

"WHY MISSIONS?"

Text: John 1:1-14

INTRODUCTION: Missions has always been a beggar--never enough money, men, etc. The only thing missions has plenty of is lost people. Why?

1. False associations--Women, WMU; children, VBS; Christmas, etc.

There is really no closeness--we feel no involvement.

2. Inferior motives--Suffering of missionaries; poor, lost people, etc.

This stirs emotion, but it soon dies. We forget we ever shed a tear.

The real reason and motive for missions is not the Great Commission--or anything else Jesus said--not duty, but it is Jesus Himself. He is the motive.

Isaiah--chapter 6--When he saw God, he went.

Paul--Acts 9--When he saw Christ, he went.

At the heart of every great Christian doctrine stands a missionary imperative. One God; one basic malady-sin; One Saviour-Christ. Impossible to believe these things and deny missions.

TWO TRUTHS OFTEN MISSED.

(1) Every revelation from God to men has been local at the outset. Incarnation; Bethlehem.

(2) Every revelation from God to men is meant to become universal by way of human messengers.

You cannot quote John 3:16 and say missions does not concern you. Some people do not believe in missions. They do not have a right to--they do not believe in Christ.

→ He who does not believe in missions faces a terrific problem of getting the incarnate Christ into and out of Bethlehem.

We want to see the missionary implications of the Incarnation and the crucifixion--they are the dynamic for missions.

I. THE INCARNATION

1. What is it?

(1) It is God among men--identified with men. 1:14; Phil. 2:5,7.

(2) It is God among men in our behalf. "A ransom..."

(3) It is God among men made available to men. All men can now know God.

(4) It is God among men now dwelling in us.

(5) It is God among men dwelling in us, and thus is reaching out to others in order to repeat our experience in another and another, etc.

2. What are the missionary responsibilities in light of this?

(1) Identify ourselves with all men. God identified Himself with us by taking on our burdens. We cannot say, "It is not my concern." Jesus said, "Your sins are my sins."

(2) Make ourselves available to all men. Our witness, our money. Paul--"Servants of Christ for your sakes."

(3) It sets the pattern for our taking aggressive initiative in redemptive interests in others.

It is impossible to be IN CHRIST, and not participate in Christ's mission to the world.

II. THE CRUCIFIXION.

The crucifixion completes the incarnation. When we stand before the incarnate Christ, we know what our duty is. When we stand before the crucified Christ, we learn how we are to perform that duty.

For Jesus to become man demanded the incarnation. For Jesus to become man's Saviour demanded the crucifixion. For you and me to become children of God demands faith in the crucified Christ. For you and me to become effective servants of God demands that we be crucified with Christ.

The road of burden bearing led Jesus to the cross; it will lead us also to the cross. LUKE 9:27

1. What was the cross for Jesus?

- (1) Voluntary
- (2) Self-denial--emptied self.
- (3) Self-giving
- (4) Vicarious--upper room--"for you."
- (5) Suffering
- (6) Redemptive
- (7) Victorious--led Jesus into resurrection life.

2. What is missionary significance--We are to bear cross.

- (1) It is voluntary--must be an expression of love.
- (2) It is self-denial--obedient, whatever the cost.
- (3) Self-giving--sacrifice.
- (4) Suffering--"fellowship of His sufferings." The lostness of all men about us is to be a death-dealing agony in our souls that will obliterate self and lift up sinners before God.
- (5) Vicarious--for others
- (6) Redemptive--others won through our efforts.

(7) Victorious--Save life, lose it. Gives us the highest plane of living.

To shun missions is to impoverish our own spiritual life, and denies the world the greatest blessing the Lord has ever provided.

Devil's Substitute

CONCLUSION: God without a cross is unthinkable. Religion without a cross is dangerous. A church without a cross is ungodly; a Christian without a cross is deadly--to himself, and to the world. There must be a cross at the center of our faith.

The incarnate, crucified Christ shouts a redemptive mission for you and me--John 12:24

(3)

High low -- "sacred" 11 months and 11 days

(1)

These girls are beautiful and intelligent and are the best of their kind in the world.