

CCBAC Missions Primer

What is God up to?

People often ask, “What in the history of the world is God up to?” George Ladd in his book “The Gospel of the Kingdom” has a good answer. He writes, “The ultimate meaning of history between the ascension of our Lord and His return is found in the extension and working of the gospel in the world....The divine purpose of the *two thousand* years since our Lord lived on the earth is found in the history of the gospel of the Kingdom. The thread of meaning is woven into the missionary program of the Church. Someday when we go into the archives of Heaven, to find a book which expounds the meaning of human history as God sees it, we will not draw out a book depicting “The History of the West” or “The Progress of Civilization” or “The Glory of the British Empire” or “The Growth and Expansion of America.” That book will be entitled “*The Preparation for and the Extension of the Gospel Among the Nations.*”

Major Bible Theme

The theme of missions (extending the gospel and bringing God's blessings to all the peoples of the world) runs through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. In Gen. 12:1-3 God promises Abraham, “...I will bless you....and you will be a blessing....and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” When Jesus cleansed the temple in Mark 11 He said, “My house shall be a house of prayer for **all** the nations (people groups).” We read in Rev. 7:9, “...I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.”

Major Focus of C&MA

The founder of our Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination – A. B. Simpson – was a member of a large church of another denomination in New York City in the 19th century. God gave him the desire to minister to the flood of immigrants in NYC on “the other side of the tracks.” He pursued this desire in spite of opposition from his church leadership. This work developed into the establishment of the Gospel Tabernacle Church in NYC where all the homeless, poor, sick, and displaced were welcomed. His concern for these people grew to a concern for all the unreached people around the world. Although he did not set out to establish a new denomination, a new denomination – the Christian and Missionary Alliance – of like-minded, missions-oriented people was born, and we today are part of that missions-focused denomination.

Priority and Incentive

John Piper, in his book “Let the Nations be Glad” writes, “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man.” Jesus did give us a command which we call the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations (people groups) baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Yes, we have this command, but if obedience to a command is our only incentive, we are not allowing God to use us as effectively as He would if we had a better incentive. That better incentive is a deep love and passion for Christ expressed in worship. Without that better incentive, our activities can easily become perfunctory and mechanical. Piper also wrote, “Worship is the fuel as well as the goal of missions.”

How to Participate

So how can each of us participate on mission with God? There are 5 roles – 1) the **SENDER** role – we can support missionaries with prayer and finances. C&MA missionaries are supported financially via giving to the Great Commission Fund (GCF). As new missionary candidates are approved by the C&MA office in Colorado Springs, they are sent out only when there is enough money in the GCF to support them. That is why we place emphasis on giving to the GCF. 2) the **MOBILIZER** role – we can be the ones who sound the rallying cry and awaken the church to God's global purposes. 3) the **WELCOMER** role – we who have neighbors or visitors from other countries/people groups can make them feel welcome and share Bible truths with them. 4) the **INTERNATIONAL WORKER** role – we can participate in short-term mission trips; some may sense God's call to long-term missionary service. 5) the **LEARNER** role – we all can read books about missions and cultures and people groups. We can read our denomination's "A-Life" magazine (free). We can take a missions course such as "Perspectives on the World Christian Movement," and read the Bible as the unified, cohesive, true story of God's plan of restoration that it is.

Let's Make Disciples!

Charles Spurgeon, a famous 19th century preacher, once said, "If you are a Christian, you are either a missionary or an impostor." Christian and Missionary Alliance – Missions is our middle name. We know God's plan to reach all peoples with His gospel message. We know He wants us involved. This knowledge invokes responsibility. Jesus said in Matthew 24:14, "And the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." The gospel will be preached in all the world, and we have the privilege of being a part of what God is doing in this world. When God determines that the gospel has made its full progress, Jesus Christ will come again. Let's do our part!