



## **Faith and Missions**

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### **Introduction:**

We began talking about faith last Sunday. Remember that faith is demonstrated by responding to what God has spoken to us, and following His direction. We talked about listening for God's voice. We talked about being able to hear what He is saying to us - and then to do what He has instructed us.

Faith is not always something that is logical to our way of thinking. When God spoke to Noah there was no logic in his setting out to build an ark. But in that act of obedience, the message of salvation was preached for 120 years. There is purpose and direction and balance when it comes to faith. We don't want the things we see to stand in the way of doing what we have heard. I have to admit, and probably you have to admit too, that at times we respond by sight, we act on the things we see around us, or what the circumstances are saying to us, rather than reacting on the things we have heard and the voice of God.

When Jesus was talking about His coming back and the signs that would be taking place before His return, He mentioned that the gospel would be preached in the whole world. These are Jesus' own words as recorded in **Matthew 24:14. "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."**

There are definite directives that our Lord left to the church.

### **I. Go to the whole world with the gospel**

The message that we are to take is a message of faith. By faith, we believe that Jesus died and rose again and is coming back. By faith, we believe that Jesus will gather those who love Him to rule and reign with Him. By faith we believe there is a heaven and hell. By faith we believe that Jesus is the answer to all of life's problems.

In obedience as people of faith, we are to take the message of Jesus to our world. When I say that, some of you cringe in fear. Remember last Sunday we talked about fear being one of the blockers of faith. If we allow it to do so, fear will paralyze us from responding obediently in faith to what God's Spirit has

revealed to us and given us knowledge of. So we are to go with the message. There are some of you sitting here today that say, I'm not called or I don't have the gifting to be a missionary. Listen; there are people around you that you influence. You influence your family, a spouse, a child, a niece or nephew, a grandparent, a parent.

We cannot use the excuse that Jesus hasn't told us His expectations. The knowledge of God's word tells us to go.

### **II. Give so others can be sent**

The early church would take offerings to send out missionaries to another city, or country so the gospel would be spread. Missions giving has been around for a long, long time. Missions is the core of God's heart and it should be the core of our heart as well.

Let me tell you about “faith promise” giving. When all of us look at our checkbooks usually the funds that we have right now are spoken for. A faith promise isn’t looking at what I have. A faith promise defies the flesh, the nature of sin, the nature of self, the limitations, and moves beyond that into the realm of the supernatural. A faith promise isn’t based on seeing, but on hearing. This is why everyone can participate. You can honestly say, “But I don’t have the money, or the resources to make a faith promise, because I know where the resources available to me are committed.” But don’t let that stop you from making a faith promise. Instead, ask God what He wants to do through you. That’s truly a faith promise. When we let God speak to us, then we act in faith and trust God to bring those resources into our hands.

I want to tell you two stories of people I know who have testified to how this has worked in their lives. One lady made a faith promise, and the next day after the missions conference she went to work and the boss called her in and said, “You haven’t had a raise for a long time and this is what your raise will be.” She was grateful and when she went home and figured it out, her raise not only supplied the amount of faith promise, but there would be a surplus.

Another individual that I know acted in faith to make a faith promise. It wasn’t long after he acted in faith that he received in the mail a refund check he did not expect. It was exactly the amount he had made for his faith promise.

Inside your bulletin this morning you received a card that says – My Missions faith promise. Take that home with you and hear from God this week. Let God put an amount in your heart and mind that He wants you to give so others can be sent. Come back next week with your card filled out and let’s see what God will do through us as a congregation over the next 12 months

Please don’t use the reason to not make a faith promise that you don’t have the money. If you have the money – that’s an offering. If you don’t have the money then it is truly a faith promise. Look at this as an opportunity for your faith to grow, for you to hear God’s voice, and for God to once again be true to His word.

Missions is at the core of God’s heart, and since He owns all the resources anyway, it is His responsibility to provide and pick up the tab for missions work. He

will use people who are people of faith to provide. So hear what He is saying, and act in obedience to what He is saying. People will be sent and supported by your faith giving.

**Acts 13:3 - So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.**

### III. Gather what has been sown

#### John 4:34-38

**“My food,” said Jesus “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”**

To gather is part of the work of faith and missions.

Most of the places we have ministered have been in the Midwest. We have served in Western Ohio, Eastern Indiana, Central Illinois, and here in Wisconsin. In each of the places I just mentioned there was farmland very near us. We have watched the process of sowing and gathering for many years. We have done so ourselves with things we have grown. We are coming into the season right now in Wisconsin where the farmers are working their fields, gathering in the grain, the corn, the beans, the crops that have been planted and growing all season long.

A farmer would be foolish to plant and cultivate his crops all season and then abandon the fruit of his labor when that fruit was ripe.

What a waste that would be. To not harvest the ripened grain on the stocks and allow them to be destroyed would be a tremendous waste. Why not complete the process and finish the work that was started?

So it is with the souls of people around us. The soil of people’s hearts has been prepared, the seed has been planted in their lives, and grown up, and now it is harvest time. It is time to gather them into the kingdom, and yet the labors are few. Those doing the har-

vesting have to wait in faith that the seed will grow and there will be a crop to harvest.

So there is a great deal of faith that is expressed when it comes to missions.

#### **IV. Praying is also a part of missions**

With all these aspects of faith demonstrated toward missions, another very important part is prayer.

#### **Matthew 9:37-38**

**Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”**

Faith has to be active when it comes to praying. Believe that God will answer your prayer and workers will be sent into the field who will work to gather in souls.

#### **Conclusion:**

So how is faith related to missions?

- To *go* we have to have heard the directive of the Spirit through the word of God that tells us to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.
- To *give* we have to exercise faith that God has spoken and will provide what we don't have.
- To *gather* we have to have faith that God will use us to see that the ripened harvest is not lost
- To *pray* we have to have faith that God is listening and will respond and answer the cries of our heart for souls to be saved.

#### **John 14:31**

**But the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. “Come now; let us leave.”**

Pray for the conditions to be right to gather in the harvest. Pray for the strength of the harvesters. Pray that the tools used will function and the task of harvesting will be complete. Pray that none of the souls who are ripened will be lost. Pray that you might be the answer to this prayer.

This past Monday evening we had a Light for the Lost banquet right here at CLF. The guest missionary, Peter Koshell, was sharing how in Korea in order to be a member of the church one has to pray a minimum of 2 hours a day. If you don't do that you cannot be a member. If you miss the prayer meeting you are assigned, you have to wait until the next prayer meeting. People are coming to Christ by the thousands. It is because of prayer.

Those people have a passion to seek God and to intercede to the Lord of the harvest and the reapers are being sent and the harvest is being gathered.