

Bible for Life: *A Theology of Missions*

CLASS 1: A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSIONS – OT

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS

Isaiah 49:6 – “It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles that my Salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.”

- If a believer’s vision for their life, family, and ministry does not include the nations, then it is not big enough. If they believe that mission is regulated to those who have been specifically called, then it is not big enough. Pastor John Piper says it best when he says, *“The way a believer sees their role in relation to world mission will depend on their vision of God and their view of man. And these in turn depend primarily upon their grasp of Scripture and secondarily upon their awareness of our contemporary, global situation.”*

- God's desire to receive worship from all tribes and nations is not just one theme in the Bible, it is consistently woven throughout all 66 books of the Bible.

1.2 THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

- In God’s covenant with Abram in Gen. 12:1-3, God shows us his plan for the nations through his promises to Abram. These promises were not just for the physical descendants of Abraham, but for all families of the earth.

Genesis 12:1-3 – “Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”

- Abram would not only be blessed, but he would be a blessing. Through Abram, he promised to bless _____ the families of the earth.

- This promise is fulfilled through the _____: the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to provide salvation for everyone who believes. As individuals (from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue) put their trust in Jesus alone for salvation, they are blessed with His presence during their lifetime and with eternal life as their future (John 3:16, 36; Rom 10:13; Eph. 6:23).

1.3 GROUP DISCUSSION

1 Samuel 17:45-47 – What was David’s motivation for challenging Goliath?

1 Kings 8:41-43 – As Solomon prayer to dedicate the temple, what was his expectation of the Lord’s fame and His desire for foreigners?

Daniel 6:25-27 – Right after Daniel was delivered from the lions, what was the result of his unyielding devotion to God?

Isaiah 49:6 – Israel thought that their Messiah was only for them and their benefit, but what does this verse teach us about the mission of the Messiah?

1.4 GOD’S PURPOSE

What is God’s purpose? God pursues a global purpose that will reconcile all things to Himself. Specifically, God is on a mission to be loved, served and worshiped by people from all humanity. To accomplish that end, God acts with a determined purpose that will not only affect all people but also defeat evil spiritual powers. God’s purpose is a single purpose with three distinct directions:

- A. **Toward** _____. God desires that worship will come to Him from every nation. Therefore, world evangelism is ultimately for God.
- B. **For** _____. God intends to bring redemptive blessing to every people. He will redeem a people from every people.
- C. **Against** _____. God will overcome evil powers in order to liberate people and, ultimately, to bring all things under His everlasting and complete governance. This kingdom reign is the substance of the blessing He brings to the nations.

God’s Purpose Summarized:

For His glory in global worship God purposes to overcome evil by redeeming a people who will love and obey Him within every people.

Psalm 67

For People: _____

Toward God: _____

Against Evil: _____

1.5 RESOURCES

The Bible (authored by God, written out by many!)

Let the Nations be Glad! by John Piper

“Explore” – Center for Mission Mobilization

“Go Mobilize” – Center for Mission Mobilization

CLASS 2: A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSIONS – NT

2.1 THE MISSION OF THE KINGDOM¹

_____ is the only verse in Scripture in which Jesus gives his disciples a specific description of what must be accomplished before his second coming and the end of the age. World evangelism is an explicit condition for his return. The gospel of the Kingdom must be proclaimed in all the world. Only then will the end come. What constitutes an adequate witness, or who constitutes all people by Christ's understanding, cannot be discerned with precision.

2.2 THE GREAT COMMISSION

Each of the gospels, as well as the Book of Acts, includes a direct expression of Christ commissioning His people to fulfill His mission in the world. The expressions in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts together show a clear mandate to complete world evangelization. The commissioning in the Gospel of John is different it focuses on the way that Jesus now sends us in the same way that He was sent by his Father.

Mark 16:15-16 is a direct _____ to communicate the gospel to _____ person in _____ place. The outcome described is either belief and salvation or disbelief and eternal loss.

Luke 24:46-49 includes Jesus' summary of what Scripture promises will take place among all nations. He indicates that his followers are to be _____ who will proclaim a pardon for sin to all nations.

Acts 1:8 is more of a _____ than a command, that the disciples would become his witnesses. But it nevertheless carries mandate force to live out the full intent of Christ that they would be his witnesses in _____ part of the world.

Matthew 28:18-20, commonly known as "the Great _____," contains the clearest expression of Christ's mandate to complete world evangelism.

John 20:21-23 does not contain a direct command concerning the nations. In the context of these words, however, Jesus imparts the Spirit of God and declares that the disciples are sent in the same _____ and for the same _____ for which He was sent.

¹ Material in 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 was adapted from *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, Study Guide*, pg. 39.

2.3 ALL AUTHORITY

The Commission is based on a transaction of authority from the Father to the Son. What was this authority? When was it given to Jesus? How does this authority enable believers to carry out the mandate? (See Dan 7:13-14) Jesus was referring to the Father awarding Him spiritual authority to subdue every evil power beneath His feet as defeated enemies in order to bring people from every tribe and tongue under His headship as His devoted servants. This kind of authority is required for the mandate which follows.

Luke 10:2 –

John 4:34-36 –

Acts 17:26-27 –

Romans 10:13-15 –

Romans 15:20-21 –

1 Corinthians 3:6-9 –

Ephesians 4:11-12 –

John 10; 11:51-52; 17 –

Revelation 5:9-10 – A Ransomed _____

Revelation 7:9-10 – A Final _____

2.4 CONCLUSION

The Great Commission is to be loved, supported and advocated for by _____ those who _____ Jesus and want to _____ Him. All over the world, wherever the gospel is preached and the people are reminded of this command of Jesus, God inexplicably and marvelously calls some who will be His _____ emissaries.

Six things that the Lord does not care about:

Four things that the Lord does care about from Philippians 2:5-8:

2.5 RESOURCES

Perspectives on the World Christian Movement by Stephen C. Hawthorne - Study Guide

CLASS 3: PERSPECTIVES ON MISSIONS

3.1 LEARN

To learn is to be actively involved in growing our understanding of God's _____,
God's _____, and God's _____.

Resources: joshuaproject.net
prayercast.org
sim.org

3.2 PRAY

To pray is to _____ with God for the good of another person; it is to lift up their concerns and join in their struggles by bringing them before the Father and entreating Him on their behalf.

Prayer also _____ us. As we seek God and His will, through prayer, He works in our hearts and changes the way we think and the way we behave. We begin to love the things that he loves, hate the things that he hates, and see things from His perspective.

Jesus showed us that there is a connection between praying and going when He said, “the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” We must NOT _____ the power of prayer or our need to follow this command to pray for laborers. We should also pray _____ (James 5:16) and _____ (1 Thess 5:17).

3.3 GO

For our purposes, to go is to work to share the _____ with people of a significantly different culture than one's own. Most often, this requires crossing national boundaries as well as boundaries of culture, language, and comfort. Every believer is called to share the gospel at every opportunity. If we call every Christian a missionary in this sense, then these cross-cultural goers need a different name. We might choose to refer to these goers as “frontier missionaries”.

3.4 SEND

To send is to leverage one's career, money, skills, and influence to _____ those who are engaged in cross-cultural ministry, not only financially but through physical help, encouragement, material provision, or other creative means.

“For the gospel to be preached to all nations, the role of a sender is vital. As more Christians embrace this role, they enable greater and more effective missions efforts to the unreached.”²

3.5 WELCOME

To welcome is to invite those who are internationals (students, refugees, and even long-term immigrants) into our culture by initiating _____ with them, extending them hospitality, developing _____, and sharing the love of Christ, as opportunities develop. Some internationals are here temporarily. They will return to their home countries where they already know the language and the culture. Even those who won't return to their home countries have relationships with family members and friends that were left behind. If internationals meet Jesus here and are discipled, they can help reach the nations through their existing networks. Some people call this strategy “missions _____.”

Though there are differences, internationals are people with needs just like us. They are homesick for the people and familiarity they have left behind. They may be overwhelmed by the new and different place they have entered. They experience loneliness, culture shock, and sometimes depression. When believers go out of their way to interact with them, be helpful to them, and develop relationships with them, it can be transforming. One of their greatest needs is _____ and someone to help them understand and find their way in this foreign place.

3.6 MOBILIZE

To mobilize is to enthusiastically share one's global vision, passion, and strategy, with others. They help them find their strategic role in the Great Commission. Mobilizers are “World Christians” who work to encourage others to become “World Christians”. When people are invested in and excited about something, they want to share it with everyone. They do this by _____ and by _____ others to join them. Jesus demonstrated this approach. He lived his life with purpose and intentionally shared His purpose with others, inviting them to join Him. We are called to do the same. We do it through the relationships that God brings into our lives. We do it by sharing our excitement and resources. We need to do it with humility, recognizing that we don't have all the answers and we need to learn from others.

² “Lesson 4 God's Work: Sending,” *Explore Discover God's Word, God's World, and God's Work*, Center for Mission Mobilization, pg. 29.

CLASS 4: THE UNREACHED

4.1 REACHED VS UNREACHED

- More than _____ billion people in the world are considered “unreached.”
- 97% of the unreached people in the world live in an area called the _____.
- Less than _____% of unreached people live in North and South America.

4.2 THUMB

T _____

161 million unreached people in over 700 people groups.
 There are about _____ cross-cultural workers for every 1 million tribal people.
 These people would be called animistic.
 Tribal religions believe that the spirits are everywhere and need to be appeased in order to live in peace with them.

H _____

860 million unreached people in over 150 people groups.
 There are about _____ workers for every 1 million Hindus.
 Hindus worship many gods and will often happily add Jesus as one more god to their other gods, but have great difficulty with the exclusivity of Jesus as the way to heaven.
 They believe in karma, earning favor by living well, reincarnation, and many other things.

U _____

121 million unreached people in over 150 people groups.
 There are about _____ workers for every 1 million unreligious.
 Many westerners are unreligious, they might refer to themselves as atheists or agnostics.
 They don't even acknowledge God. If they do, they believe that He has no interest in them or their concerns.

M _____

1.3 billion unreached people in over 2,000 people groups.
 There are about _____ workers for every 1 million Muslims.
 Muslims believe in Allah as one God who was creator of the world.
 Mohammed is his prophet and as such is revered and worshiped.
 Hope of heaven is increased by practicing the five pillars of Islam.
 Their holy book is the Quran and is also highly revered.

B _____

275 million unreached people in over 300 people groups.

There are about _____ workers for every 1 million Buddhists.

Buddhism is a religion of eastern and central Asia growing out of the teaching of Siddhārtha Gautama that suffering is an integral part of human life and that one can only be freed from suffering by cultivating wisdom, virtue, and concentration.

4.3 ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR³

One Final Charge

To be a disciple of Jesus is to let His ultimate purpose in the world _____ everything you think, desire, and do.

Two Spiritual Realities

We are involved in a _____ war, and our enemy is formidable.

The outcome of this spiritual war is inevitable, and our ally is _____.

Three Practical Steps

_____ differently

_____ differently

_____ differently

Four Biblical Guarantees

God has power to _____.

The gospel has power to _____.

The church has power to _____ the world.

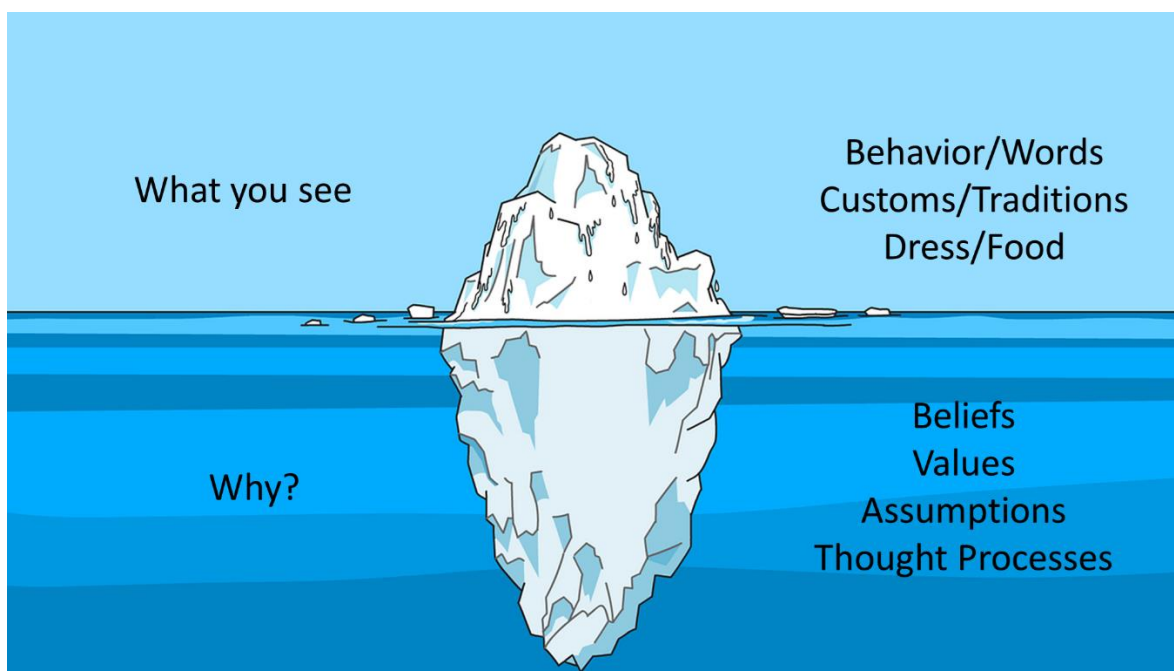
In the face of opposition, this commission will one day be _____,
and this world will one day be new.

³ The following section was adapted from David Platt's *Secret Church 21: The Great Imbalance*.

CLASS 5: CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC CHALLENGES FOR MISSIONARIES

5.1 CULTURE

What is culture? The customary _____, social forms and material traits of a racial, religious, or _____ group; the characteristic features of everyday existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time.⁴



Missionaries, who desire to be welcomed into a place in order to share the gospel, don't want only to learn and adapt to a new culture, they want to adopt and embrace it as much as possible so that they can earn the right to speak _____ all the while maintaining biblical _____.

Where culture and Scripture conflict, _____ should always win out.

⁴ Merriam Webster's definition.

5.2 SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Corinthians 10:23-24 "All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. ²⁴ Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.

Romans 12:9-16 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰ Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Romans 14:1-3 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ² One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.