

## THE MISSION

- There are many passages of Scripture which are commonly used as the “Biblical basis of missions,” yet are really *not* the basis of *our* mission.
- When you get started on the wrong foot, the conclusion can be disastrous.
- The most common passage used as the basis for *our* mission: Matthew 28:18-20.
  - This requires an “apostolic” church because the message is directed to the apostles (v. 16).
  - This requires an always-insufficient explanation of why we do not completely do what Jesus commanded in the passage. Namely, **teaching them to observe all things whatsoever**. We teach them to observe *some things* then we teach that we believe every word of the Bible. This is problematic and void of reasonable explanation.
  - Example: John 13:14
- There are passages which speak to our evangelistic assignment. For example, 2 Corinthians 5:20.
- Do we have a “Great Commission?”
  - This is a term created by church leaders, though it is uncertain who coined the term.
  - Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) popularized the term.
  - Since it is not a Biblical phrase, and since we got it wrong one-time, why should we feel a need to *have* a “great commission?”
  - Designation of a “great commission” can be reductionist and cause us to lose focus on the totality of the Christian life.

## THE MESSAGE

- One of the most surprising aspects of Christian life is the fact that Christians have never agreed upon a Gospel presentation.
- Is repentance required? Is baptism required? Is church-membership required? Is a prayer required? What should that prayer say if it is required?
- The “problem” with a “plan of salvation” is that the Bible does not expressly state what that “plan” is, thus they are all man-made.
- The solution: *an understanding of the Bible, rightly divided, is the plan of salvation.*
- Can a person trust in the completed work of Jesus Christ if they do not know...
  - The eternal nature of human existence?
  - Why they need a Savior?
  - Why the provision involved the death and resurrection of the Savior?
  - How God is going to restore all things?

- Why our world is such a mess today?

- In a world with a fairly uniform Biblical understanding and Judeo-Christian worldview, a “plan of salvation” might work. But that world increasingly does not exist.

## THE METHOD

- To develop the basic understanding needed to bring a person to receive the gift of salvation, chronological Bible teaching is a must.
- The church world insists on a “quick fix,” and that insistence is causing more problems than it is addressing the lostness of the world.
- Missions, therefore, requires –
  - A career mindset: short-term “missions” is really “missionary support activity.” A missionary settles into a ministry that may take decades for fruit.
  - A church mindset: without the development of a local church of people gathered weekly for Biblical training, the ministry will be short-lived.
- Humanitarian activity can (and more often than we think *does*) divert funds, time, and energy from real missionary activity. We like it because it gives a quick smile and a big crowd.

## THE MEASUREMENT

- A missionary measures “success” by:
  - Is he/she still there?
  - Is he/she growing in the knowledge of the Word?
  - Is he/she able to communicate in “local lingo,” both linguistic and cultural?
  - Is he/she developing friendships with those who need to be saved?
  - Is he/she finding ways to teach Biblical content to those who do not know the Bible?
- The mission-field context along with the skills and personality of the missionary will determine how quickly the missionaries work results in new believers serving the Lord in the local church.
- If speed is the goal (even if unspoken), the following will result:
  - A high percentage of missionaries will get frustrated and leave the field after a huge financial investment but before any spiritual fruit.
  - A high percentage of “missions” will actually be humanitarian activity that provides a big “splash” but no substance.
  - The big “splash” will become the focus for more and more “missionary” activity, and real missions will become almost non-existent (fewer career missionaries, more humanitarian feel-good “missions”).
- May God bless missionaries who teach the Bible to those who do not know it, and thus share the greatest news of all time.