felt that way? How can this Connection Group best pray for you? Discuss.

IV. WE HAVE HIS PROMISE (*Romans 8:38,39*)

As we read the final verses of Romans chapter 8, once again we would like to share a literal translation from the Greek text:

Romans 8:38,39: “*For I am absolutely convinced that there is nothing in God's created universe that can separate me from the love of God given to me by the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter how fearful life or death may seem to be, they have absolutely no power over my soul. Neither the holy angels nor demons; or the things going on in my life at this present moment or the things that will occur to me between now and the day of my death can separate me from Christ. If I am opposed by men in high places of power, or even angels who exhibit miraculous power—³⁹ there is nothing in the heights of the heavens above me or in hell beneath me that can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus! And in case I forgot to list something that someone might think will cancel my eternal life, let me just put your fears to rest by saying that there is absolutely, positively,*

nothing in God's created universe that can separate me from God's love bestowed upon me through the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing!!!"

Adoniram and Ann Judson knew the meaning of this passage of Scripture because they faced the full force of the fury of hell and the opposition of man. They discovered what every child of God will eventually discover, that there is nothing in this universe that can separate the child of God, from the love of God, found in Christ Jesus our Lord!

In 1849, after 37 years, the difficulty of life on the mission field had taken a tremendous toll upon Adoniram's body and he found himself fighting for his life. Hoping that a sea voyage would help him regain his health, he left his wife and children at home and set out to sea. On April 12, 1850, Adoniram Judson departed this life and was buried that evening at sea.

When Judson died in 1850, there were more than 7,000 Burmese worshipping Jesus Christ every week in 63 churches under the oversight of 163 missionaries. By 1890, there were 485 Baptist churches in Burma with 25,607 baptized members. Today, the Myanmar Baptist Convention has more than 600,000 members in 3,513 churches.

Ask the following questions:

Having briefly studied the lives of Adoniram and Ann Judson, what is it about their lives that has impacted you the most and why? Discuss.

CONCLUSION

It is interesting to note that it was at the time of Adoniram's most crushing trials, that God opened the hearts of the Burmese people to the Gospel. It seemed that everyone in Burma wanted to learn about the "new Gospel." Judson wrote: "*[We have distributed] nearly 10,000 tracts, giving to none but those who ask. I presume that there have been 6,000 applications at the house. Some come two or three months' journey, from the borders of Siam and China—'Sir, we hear that there is an eternal hell. We are afraid of it. Do give us a writing that will tell us how to escape it.'*"

Dr. George Smith called Adoniram Judson, "*The greatest of all the American missionaries...surpassed by no missionary since the Apostle Paul.*"

Ask the following questions:

Have you ever seen God bring something good out of a bad situation? (Genesis 50:20) What was the situation and what was the result? Discuss.

BECOMING A WORLD CHANGER



10 Minutes

Adoniram Judson left the comforts of home, not knowing what he would face but trusting God for all things. In the end, his life “left a mark” on thousands of Burmese people.

Our church offers you the same opportunities to “leave a mark” on the lives of others through short term missionary journeys. These 10-14 day journeys across America and the world will not only leave a mark on others, it will rock your world! A short term missionary journey is not about 10-14 days, it is about impacting you and others for eternity.

Ask: Have you ever thought about participating in a short term missionary journey? Who has already gone on a missionary journey? Ask someone to share what impact that missionary journey had on their life and others.

Doug Sarver, our church’s Minister of Global Missions says, “If you have ever thought about going on a short term missionary journey, God is probably calling you... and you can not follow that call without a passport!” Doug believes every Christ follower must own a passport!

What are the steps to participating in a short term missionary journey with my church?

1. Look for opportunities. Our church goes on 10-14 missionary journeys per year. These are always promoted in the Sunday bulletin and web site. You can always contact the Global Missions Office to inquire about dates and locations.

For instance, take a look at some of the upcoming opportunities for you:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| October 15-19, 2009 | San Diego, CA |
| October 30-November 7, 2009 | Haiti |
| January 8-16, 2010 | Haiti |
| March 6-13, 2010 | Tampa, FL |
| March 16-27, 2010 | Africa |
| April 14-24, 2010 | China |
| April 23-May 1, 2010 | Haiti |
| June 8-19, 2010 | Africa |
| June 11-18, 2010 | Haiti |
| June 19-28, 2010 | Haiti |
| August 21-28, 2010 | Tampa, FL |
| August 24-September 4, 2010 | Africa |

2. Pray and Prepare. Pray about going. We know that it is the will of God for ALL believers to go. Read Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8.

God wants you to go so pray first, then prepare.

- Prepare through training offered
- Prepare financially by saving toward the cost
- Prepare your family with the spiritual call on your life for this short term opportunity
- Prepare your life in regard to work and time away

3. Go. That is right, just do it. Contact the Global Missions office and share your desire to participate. They will train and equip you for the journey.

Ask: What are the barriers to participating in a short term missionary journey? Have class members list various reasons. List could include finances, family objections, time away, fear of travel, fear of foreign countries, etc.

Discuss the validity of those fears and dispel them with these truths:

- Finances – God will provide where He guides. Share scripture here.
- Family objections – help your family to understand you are simply desiring to serve the Lord. Families should support our callings and run from fears as we trust in the Lord with all our heart. Proverbs 3:5-6
- Time – this could be the best vacation time you ever took. Don't be selfish with your time. Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of My Father and finish His work." John 4:34. Remember this, Jesus had the same 168 hours in a week that we do; He simply prioritized his time to do God's work FIRST!
- Fear of travel or countries – Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you even to the ends of the age." Matthew 28:20. The safest place to be in the center of God's will. Remember this, God does not have to work any harder to protect you abroad than He does to protect you at home!

Yes, like Adoniram Judson, you can leave a mark on many, and short term missionary work will leave a mark on you. But only if your response to God's call is, "Yes, send me!"

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Romans 8:28: *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (KJV).*

Receive prayer requests and then close the meeting in prayer.

MARKED FOR DEATH, MESSENGERS OF LIFE: ADONIRAM & ANN JUDSON

JESUS IS EVERYTHING TO ME!: GLORIOUS TRUTH IN THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BILL WALLACE

August 30, 2009

FELLOWSHIP TIME 10 Minutes

Spend the first ten minutes of your time together speaking with one-another, greeting any guests, and enjoying the refreshments.

OPENING PRAYER

Open the meeting in prayer by calling upon someone to pray, by asking, “*Does anyone feel led to lead us in prayer?*” or by praying yourself.

ICEBREAKER 10 Minutes

To get the discussion started, ask the following “*Icebreaker*” questions:

If someone who does not know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior were to ask you, “*What does Jesus mean to you?*”—what would you say? Why you feel that way about Jesus? How are your feelings for Jesus different from your feelings for your family or friends? Discuss.

SCRIPTURE READING

Ask a volunteer to read **Philippians 1:21** aloud to the group.

Philippians 1:21: “*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*”

INTRODUCTION

When the name William Wallace is mentioned, most people think of William Wallace of Scotland, the man whom Mel Gibson made famous in the movie *Braveheart*. However, the subject of this lesson is the William Wallace who was a missionary to the Chinese people for 15 years only to be tortured and brutally murdered as a martyr on February 10, 1951. This William Wallace is affectionately known as “*Bill Wallace of China.*”

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TEXT



15 Minutes

I. FOR TO ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST (*Philippians 1:21*)

Bill Wallace was born in 1908 in Knoxville, Tennessee, the son of a physician. Early in his life he demonstrated a love for mechanical things including cars and motorcycles. Most people who knew him then would have thought he would have grown up to be a mechanic or an engineer.

When Bill was 17 years of age, he was working on a car in the family garage when a question repeatedly came to his mind, “*What should I do with my life? No, what would God have me do with my life?*” Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and with the New Testament in his hand, Bill made a decision—he would be a medical missionary. The date was July 5, 1925, a date that he recorded in the back leaf of his New Testament, and from that moment until the day of his death, Bill never wavered from his commitment.

Ask the following questions:

What has God called you to do with your life? (*family, vocation, and spiritual service?*)
How does your spiritual gifting affect God's call upon your life? Does a believer's passion, abilities, personality, and life experiences affect God's calling upon your life? (*absolutely—God is the source of these things!*) **Discuss.**

For the next 10 years, Bill dedicated himself to completing his education which would qualify him to be a doctor. As the time of his medical training was nearing completion, the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention received a letter from Dr. Robert Beddoe of China with this prayer, “*O God, give us a surgeon.*” While the Foreign Missions Board was reading Dr. Beddoe's letter, Bill was writing a letter to the Foreign Missions Board telling them of his calling to be a missionary doctor and that he was “*...willing to go anywhere I am needed.*” On July 25, 1935, ten years after he made his commitment to giving his life to God in the family garage, Bill was appointed as a medical missionary by the Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Board to serve at Stout Memorial Hospital in Wuchow, China (*now spelled “Wuzhou”*).

On September 1, 1935, just prior to leaving for China, Bill spoke to his home church the following words:

I want to express to you my sincere and heartfelt appreciation in making it possible for me to go to China as your missionary, your ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ...You may ask why do I want to go to China...Why should I go when there are such hardships and inconveniences? The only answer I have is that it is God's plan that I go. I want to go because of the needs...China today is ready and willing to hear and accept the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. In our mission field today in China and in other countries, hundreds and thousands are going to their death without knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ because we do not have enough missionaries to tell the story...If there is one final word or request that I leave

with you it is this—that you would pray for me, pray daily that this, your humble servant's ministry and work might be all that God would have it to be.

The humility of Bill Wallace's heart permeates these words as he departs from the people that he loves, in the name of the One he loves most, to tell people he has never met of a God who loves them.

Bill Wallace's life verse was Philippians 1:21: "*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*" John MacArthur made this observation, "*His [Paul's] only hope, his only purpose, his only reason to live was Christ. He traveled for Christ, preached for Christ, and was persecuted and imprisoned for Christ. Ultimately, he would die for Christ.*" What Dr. MacArthur said about Paul was also true about the life of Bill Wallace. Bill's "*...only hope, his only purpose, his only reason to live was Christ. He traveled for Christ, preached for Christ, and was persecuted and imprisoned for Christ. Ultimately, he would die for Christ.*"

Everyone lives for something or someone and eventually dies. In reality, there are two blanks in this verse Scripture that every man needs to fill in. The first is: "*For to me to live is _____.*" How would you fill in that blank? Some people fill it in with the things this world values—money, popularity, power, pleasure, or prestige. But what about you? How would you fill in that blank? That was an easy question for Bill Wallace. He would without reservation say, "*For to me, to live is Christ...!*"

Ask the following questions:

Considering your priorities and the things you need to do this week, how would you honestly fill in the blank, "*For to me to live is _____?*" Would there be any appointments or activities on your schedule that you would have to cancel if you answered "*Christ?*" Discuss.

II. FOR TO ME TO DIE IS GAIN (*Philippians 1:21*)

After Bill arrived in the southern Chinese province of Guangxi where he would labor, he was informed by an American ship Captain that he would have to return to Hong Kong because the country was in turmoil. He firmly said that he would stay where he was. The American military captain sent word through one of his officers that he could not be responsible for Bill's safety to which Bill replied, "*Tell your captain to rest easy. He was not responsible for my coming here in the first place, and he does not need to be responsible for my staying here!*" In Bill's mind, it was God who was responsible for his coming to China and it was God who would be responsible to take care of him.

Bill would face many obstacles and challenges during his 15 years of serving the Chinese people. There were a number of political uprisings in the country: the Boxer rebellion, the Japanese invasion of China during World War II, and the Communist takeover of China. On more than one occasion, he would perform surgery with bombs exploding all around the hospital. In 1948, he nearly died of typhoid fever. Several times he was urged to leave China but his response was always the same, "*I will stay as long as I am able to serve.*"

Hospital administrator, Dr. Beddoe, who wrote the letter to the Foreign Missions Board asking for a surgeon, spoke of a revival that broke out in the hospital after Dr. Wallace's arrival. People were being healed and saved on a regular basis. Not only did the Lord use Dr. Wallace's medical skills but He also anointed this humble doctor with spiritual power!

One of the things that endeared Bill to the Chinese people was that he loved them and they knew that he loved them. One Chinese man described Dr. Wallace in these terms, "*I believe...[That he] saved our lives during this period. He was so good, watching over each of us, cheering us, caring for the sick, and doing everything he could to provide for our comfort...We know the missionaries love us, but there was always a difference. They live their way and we lived ours, but Dr. Wallace didn't know about the difference. He was one of us.*"

Paul declared, "*For to me, to live is Christ...*" and then went on to say that "*to die is gain*" (*Philippians 1:21*). The word "gain" means, "*an advantage*" or "*profit*." For the believer, death is nothing to fear as it will be to our "*advantage*" or to our "*profit*" because we will be with Christ! Bill Wallace demonstrated again and again and that he was **not** afraid to die. Why? Because he knew "*Who*" awaited him on the other side of death's door. For Bill the purpose of life was to live for Jesus Christ and the purpose of death was to free the soul from the body to live eternally in the very presence of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The only reason that Paul could say, "*To die is gain*" is because he could also say, "*To me to live is Christ*" (*Philippians 1:21*). Christ not only made life worth living for Paul, but death worth dying. The simple truth is that we cannot die the death of the righteous unless we live the life of the righteous.

There is a second blank that we all must fill in: "*And to die is _____.*" Keep in mind that the answer we put in this blank is direct result of the answer we put in the first blank. You can't put the wrong answer in the first blank and get the right answer in the second blank. You cannot live in sin and for yourself and expect everything to turn out fine when you die. Dr. Bill Wallace knew that!

III. THE SUPERLATIVE SERVANT OF THE SAVIOR GOES HOME TO HIS LORD

After the Communists took over China, the new government viewed Dr. Wallace, as well as all foreigners, as a threat to their iron grip over the people of China. The People's Republic of China had declared war on the United States in the wake of the Korean War and Americans were intensely hated. It seems that everybody knew that Bill Wallace was in great peril by remaining in China, everyone except the man himself.

On December 19, 1950, in the early morning hours before dawn, Communist Chinese soldiers entered the hospital and immediately began to accuse Dr. Wallace of being "*President Truman's chief spy in Wuzhou*" in an attempt to discredit him before the Chinese people who loved him so dearly. Very calmly the doctor responded to these accusations: "*We are what we seem to be. We are doctors and nurses and hospital staff engaged in healing the suffering and sick in the name of Jesus Christ. We are here for no other reason.*"

The soldiers went to Bill's room and returned with a brown package containing a small handgun. Bill protested, "*That is not my gun. I do not own a gun, and I do not know where that one came from.*" There is no historical evidence that Bill ever owned or shot a gun in his entire life. Obviously, the gun was planted in Bill's room. The Chinese Communist soldiers placed Bill and his nurse assistant Everly Hayes under arrest.

Although they tried desperately, neither the American Consulate nor the Southern Baptist Foreign Missions Board could do anything to help Bill and permission to visit him was denied. His coworkers repeatedly pleaded with the Communist officials to release him but they would not. At that time Bill told his coworkers, "*Go on back and take care of the hospital. I am ready to give my life if necessary.*"

From his cell, Bill witnessed to his jailer about Jesus Christ and preached from his cell window to two or three peasants who gathered to hear. One week after his arrest, a meeting was held in the town hall and all citizens of any importance were ordered to attend. The Chinese Communists told the crowd that Dr. Wallace had confessed to being a spy and hinted at some very dark deeds that he had done. They asked those in the crowd who had any accusations against Dr. Wallace to come forward with their charges. When no one came forward the officials asked people to step forward and denounce the missionary. Again, no one came forward. Even though the Communist had planted people in the audience to yell vindictive statements against the doctor, no one in the crowd joined them. No one was deceived. The doctor was being falsely accused and everyone knew it. When reflecting upon the life of Dr. Wallace, a Roman Catholic missionary stated that the only charge that anyone could make against Dr. Wallace was that "*he went about doing good,*" the same statement that Peter made about Jesus Christ (*Acts 10:38*).

The "*so-called*" confession was a statement from Bill concerning his name, age, length of service in China, and other matters of fact. Realizing it was accurate, Bill signed the document. Later, the Communists typed into a blank part of the paper that Bill had been sent to China as a Secret Service man under the direction of the United States government. Some time later, Bill was forced to stand behind a table piled with guns, ammunition, radios, and other items supposed to have been confiscated from him and others by the Communists. This picture supposedly proved that Bill was guilty of being a spy for the American government.

His captors interrogated him day and night shouting over and over again accusations of incompetence in surgery, of maiming or murdering Chinese patients, and of being a spy. He would be allowed to return to his cell for a few hours and then the process would begin all over again. Their intention was to make Bill publicly repudiate all that he was and all that he stood for. One Catholic missionary, who was incarcerated in the same prison, asked Bill, "*How are you holding out?*" to which Bill replied, "*All right. Trusting in the Lord.*"

On the evening of February 10, 1951, the guards came to Bill's cell with long poles and cruelly thrust them between the cell bars jabbing him until he became unconscious. That night, at the age of 43, Bill Wallace's soul escaped his weak body and exhausted mind to be with Christ. To

the world, Dr. Bill Wallace was dead but we know differently. Dr. Bill Wallace who had declared, *“For to me to live is Christ...”* now knew that *“...to die is gain!”*

The next morning the Communists ran up and down the cell block screaming that the Bill had hanged himself. The guards even brought two Catholic priests into the cell where they saw the lifeless body of Bill hanging from a beam by a rope made of a braided quilt. They demanded that the priests sign a statement that Bill had committed suicide. They refused to do so.

Word came to the hospital that Dr. Bill Wallace was dead and that the medical personnel were to come and claim his body. Bills’ nurse assistant Everley Hayes and two others went. Miss Hayes was not allowed to enter the cell but her assistant reported that Bill’s body had none of the telltale signs of someone who had hanged himself. In an attempt to hide their evil deed—their brutal torture and murder of this humble servant of the Lord, the Communists quickly placed Bill's body in a cheap wooden coffin, nailed the lid shut, and buried him immediately.

When word of Dr. Wallace’s cruel treatment and martyr's death reached the outside world, people were outraged and broken. Dr. Theoron Rankin, Executive Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board wrote: *“When God chooses someone to make a superlative witness of His love, He chooses a superlative child of His. He chose His own son, Jesus, to make the witness on the Cross. And now it seems that He chose Bill to make this witness...”* Bill truly was a *“superlative servant of the Savior.”*

Ask the following questions:

Has anyone ever been persecuted for your faith in Christ? What was said to you? What was done to you? How did you respond to the persecution and the persecutor? Did you learn anything about yourself through this experience? How did this incident affect your spiritual life? Discuss.

CONCLUSION

On January 12, 1985, a memorial service was held at the Wallace Memorial Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee as the remains of William Lindsay Wallace were returned to rest in the town where he grew up. In that service, Dr. James McCluskey told the assembled thousands: *“I know that the remains of William Lindsay Wallace live on in my own life...in this church named in his memory...in the lives of thousands who have been inspired and led by his life...[Who] are scattered today into the uttermost parts of the earth.”* When Satan was allowed to blow out the candle of Dr. Bill Wallace’s life, God used his candle to literally light thousands of candles all over the world. Men and women inspired by the humility, dedication, and love of a layman from Tennessee, went to the mission field to burn out for God! No one truly dies when he or she has given his or her life for God for that life lives on in the lives of those who were touched and by those who pick-up the torch and carry on the work of the Lord.

The Communists would allow no funeral service for Bill Wallace. There was no stone to mark his grave. The soldiers even drove away everyone who had followed the remains of Dr. Wallace to their final resting place. Despite considerable danger to themselves, the Chinese people

collected funds to build small monument over Bill Wallace's grave. Inscribed on that monument was the name: "Dr. William L. Wallace" and beneath his name were seven words: "For to me to live is Christ..."

Ask the following questions:

Having briefly studied the life, ministry, and death of Dr. Bill Wallace, what thoughts are going through your mind? How has this humble man's life challenged you? How will your life be different now that you know what it means to be sold out to God? Discuss.

BECOMING A WORLD CHANGER 10 Minutes

Bill Wallace had a dramatic effect on the world that carries on a generation after his martyrdom. It seems difficult to imagine a calling in our comfortable surroundings that would mean making that type of sacrifice. However Bill's first sacrificial step involved leaving the familiar and heading into the unfamiliar to share Christ with a lost people. In 2006 Brad and Becky Graves felt a similar calling to reach the lost people of San Diego, California. After a period of preparation they left the familiar surroundings, family and friends of Northwest Arkansas and moved to the thriving city of San Diego.

It is hard to imagine that in America there are areas where an evangelical church is not a common sight. There are many areas where Christianity is not only not the dominant religion, but not even a prominent influence in the community. San Diego is the seventh largest city in America. However in this massive city, ninety-five percent of its almost three million residents do not attend a church of any faith. Clearly the need for Christ is great here in this part of our own country!

Since moving to San Diego in 2007 the Graves family has worked to plant a church in the heart of San Diego. God has moved and our church has been a part of that work. On a typical Sunday Cross Church San Diego has an attendance of 150 including 50 children. They have seen over 100 people come to Christ in this time. In May their first baptism service saw 14 people follow Christ in baptism including an entire family of four.

You can be involved in what God is doing in Cross Church San Diego by giving, praying and going. There will be a trip to San Diego leaving on October 15th to help continue the work that God is doing. 5 individuals are needed to come and be a part of what God is doing. Daily prayer is needed to support the important work in this ministry area. Pray that the Graves and other families in this church will be a strong light in their community.

In addition God may be calling you to leave your familiar surroundings and help in this church planting effort in San Diego or one like it. Many other communities around the United States have these same bleak statistics. Our church currently has a partnership beginning with Covenant Life Church in Tampa, Florida that is in the early phases. We will be taking two trips to help

with this effort. The first trip will be March 6th - 13th of 2010. The second trip will be August 21st - 28th of 2010. For more information in how you can be involved contact our mission office.

Ask the following questions:

At the age of 72, William Carey said, “*Few people know what may be done till they try and persevere in what they undertake.*” Share with the group something in your life that you thought that you could never do but later learned that you could. How difficult was it to do this particular thing the first time? What convinced you to finally do it? Do you enjoy this activity now? Discuss. Concerning missions, what is keeping you personally from getting involved?

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Philippians 1:21: *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”*

Receive prayer requests and then close the meeting in prayer.

JESUS IS EVERYTHING TO ME! GLORIOUS TRUTH IN THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BILL WALLACE

THE POWER OF A CONSECRATED LIFE: THE MINISTRY OF LOTTIE MOON

September 13, 2009

FELLOWSHIP TIME 10 Minutes

Spend the first ten minutes of your time together speaking with one-another, greeting any guests, and enjoying the refreshments.

OPENING PRAYER

Open the meeting in prayer by calling upon someone to pray, by asking, “*Does anyone feel led to lead us in prayer?*” or by praying yourself.

ICEBREAKER 10 Minutes

To get the discussion started, ask the following “*Icebreaker*” question:
If you could live your life over again, what do you think that you would do differently concerning your spiritual life? Why would you do these things differently? In what ways do you think these changes would have positively affected your life? Discuss.

SCRIPTURE READING

Ask a volunteer to read **Romans 12:1** aloud to the group.

Romans 12:1: “*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.*”

INTRODUCTION

After spending 11 chapters explaining the doctrines of sin, salvation, sanctification, and sovereignty—the Apostle Paul then addressed how believers are to live in light of these biblical doctrines. The first practical truth that Paul addressed has been called the “*consecrated life*”—a life sold-out to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Dr. Danny Aiken shares four truths from Romans 12:1 that were clearly lived out in the life of Lottie Moon.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TEXT



20 Minutes

I. LIVE A GRATEFUL LIFE (*Romans 12:1*)

When speaking of the “*consecrated life*,” the first thing that we would draw your attention to is that in chapter 12 of his letter to the church in Rome, Paul addressed his remarks to “*brothers*” in Christ. He is speaking to the person who knows what it’s like to be lost and who also knows what it’s like to experience the grace of God. When writing about the churches in Macedonia, who had made great sacrifices to the Lord’s work, Paul said that the key to their sacrificial giving was, “...*they gave themselves first to the Lord*” (*II Corinthians 8:5*). Before we can offer any sacrifice to God, we must have first given our hearts to Him.

Paul then says, “*I urge you...*” The word “*urge*” means to “*beg*” or “*encourage*” and is actually the Greek word *parakaleo* (*par·ak·al·eh·o*) from which we get the words “*Holy Spirit*.”¹ One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is “*to come along side to support and encourage*” believers. Paul was speaking with the tender heart of a fellow struggler to encourage the believers in the church at Rome to follow through on the natural response to salvation—the “*consecrated life*.”

Paul made his appeal to the Christians in Rome based upon two things: (1) On everything that he has just taught them about the character and nature of God (*Romans chapters 1-11*). (2) On the basis of God’s mercy that God has extended to every believer (*Romans 12:1*).²

Paul asked that in the light of God’s “*mercies*”—in light of His goodness in that He gave us things that are not deserved and money cannot buy—isn’t it only reasonable that we consecrate our entire lives to Him?³ **Our gratitude to God ought to be our strongest motivation to live for Him** (*Psalms 116:12*). If the cross of Christ and the mercies of God do not motivate a believer to give his or her all in the service of the Lord—nothing else in this universe can!

Lottie Moon lived a “grateful” life. She was grateful for:

- ◆ Her spiritual heritage.

Lottie’s father was a merchant and a lay leader in the Baptist church. When Lottie was twelve years old, her father died of a heart attack or stroke while on a business trip traveling by river boat from New Orleans to Memphis. Her mother, Anna-Maria Moon, then 44, assumed the role of leading the family. Lottie’s mother was also of the Baptist faith and conducted Sunday worship services in her home because there was no nearby church. Occasionally, an itinerant Baptist preacher would come by who was invited to preach to the group. As a child, Lottie’s mother read to her from the Bible and as well as from other religious books. One of Lottie’s favorite books was the biography of Ann Judson, the wife of Adoniram Judson and the first Baptist woman missionary from America.

In December 1858, at the age of 18, Lottie placed her faith and trust in Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. She was led to Christ by the famous Baptist pastor John Broadus, who also baptized her at First Baptist Church of Charlottesville, Virginia.

Ask the following question:

Who would like to share their spiritual heritage with the group and what you are specifically thankful for? Discuss.

- ◆ For life's trials.

Lottie faced many trials in her life: (1) Death of her parents, sister, and co-workers. (2) Poverty after the Civil War and in China. (3) Disease on the mission field. (4) Famine in China. (5) Loneliness. Later in life, Lottie would write: *"I do not believe that any trouble comes upon us unless it is needed, and it seems to me that we ought to be just as thankful for sorrow as for joys."* Lottie's grateful heart and implicit trust in God's divine providence, sustained her throughout her life.

- ◆ God's providential care.

When persecution broke out against Christians in Sha-Ling in 1890, Lottie rushed to the area and told the persecution leaders, *"If you attempt to destroy His church, you will have to kill me first. Jesus gave Himself for us Christians. Now I am ready to die for Him."* On another occasion, Lottie wrote, *"I have a firm conviction that I am immortal 'till my work is done."* Such boldness in the face of death demonstrates Lottie's trust in the providence of her Lord and Savior.

- ◆ For the word of God.

In her Bible Lottie wrote, *"Words fail to express my love for this holy book, my gratitude for its author, for his love and goodness. How shall I thank him for it?"* Lottie understood that *"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights..."* (James 1:17).

Lottie Moon lived a grateful life.

Ask the following questions:

In what specific ways has God been "merciful" to you and your family? Discuss. How can you demonstrate your thankfulness to God for His mercy? Discuss.

II. LIVE A TOTAL LIFE (Romans 12:1)

The second characteristic of the *"consecrated life"* is to *"offer"* our bodies to God. The word *"offer"* was often used to describe a sacrifice that was offered to God in the Temple and literally means, *"to place near the hand of God to be used for His benefit."*⁴ Paul said that believers are to *"offer your body..."* to God. When Paul referred to the *"body,"* he was referring to the entire person (*mind, will, emotions, and body—Romans 6:11-14; Philippians 1:20; I Corinthians 6:20*).⁵ God wants us to give Him our eyes, ears, lips, hearts, money, time, abilities, spiritual gifts, families—and everything else we have. Because the believer has experienced the mercies

of God, Paul calls upon the believer to offering everything we are and everything we have as a sacrificial offering to God. “*All of you, all of the time*” is the essence of Paul's admonition.

The decision to “*offer*” our “*bodies*” to the Lord is a decision that every individual believer must make. The “*consecrated life*” is voluntary and believers cannot be compelled by God or man to make such a commitment.

Lottie freely made a “*total*” commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and gave her best in everything she did:

- ◆ In college.

Lottie graduated from the Albemarle Female Institute with a Bachelor's Degree in teaching and graduated again in 1861 with a Master of Arts degree in teaching, one of the first women in the South to receive a master's degree. Lottie was proficient in Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and Spanish. Pastor John Broadus called her “*the most cultured woman in the South.*”

- ◆ In serving others during the Civil War.

After graduation from college, Lottie returned home to Viewmont about the time the Civil War began. She spent the war years at home tutoring a younger sister Edmonia (*Eddie*), nursing wounded soldiers at Charlottesville, taking care of her brother Orie at home, and teaching Sunday School to both black and white children.

- ◆ In her missionary “*calling*” to China.

Lottie declared that she heard her missionary calling to China “*as clear as a bell*” in February 1873, after hearing Dr. R.B. Headden preach a sermon on missions at First Baptist Church in Cartersville, Georgia. Lottie walked the aisle that Sunday morning to tell the pastor that she had answered the call to missions. Her words were, “*I have long known God wanted me in China. I am now ready to go.*”

On July 7, 1873, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed thirty-three year old Lottie Moon as a missionary to China and with the financial support of Baptist women in Cartersville, Georgia, she reached China on October 7, 1873.

- ◆ In sharing the Gospel.

Within weeks of arriving in China, Lottie began visiting homes and sharing the Gospel with the women and children. A little while later, she began to take the Gospel to villages in the country. The women missionaries would share the Gospel with crowds of women and children in each village and teach hymns and a Bible lesson.

Lottie would travel from one village to another speaking from early morning to late evening about the Savior. She found her strength in prayer and reading the Bible as well as devotional Classics. She once said that as she traveled from village to village, “*I feel it is no idle fancy that*

the Master walks beside me, and I hear his voice saying gently, 'I am with you always, even to the end.'"

Lottie Moon lived a life of “total” commitment to God.

III. LIVE A SACRIFICIAL LIFE (*Romans 12:1*)

A third component of the “consecrated life” is to offer our bodies as “living sacrifices.”⁶ There were five animal sacrifices offered in the Old Testament (*Leviticus chapters 1-6*) but in this passage Paul was specifically referring to the burnt offering (*Leviticus 1:1-17*). The burnt offering was exclusively God’s and symbolized “total” commitment to the Lord.

Paul told believers that they were to be “living sacrifices” in contrast to the dead sacrifices offered in the Old Testament. God does **not** want us to crawl upon an altar and die as did the sacrifices of the Old Testament. He wants us to live for the Lord and be “living sacrifices.” The advantage of the living sacrifice is that it is a perpetual offering to the Lord. We can offer ourselves to God as a “living sacrifice” today, tomorrow, and all the tomorrows to come!

Lottie Moon made many physical, financial, and emotional sacrifices to go to China and to remain on the mission field for 39 years. One particular sacrifice was that she never married although she did receive a proposal that she turned down. On one occasion, Lottie was asked by her niece, “Aunt Lottie, have you ever been in love?” She replied, “Yes, but God had first claim on my life, and since the two conflicted, there could be no question about the results.”

Lottie Moon truly lived a “sacrificial” life.

Ask the following questions:

When you hear the word “sacrifice,” what do you think? Have you personally made sacrifices” in your Christian life? Was it hard to make these sacrifices? In what way? How did you feel after you made the sacrifices? Discuss.

IV. LIVE A WORSHIPFUL LIFE (*Romans 12:1*)

The final component of the “consecrated life” is holiness. Paul described the nature of the “living sacrifice” as “...holy.” If we are to offer our lives as “living sacrifices,” we must be holy sacrifices—separated from earthly defilement.⁷ Such a sacrifice is “pleasing to God”⁸ and actually regarded by the Lord as a “spiritual act of worship.”⁹ Paul viewed the “consecrated life” as actually a “worshiping life.” **Worship in its essence is a lifestyle!** All of the activities and virtues of worship are to be practiced all day, everyday.¹⁰

One cannot study the life of Lottie Moon and not clearly see that hers was a worshipful life.

CONCLUSION

In 1911, a severe famine broke out in China that affected everyone. Lottie accepted the misfortunes of China as her own. She gave all of her cash to see that others could eat and have medical care. She almost stopped eating herself and reasoned that others could not have food, neither would she. As a result, her health and physical strength began to fail. Lottie became so weak that medical personnel were called to attend to her and decided that the only hope of saving her life was to take her to America. On December 20, 1912, Lottie and missionary nurse Cynthia Miller, began the month long sea voyage back to America.

As the ship stopped in Japan to take on coal, Lottie grew worse. She died on December 24, 1912, at the age of 72, aboard ship in the Japanese harbor of Kobe. The nurse who was attending to her said that Lottie opened her eyes, smiled and looked around. Summoning the last remaining strength in her body, she raised her fists together—the traditional Chinese greeting of friends. She must have been greeting her Lord, for at that moment her soul went to meet Him.

At the time of her death, Lottie weighed a mere 50 pounds because she refused to eat so that others could. Lottie's body was cremated according to Japanese law and her ashes are buried in Crewe, Virginia. She served the Lord for 39 years on the mission field and in the year of her death, 2,358 persons were baptized in northern China, nearly doubling the Baptist population in the area.

Her personal effects consisted of one steamer trunk and when all of her personal property was sold, there was \$254.00 left in her estate. She had given it all to the work of the Lord! Twenty years after her death, Chinese women in remote villages were still asking, "*When will the heavenly book visitor come again?*" Their testimony about Lottie Moon was, "*How she loved us.*"

In 1918, the decision was made to name the Southern Baptist Christmas offering for missions in memory of Lottie Moon and it has been called the "*Lottie Moon Christmas Offering*" ever since. She would have never dreamed that in 2008, \$141.3 million dollars was given to missions and since the beginning of the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, almost \$3 billion dollars has been raised for missions in her name. More than half the annual budget of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board comes from the offering that honors her name. It is only fitting that she died on Christmas Eve since the annual Christmas missionary offering is named in her honor.

Following her death, fellow missionaries found her Bible and in the flyleaf was written the following words, "*O, that I could consecrate myself, soul and body, to His service forever; O, that I could give myself up to Him, so as never more to attempt to be my own or to have any will or affection improper for those conformed to Him.*" One who knew her said that she was only 4 feet, 3 inches tall. This was a recollection after many years and not quite accurate although she was a very small woman physically—but a spiritual giant for God!

TAKING THE LESSON HOME



5 Minutes

David Livingstone, the great nineteenth-century Scottish missionary to Africa, spoke eloquently about the "*consecrated life*" when he wrote:

People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of the great debt owing to our God, which we could never repay? Is that a sacrifice, which brings its own reward of healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter? Away with such a word, such a view, and such a thought! It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather that it is a privilege. Anxiety, sickness, suffering or danger now and then, with a forgoing of the common conveniences and charities of this life, may make us pause and cause the spirit to waver and sink; but let this only be for a moment. All these are nothing when compared with the glory, which shall hereafter be revealed in and for us. I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk when we remember the great sacrifice, which He made who left His Father's throne on high to give Himself for us.

We shouldn't talk about our sacrifices for they pale in significance when compared to Jesus' sacrifice! We are not committing ourselves to the work of the Lord to try and repay God. We are committing ourselves to Christ in light of His abundant mercies. It's as if we are saying, *"Lord, you've done so much for me and it is such a small thing for me to crawl up on that altar and offer myself as a living sacrifice."*

Someone said, *"The problem with 'living sacrifices' is that they keep crawling off the altar."* Some believers are on the altar for a few weeks or months but then they began to look around at other people's lives and think about all they are missing. They are still saved but no longer a *"living sacrifice."* The altar is empty.

That's why our commitment must be renewed day-by-day. Every morning of our lives we must crawl back up on that altar. But in light of the Lord's mercies—isn't life on the altar the only way to live?

BECOMING A WORLD CHANGER



10 Minutes

If you have been around the "Baptist World" for any amount of time, you have probably heard the name of Lottie Moon many, many times. She is the poster child, if you will, for missions. Her committed work is a huge part of the reason why we do missions the way we do missions today.

Well, how DO Southern Baptists do missions today? What is the process? How did we end up where we are?

The Southern Baptist Convention started in 1845 mainly for one purpose: to create the Foreign Mission Board (which is now the International Mission Board) and the Domestic Mission Board (which is now the North American Mission Board). Since that time, more than 20,000 missionaries have been appointed! The IMB supports 5,629 missionaries around the world and

NAMB has 5,611 missionaries who carry out the Great Commission in the US, Canada, and their territories.

But unlike during Lottie's time, how we support missionaries through our convention has completely changed. Whereas Lottie had to depend on raising her own support, missionaries today both domestic and international are funded through the generous giving of people like you!

As Southern Baptists, we have several giving avenues for missions. The first is through the Cooperative Program. Started in 1925, the Cooperative Program enables all Southern Baptists to work together to support missions efforts worldwide. Every year our church prayerfully decides how much is to be given to the Cooperative Program which will be used to reach people in our state (through our state convention) and around the world. A portion of your gifts to our church go to the Cooperative Program each year. These gifts are used to send and support missionaries, train pastors and other ministry leaders, provide relief for retired ministers and widows, and address social, moral, and ethical concerns relating to our faith and families.

Another avenue for giving is through the seasonal Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for national missions. These offerings go 100% to support missionaries and their work. To show you how vital these offerings are, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering makes up 54% of the total income the International Mission Board receives. It is critical that we all get involved in making sure the Gospel truly gets to the ends of the earth.

This information is all well and good, but how does it apply to you? How does it apply to me? How can I not only be part of a denomination that is missional, but how can I PERSONALLY be missional?

Lottie felt the stir of God on her heart for many years before she answered His call. Some of you feel the same stir, but don't know how to get involved. I would encourage you to do one of several things.

One: get the facts. Go to the International Mission Board's website (www.imb.org) for information on their missionary opportunities. They have anything ranging from short term to career missions opportunities. They have a 2-3 year program for short term volunteers for college graduates, singles and young couples, plus opportunities for those 50 and older. If you are looking for more long term, they have 3-4 year programs which allow you to learn the culture and gain valuable experience should you decide you want to be a career missionary.

Go to the North American Mission Board's site (www.namb.net, or www.answerthecall.net). NAMB has opportunities for high school students, college and seminary students, and every other age out there. Find out what the needs are, ask God how you can be a part, and then go DO IT!

We also have several opportunities here at FBCS/CPH to be a part of a short-term missionary journey. We have partnerships from Tampa and San Diego to Montreal, Malawi, and China.

Still not sure how to get involved? Call our Mission's Office. Our Mission's Ministry will help you walk through some of your questions and will be a great asset on this potential journey.

One thing is certain about Lottie Moon and her committed, consecrated life as a believer and Baptist with a great spiritual heritage. She answered God's call to "*go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*" She answered the call of missions on her life. Will you? Whether around the corner from your house or the very farthest corner of the world, our church will help you find your place to serve.

Ask the following questions:

What can our Connection Group do to reach out to the unsaved and unchurched in the neighborhood surrounding the place where we meet? Discuss.

- Have a block party.
- Have a holiday party.
- Invite the neighbors to watch the "*big*" game with you.
- Invite the neighbors to go to the "*big*" game with you.
- Help the neighbors with yard work, repairs, babysitting for a date night, etc.
- Welcome the new neighbors.
- Invite the neighbors to special events at church.
- Minister to the neighbors in times of sickness, death, divorce, etc.

Try to narrow it down to one specific activity and began planning to make it happen.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Romans 12:1: *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."*

Receive prayer requests and then close the meeting in prayer.

THE POWER OF A CONSECRATED LIFE: THE MINISTRY OF LOTTIE MOON

DIGGING DEEPER



¹ The Greek word *parakaleo* (*par-ak-al-eh-o*—Strong’s #3870) is translated in this verse (*Romans 12:1*) as “urge” and means, “to encourage,” “to exhort,” or “to plead.” It is from this Greek word we derive the words “Holy Spirit.” One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is “to come along side to support and encourage” believers.

² Here is a partial listing of the “mercies of God” that have been bestowed upon believers that Paul alluded to in the first eleven chapters of the book of Romans:

- ◆ God’s love (*Romans 5:5; 8:35,39*).
- ◆ God’s grace (*Romans 1:7; 3:24; 4:4,16; 5:2,15,20,21; 6:1,14,15,17; 11:5,6*).
- ◆ God’s peace (*Romans 1:7; 2:10*).
- ◆ God’s comfort (*Romans 8:14-18,28,35-39*).
- ◆ God’s power (*Romans 1:16*).
- ◆ The hope of salvation (*Romans 5:2; 8:24*).
- ◆ God’s patience (*Romans 5:3; 9:22; 11:22*).
- ◆ God’s kindness (*Romans 2:4*).
- ◆ God’s forgiveness (*Romans 3:25; 4:7,8*).
- ◆ Reconciliation with God (*Romans 5:9,10*).
- ◆ Justification by God (*Romans 5:9,10*).
- ◆ Security of our salvation (*Romans 8:26-39*).
- ◆ We presently possess eternal life (*Romans 5:21; 6:22,23*).
- ◆ Freedom in Christ (*Romans 6:18; 7:5,6*).
- ◆ Sonship (*Romans 8:14,15*).
- ◆ God intercedes on our behalf (*Romans 8:27*).
- ◆ The promise of our resurrection (*Romans 8:11,23*).
- ◆ He gives us His Holy Spirit to live within us (*Romans 5:5; 8:2-26*).
- ◆ He crowns us with glory and honor (*Romans 2:10; 9:21-23*).
- ◆ He gives us His righteousness (*Romans 3:21,22; 5:17,18*).
- ◆ He increases our faith (*Romans 10:17*).

³ The Greek word *oiktirmos* (*oyk-tir-mos*—Strong’s #3628) is translated as “mercies” (*Romans 12:1*) and refers to the “pity” or “compassion” that God has for believers who are struggling with sin and living for God.

⁴ The Greek word *paristemi* (*par-is-tay-mee*—Strong’s # 3936) is translated as “offer” (*Romans 12:1*) and was often used to describe a sacrifice that was offered to God in the Temple. This Greek word literally means, “to place near the hand of God to be used for His benefit.”

⁵ The Greek word *soma* (*so-mah*—Strong’s #4983) is translated into English as “body” (*Romans 12:1*) and sometimes refers to the whole person—body, soul, and spirit.

⁶ The Greek word *zao* (*dzah-o*—Strong’s #2198) is translated into English as “living” (*Romans 12:1*) and refers to a “living and constant” sacrifice that could repeatedly be offered to the Lord in contrast to the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament that could only be offered once.

⁷ The Greek word *hagios* (*hag-ee-os*—Strong’s #40) is translated in this verse (*Romans 12:1*) as “holy” and means, “pure” or “holy” and “set apart” for the exclusive use by God.

⁸ The Greek word *euarestos* (*yoo-ar-es-tos*—Strong’s #2101) is translated into English as “pleasing” and means “well pleasing” and “accepted” by God.

⁹ The Greek word *latreia* (*lat-ri-ah*—Strong’s #2999) is translated in this verse as the phrase “*this is your spiritual act of worship*” (*Romans 12:1*) and refers to the fact that “*holy*” and “*living sacrifices*” are considered as “*acceptable*” acts of worship to the Lord and are in fact “*well-pleasing*” to God.

¹⁰ **Worship in its essence is a lifestyle!** All of the activities and virtues of worship are to be practiced all day, everyday: (1) We are to offer **perpetual sacrifices** (“*living*”—*Romans 12:1*). (2) We are to “**rejoice forevermore**” (*I Thessalonians 5:17*). (3) We are to “**pray without ceasing**” (*I Thessalonians 5:18*). (4) We are to **continually give thanks** (*I Thessalonians 5:19; Ephesians 5:20; Hebrews 13:15*). (5) We are to offer the **sacrifice of praise** “**continuously**” (*Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 34:1; 71:6; 113:3; 84:4*). (6) We are to “**bless the Lord at all times**” (*Psalm 34:1*). (7) We are to **sing and make melody** in our hearts continually (*Psalm 47:6,7; Colossians 3:16,17; Ephesians 5:19; James 5:3*).

LET THE NATIONS GIVE GOD GLORY!: A PASSION IN THE LIFE AND MARTYRDOM OF JIM ELLIOT

September 27, 2009

FELLOWSHIP TIME  10 Minutes

Spend the first ten minutes of your time together speaking with one-another, greeting any guests, and enjoying the refreshments.

OPENING PRAYER

Open the meeting in prayer by calling upon someone to pray, by asking, “Does anyone feel led to lead us in prayer?” or by praying yourself.

ICEBREAKER  10 Minutes

To get the discussion started, ask the following “Icebreaker” question:
What is it about “personal evangelism” that scares us so much? Where do you think this fear comes from? What can we do to overcome our fear? Discuss.

SCRIPTURE READING

Ask a volunteer to read Psalm 96:1-13 aloud to the group.

Psalm 96:1-13: “Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
² Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.
³ Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
⁴ For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. ⁵ For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.
⁶ Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. ⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. ⁹ Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth. ¹⁰ Say among the nations, ‘The LORD reigns.’ The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.
¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; ¹² let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the

forest will sing for joy; ¹³ they will sing before the LORD, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth.”

INTRODUCTION

Psalm 96 is a hymn written to the Lord God of Israel in which there is an invitation for the nations of the world to join Israel in praising Yahweh. This Psalm has four major movements that focus on the desire of God in relation to the nations. All four of these movements were a prominent part of the life of missionary Jim Elliot.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TEXT



15 Minutes

I. GOD DESIRES THAT THE NATIONS PRAISE HIM (*Psalm 96:1-3*)

In this Psalm, God identifies Himself by His personal name of Yahweh ¹ and invites the entire world to worship Him in three distinct ways:

- ◆ We should sing a new song (*Psalm 96:1,2*).

Three times in the first two verses of this Psalm, we are invited to “sing to the Lord” (*Psalm 96:1,2*) a “new song.”² This “new song” is fresh, distinctive, and different. The song looks back to God's deliverance in the past and looks forward to God's great act of deliverance from sin through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ (*Revelation 5:9,10; 14:3-5*).

- ◆ We should proclaim His salvation (*Psalm 96:2,3*).

The psalmist also tells us to “praise His name,” “proclaim His salvation,” and “declare His glory” (*Psalm 96:2,3*). One of the best ways to “praise the Lord” is to “proclaim his salvation day after day” to the nations of the world (*Psalm 96:2*).

- ◆ We should declare His glory (*Psalm 96:3*).

The nature of who God is and the message of God's salvation demands a worldwide declaration: “Declare his glory among the nations, is marvelous deeds among all peoples” (*Psalm 96:3*). In the *Message*, Eugene Peterson paraphrases this verse in the following words: “Shout the news of his victory from sea to sea, take the news of his glory to the lost, news of his wonders to one and all!”

The nature of who God is and the message of God's salvation was the passion of Jim Elliot's life. Born Philip James Elliott in 1926 in the city of Portland, Oregon, Jim's father was an itinerant Baptist evangelist. Although Jim's father did **not** have a formal theological education, he was a genuinely spiritual man who walked with God. Jim said this about his father: “He cannot define theism, but he knows God.” Jim's father deeply impacted his life perhaps more than any other earthly man.

Missionaries often stayed in the Elliot's home and when he was eight years of age, Jim trusted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. As a teenager, God had already placed in his heart the desire to be a missionary.

Jim enrolled in Wheaton College, a private Christian college located just outside the city of Chicago, in 1948, and began speaking to youth groups about Christ, journaling on a daily basis, and met his future wife Elizabeth Howard, whom he called "*Betty*." During his sophomore year in college, God placed within the heart of Jim Elliot a passion to see the nations praise the Lord. In particular, Jim's heart was drawn toward the greatly feared Huaorani tribe, known in that day as the "*Aucas*," who lived in the country of Ecuador. In a letter written to his parents dated August 8, 1950, Jim wrote: "*I dare not stay home while Quichuas perish. So what if the well-fed church in the homeland needs stirring? They have the Scriptures, Moses, and the Prophets, and a whole lot more.*" In a journal entry dated July 26, 1952, Jim wrote: "*Oh for a faith that sings!..Lord God, give me a faith that will take sufficient quiver out of me so that I may sing! Over the Aucas, Father I want to sing.*"

Jim Elliot had a passion to sing praises to the Lord with the nations!

Ask the following questions:

Why does God want the nations to praise Him? What is praise? In what specific ways can men praise Him? Discuss.

II. GOD DESIRES THAT THE NATIONS FEAR HIM (*Psalm 96:4-6*)

The Lord God is the sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Lord of the universe who is coming to "*judge the world in righteousness*" (*Psalm 96:13*). Therefore, we are to "*fear*" Him for two reasons: (1) "*For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise*" (*Psalm 96:4*). All the gods of the nations are false gods, imposters, and no gods at all. In the words of Danny Aiken, "*The Lord is great and they are not. He saves and they damn. The Lord is really something and they are really nothing. The Lord made everything. They have made nothing.*" (2) "*Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary*" (*Psalm 96:6*). God's "*splendor*," "*majesty*," "*strength*," and "*glory*" bear witness to the fact that God is awesome and like no other!

Jim Elliot had a holy reverence and fear of God. On October 27, 1948, while a junior at Wheaton College, Jim wrote these words in his diary, "*...my desire is toward Thee...I desire to be like Thee.*" On October 28, 1948, he wrote: "*Prayed a strange prayer today. I covenanted with my Father that He would do either of two things—either glorify Himself to the utmost in me, or slay me. By His grace I shall not have His second best. For He heard me, I believe, so that now I have nothing to look forward to but a life of sacrificial sonship or heaven soon.*" And on November 1, 1948, Jim wrote: "*Son of Man, I feel it would be best if I should be taken now to Thy throne. I dread causing Thee shame at Thy appearing (Mark 8:38). Father, take my life, yea, my blood if Thou wilt, and consume it with Thine enveloping fire. I would not save it, for it*

is not mine to save. Have it, Lord, have it all. Pour out my life as an oblation for the world. Blood is only of value as it flows before Thine altar.”

How strange the words of Jim Elliot seem to today's lukewarm church (*Revelation 3:14-22*). Men would label him as a “*fanatic*” but what do you think that would Jesus think of him? What Jim had the church of the Lord Jesus Christ needs today!!!

Jim Elliot desired that the nations fear God.

III. GOD DESIRES THAT THE NATIONS WORSHIP HIM (*Psalms 96:7-9*)

God desires that the “*families of nations*” praise and worship Him. To worship is to ascribe to God worth and value by humbling ourselves before Him and submitting to His will for our lives. Two times, in three verses, the psalmist instructs believers to “*ascribe*” to the Lord “*glory and strength*” and “*the glory due to his name*” (*Psalms 96:7,8*). God's holiness should produce such awe and respect in us that we tremble in adoration before Him (*Psalms 96:9*).

The psalmist declared that we should honor the Lord because of His “*holiness*” (*Psalms 96:9*). God's nature is perfect, without flaw, and completely pure. Holiness is the centerpiece of God's attributes and the one that permeates all of the others. In light of our sinfulness and depravity, we should tremble before such a perfect God!

Jim Elliot understood his own sinfulness and the Lord's infinite holiness. In his diary dated November 6, 1948, he wrote: “*Forgive me for being so ordinary while claiming to know so extraordinary a God.*”

Jim Elliot desired that the nations worship God.

Ask the following question:

How would you define “*worship*?” What does “*worship*” mean to your spiritual life? In what specific ways do you personally “*worship*” God? Discuss.

IV. GOD DESIRES THAT THE NATIONS ENJOY HIM (*Psalms 96:10-13*)

The psalmist declared, “*Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad...*” (*Psalms 96:11*). It is God's desire that the nations of the world enjoy Him. We enjoy God for three reasons: (1) **He is the sovereign King** (*Psalms 96:10-12*). God made the earth (“*the world is firmly established*”—*Psalms 96:10*), He maintains the earth (“*it cannot be moved*”—*Psalms 96:10*), and He rules over the earth (*Psalms 96:10*). Because the Lord is the sovereign King, we are assured that the world is not out of control and that everything is going according to His eternal plan. (2) **He will judge all men righteously:** “*He will judge the peoples with equity*” (*Psalms 96:10*) and “*in righteousness*” (*Psalms 96:13*). Because the Lord will judge all men in righteousness, we are assured that every wrong will be made right and every right will be rewarded. (3) **He is coming again!** (*Psalms 96:13*) To those of us who have a personal relationship with God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ, the coming of our Savior will be a day of rejoicing!

Jim Elliot desired that the nations enjoy God.

Ask the following question:

In what specific ways do you personally “enjoy” God? Discuss.

CONCLUSION

In one of the last conversations that Jim ever had with his wife Elizabeth, she asked him if they were attacked by the Aucas if they would use their guns. Jim responded with certainty, “*We will not use our guns!*” When Elizabeth asked why he simply said, “*Because we are ready for heaven, but they are not.*” In a letter to his family, Jim Elliot expressed why he was so confident in the face of possible danger: “*Remember you are immortal until your work is done.*”

In January 1958, Jim Elliot, Ed McCulley, Roger Youderian, Pete Fleming, and Nate Saint flew into the jungle landing their plane on a sand bar they named “*Palm Beach*” on the Curaray River. From this base, they hoped to have a friendly face-to-face encounter with the Aucas. On January 8, 1956, a group of ten Aucas attacked and brutally murdered these five missionaries. Jim left behind Elizabeth, his wife of three years, and a baby girl named, Valerie (*born January 4, 1956*).

A note was found on Jim's body dated January 4, 1956, four days before he died: “*Our hopes are up but no sign of the “neighbors’ yet. Perhaps today is the day the Aucas will be reached... we're going down now, pistols, gifts, novelties in our pockets, prayers and our hearts. All for now. Your lover, Jim.*” Jim Elliot loved three things in this world in this order of importance: (1) God. (2) His Family. (3) The Aucas—people he had never met.

We close with the most famous journal entry ever penned by Jim Elliot: “***He is no fool who gives up when he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.***” Jim Elliot did give up that which he could not keep (*his physical life and the things of this world*) to gain the things he could never lose (*eternal life and the rewards that the Lord will bestow upon faithful believers*). So the question before us today is will you...yes you, “*give up that which you cannot keep to gain that which you cannot lose?*” God is waiting for an answer!

Ask the following questions:

Having studied the life of Jim Elliot and the martyrdom of these five missionaries, how has your commitment level to Christ been challenged? What can you personally do to raise your commitment level to Christ and keep it there? Discuss.

BECOMING A WORLD CHANGER



10 Minutes

For most men, the story of Jim Elliot's life resonates in our hearts. Men secretly want to live that adventurous life and experience the unknown. The life of adventure and abandonment is hidden in many men's lives. So how do we break out of our "safe" lives and enter into the adventure of a lifetime? For most, we will never live the life of a Jim Elliot, but we can live the greatest adventure of our lives as we live a "**Missional Lifestyle Daily**."

Ask: What does it mean to you to live a Missional Lifestyle Daily? Have class members respond and discuss.

Let me offer a few suggestions on living a **Missional Lifestyle Daily**.

1. Remember service is our worship offered to God. Romans 12:1

- Living missionally means serving. Are you serving in our church? If not, why not? What would it take for you to begin serving? Why is service a form of worship?
- Realize also that giving financially is worship to the Lord.
- Our Acts 1:8 Celebration offering which is themed, "Reaching our Mission" gives us all opportunities to live a Missional Lifestyle Daily. This offering will allow our church to do missions like never before.

The offering will support things like

Mission Northwest Arkansas

- Jail ministry
- IMPACT/community ministries
- Ministry center start up
- Local mission churches
- Community outreaches
- Loving NWA emergency ministry
- Blessing Baskets food distribution to 3500 families

Church plants & sites

- Cross Church San Diego
- Tampa church plant
- 10 new churches we invest in and launch globally
- Supporting various journeys with special needs

Missionary Support

- Supporting missionaries to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth. We support 5629 missionaries through the International Mission Board and 5611 through the North American Mission Board.

Esther's House orphanage

- Providing ongoing support to the 100 orphans and 50 widows of Malawi Africa

Annual Global Missions Celebration (missions education)

- Conducting Mission education to our 19,000 member's through a Global Missions Celebration whereby we bring in missionaries from around the globe to share what the Lord is doing while mobilizing hundreds of our people to the mission fields

Please give regularly to "Reaching Our Mission". This special mission gift should always be over and above our regular tithes and offerings so as not to diminish the great work of ministry done through the Ministry Budget.

2. Remember that living a missional lifestyle daily means living in a radical way.

Let's consider this... why do we call it radical living when Jesus would call it ordinary living? We would say that someone is a radical Christian if they

1. Tell someone about Jesus at the water cooler at work;
2. Stop and help a homeless person on the street corner;
3. Give large amounts of money to God's work;
4. Spend large amounts of time serving God instead of participating in some sporting or social event.

Jesus would call all the above just a **normal life**.

Have the class discuss radical vs. normal living for God.

3. Living a Missional Lifestyle Daily means recognizing that the nations live in my neighborhoods for the sole purpose of me being God's ambassador of the good news to them!

Do you know there are 66 different nationalities that live in Washington and Benton counties?

Ask the group to list language groups/nationalities they may know.

Leaders: Share this list of nationalities...

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Argentina | Australia | Austria |
| Bangladesh | Barbados | Bolivia |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Brazil | Cambodia |
| Canada | Chile | China |
| Colombia | Costa Rica | Cuba |
| Czech Republic | Dominican Republic | Ecuador |
| El Salvador | Ethiopia | Egypt |
| France | Germany | Ghana |
| Greece | Guatemala | Guyana |
| Honduras | Hungary | India |
| Indonesia | Iran | Iraq |
| Ireland | Israel | Italy |
| Jamaica | Japan | Jordan |
| South Korea | Laos | Lebanon |
| Malaysia | Mexico | Netherlands |
| Nicaragua | Nigeria | Pakistan |
| Panama | Peru | Philippines |
| Poland | Portugal | Romania |
| Russia | South Africa | Spain |
| Sweden | Syria | Taiwan |
| Thailand | Trinidad and Tobago | Turkey |
| Ukraine | Venezuela | Vietnam |

Ask: How are we going to bring the gospel to these 66 groups in NWA?

What is your responsibility? Discuss with your group.

No, you probably will never give you life trying to bring the gospel to a people group like Jim Elliot did. However, God is desiring that we do something to make Him known among the lost people groups of NWA.

Spend some time brainstorming ways your Connection Group can begin to reach out to a particular language group in NWA.

Pray over the list of language groups asking God to use you and save them.

Ask the following questions:

What can our connection group to together do personally get involved in missions?

Have members make suggestions and then discuss their ideas.

- Sponsor an Impact Team. Provide the manpower to operate a team or purchase the ministry supplies needed to operate a team.
- Support a North American or international missionary.
- Sponsor a child in our orphanage in Malawi.
- Adopt a people group, learn all you can about that group, and then have special times of prayer for them on a regular basis.
- Go on a short-term mission trip together.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Psalm 96:3,4: *“Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. ⁴ For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods.”*

Receive prayer requests and then close the meeting in prayer.

LET THE NATIONS GIVE GOD GLORY!: A PASSION IN THE LIFE AND MARTYRDOM OF JIM ELLIOT

DIGGING DEEPER



¹ The personal name of God in the Old Testament is **Yahweh** (*Yah-way*) or **Jehovah** (*Yeh-ho-vaw—Strong’s #3068*), which means the “*Being One*” or “*the self-existent One*” (a reference to the fact that He possesses life within Himself and is eternal). This name of God is used 6,823 times in the Old Testament (*Exodus 3:14; 6:3; Genesis 2:5,8,18,21,22; 3:1,8,13,15,21, etc.*).

² The word of God instructs the believer to sing a “*new song*” unto the Lord (*Psalm 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Isaiah 42:10*). The Hebrew word *hadas* (הָ אֲדָ אֵשׁ—*Strong’s #2319*) is translated into English as “*new*” and means, “*brand new*” or “*fresh*.” The truest definition of the word is, “*a fresh composition in response to a new work of Yahweh (God) rather than a fresh rendering of an old song.*” The “*new song*” is fresh, distinctive, and different. The idea is that the song has never been sung before. It is God Himself who places this “*new song*” in our hearts (*Psalm 40:3*). In the Scriptures, the word “*new*” is associated with “*song*” more than any other feature of salvation.