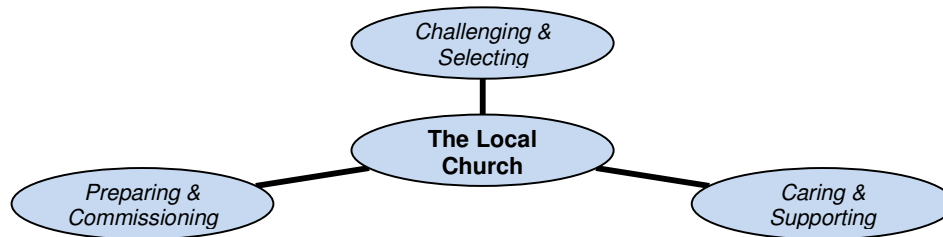


WORLD FOCUS TEAM

Assisting Local Churches and Christians in World Mission



Resource Paper 3

The Biblical Imperative for Mission

Mission flows from the identity of God and His Christ and this statement is based on our understanding of God's missionary heart.

God's missionary heart is set out in these key missional themes

- ❖ *His **Vision** to come and gather all the nations and tongues* Isaiah 66 v 18
- ❖ *His **Covenant** that all the peoples on earth will be blessed* Gen 12 v 2,3
- ❖ *His **Inheritance** I will make the nations your inheritance* Psalm 2 v 7,8
- ❖ *His **Love** for the world* John 3 v 16
- ❖ *His **Invitation** to be fishers of men* Mark 1 v 17
- ❖ *His **Commandment** to Love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself* Matthew 22 v 37 - 39
- ❖ *His **Commission** to go and make disciples of all nations* Matthew 28 v 18 - 20
- ❖ *His **Empowerment** to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth* Acts 1 v 7,8
- ❖ *His **Fulfilment** 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* Revelation 7 v 9

The mission of God

From Genesis 12 we know that God is totally, covenantally, eternally committed to the mission of blessing the nations through the people of Abraham. The meta-story of the Bible is that of the four great themes of creation, fall, redemption and future hope. There is one God at work in human history, and that God has a mission which will ultimately be accomplished by the power of his Word and for the glory of His name. Like salvation, **mission belongs to our God**. God will accomplish His purposes to bring "a great multitude that no-one can count, from every nation, tribe, people and language" Revelation 7 v 9 to stand before His throne in worship.

The church is entrusted with God's mission

In the Old Testament, God's covenant people were to minister to the nations by drawing nations to themselves through their godliness and distinctiveness. In the New Testament, God's covenant people, the church, are commissioned **to complete God's mission** by making *disciples of all nations* Matthew 28 v 19.

The church was made for mission - the mission of God - thus the desire of Christ's church is that its life together will build up "world Christians" with a world-view that is God centred and Biblical in order that God would be glorified.

The believer is entrusted with God's mission

The disciples knew the true identity of the crucified and risen Jesus therefore they were entrusted with bearing witness to that to the ends of the earth. Every follower of Christ is called to be so gripped by the glory of God and the glory of His redemptive purpose that he **chooses to align himself with God's mission** to *fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea* Habakkuk 2 v14.

The believer's vocation

As disciples of Jesus the vocation of every believer is to "*come follow me and I will make you fishers of men*" Mark 1 v 17 Their entire lives are to be shaped by Jesus' Kingdom mission. **The believer cooperates in God's purposes** for changing people into mature followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, thus, they are to be energetic and active in their commitment to the mission of God.

The global scope of God's Mission

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible declares God's gracious purposes for all the nations of the earth (*Psalm 2 v 8; Mark 16 v 15-16 et al*). One characteristic of many of the first century congregations was their commitment to the **advancement of the Gospel beyond their immediate situation**. In Acts 1 v 8, the model given to the early church for undertaking the mission of God is one that addresses gospel needs at a local, national and international level. God has one single mission purpose involving both local evangelism and international dimensions which only the whole universal church can fulfil.

Our confidence is in God's Word

The Word of God says about itself *So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.* Isaiah 55 v 11. The passage in Isaiah describes the absolute confidence we can have that **God's Word will always accomplish its purpose**. It never fails.

Is your church centred on both the Word of God and the Mission of God? The Word of God commands it. The needs of the world demand it.

Recommended reading:

Let the Nations be Glad; John Piper; IVP

The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative; Christopher J.H. Wright; IVP; October 2006

Covenant and Missions; Dr Allan Harman; Kosin University, Posan, South Korea