

The calling of missionary essay



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THEOLOGICAL CENTRE FOR ASIA (MALAYSIA) THE CALLING OF A MISSIONARY
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14 i THE CALLING OF A MISSIONARY What is a missionary call? How does one recognize that God is calling him or her into an international mission field or to local mission? Before we can answer the above questions, we must firstly define what is the meaning of the word “ Missionary”. One person defines a missionary is someone sent by Jesus Christ just as He was sent by God.

Here the great controlling factor is not the needs of people, but the command of Jesus. Another definition for a missionary is any Christian who crosses cultural boundaries to further the building of Christ’s church and the expansion of God’s kingdom. In a sense, Jesus Christ was our prime missionary example in that he crossed from the kingdom culture and lived his life for three and half years in a new culture known as earthly kingdom. The Primary Call Every Christians have an initial call from God i. the calling to accept the salvation of God.

This is the main call of every believers in Christ. If a person does not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his Lord and personal Saviour, then he can’t proclaim the Good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How can he proclaim what he himself has not experience. An example in the Bible can be said of the Apostle Paul. He had to have an encounter with Jesus Christ before he was commission to be an Apostle to the Gentile.

(Acts 9: 1-22) Similarly he or she is then commanded by Jesus Christ to share the good news of this salvation to the unbelievers. Such proclamation can be done locally or abroad as the directed by God. The Missionary Call However, before a person can accept the missionary call, one must have a clear understanding of God's redemptive mission on earth. In the Bible, there are a lot of scriptures to back up God's mission endeavor. In the book named "The Condensed World Mission Book" the editor Jonathan Lewis quoted John R.

W Stott as saying this " Without the Bible world evangelization would be not impossible but actually inconceivable. It is the Bible that lays upon us the responsibility to evangelize the world, give us a gospel to proclaim, tell us how to proclaim it, and promises us that it is God's power for salvation to every believer. It is moreover, an observable fact of history, both past and contemporary, that the degree of the church's commitment to world evangelization is commensurate with the degree of its conviction about the authority of the Bible. Whenever Christians lose their confidence in the Bible, they also lose their zeal for evangelism.

Conversely, whenever they are convinced about the Bible, they are determined about evangelism. Exhortations from the Bible The Bible is full of explicit as well as implicit references to God's will for world evangelism. Most evangelical believers are familiar with the Great Commission: " Go ye into all the world. " However, there are 195 references to calling in the New Testament, 73 having strictly theological meaning. To back up, here are some scriptures that show God's redemptive mission as found in the Old

Testament and New Testament for reflection. Old Testament and missions

- Genesis 12: 1-3 (repeated in Gen. 18: 18, 22: 17-18, 26: 24 and 28: 12-14) •Exodus 19: 6 — Israel was to be a “kingdom of priests” Numbers 14: 21 — glory of Lord fills the whole earth
- Deuteronomy 4: 6-8 — show your understanding to the nations
- Deuteronomy 10: 19 — “ You are to love those who are aliens”
- Deuteronomy 28: 10 — “ all the peoples on the earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord” •Joshua 4: 24 — “ so that all the peoples of the earth might know” •1 Samuel 17: 46 — “ the whole world will know there is a God in Israel” •1 Kings 8: 41-43, 59-60 (also in 2 Chronicles 6: 32-33) — “ so that all peoples of the earth may know your name” (Solomon’s prayer at dedication of Temple) •2 Kings 19: 15 — “ Hezekiah prayed . . . O LORD, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. ” •1 Chronicles 16: 31 “ Let the earth be glad; let them say among the nations, The Lord reigns! ” •2 Chronicles 6: 33 — “ so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you” •Psalm 2: 7-10 — “ You are my Son . . . I will make the nations your inheritance” •Psalm 7: 7-8 — “ Let the Lord judge the peoples” •Psalm 8: 9 — “ How majestic is your name in all the earth! ” •Psalm 18: 49 — “ I will praise you among the nations” •Psalm 22: 26-28 — “ all the families of the nations will bow down” •Psalm 19: 1-4 — “ their words to the ends of the world” Psalm 22: 27 — “ All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord” •Psalm 24 — “ The earth is the Lord’s” •Psalm 33 — “ Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” •Psalm 45: 17 — “ The nations will praise you for ever and ever” •Psalm 46: 10 — “ I will be exalted among the nations” •Psalm 47 — “ God reigns over the

nations” •Psalm 48: 10 — “ Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth” •Psalm 49: 1 — “ Hear this, all you peoples; listen, all who live in this world” •Psalm 50 — “ From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets” •Psalm 57 — “ I will sing of you among the peoples” Psalm 59: 13 — “ It will be known to the ends of the earth that God rules over Jacob. ” •Psalm 66 — “ All the earth bows down to you . .

. Praise our God, O peoples” •Psalm 68: 32 — “ Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth” •Psalm 72 — “ all nations will serve him” •Psalm 72: 9 — “ the desert tribes will bow before him” •Psalm 72: 17, 19 — “ All nations will be blessed through him . . .

May the whole earth be filled with his glory” •Psalm 77: 14 — “ you display your power among the peoples” •Psalm 82 — “ all the nations are your inheritance” Psalm 83: 18 — “ You alone are the Most High over all the earth. ” •Psalm 86: 8-13 — all nations will come and worship •Psalm 87 — the register of the peoples •Psalm 96 — “ sing to the Lord, all the earth . . .

Declare his glory among the nations” •Psalm 97 — “ The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice” •Psalm 98: 3 — “ All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. ” •Psalm 98: 9 — “ He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity. ” •Psalm 99: 1-3 — “ He is exalted over all the nations.

Let them praise your great and awesome name” •Psalm 102: 15 — “ The nations will fear the name of the LORD, all the kings of the earth will revere your glory. ” •Psalm 102: 22 — “ when the peoples and the kingdoms assemble to worship the Lord” •Psalm 105: 1 — “ make known among the

nations what He has done” •Psalm 106: 8 — reason for dividing the Red Sea

•Psalm 108: 3 — “ I will sing of you among the peoples” •Psalm 108: 5 — “ Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth. ” •Psalm 110: 6 — “ He will judge the nations,” Psalm 113: 3 — “ From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised” •Psalm 117 — “ Praise the Lord, all you nations” •Psalm 126 — “ it was said among the nations” •Psalm 135 — “ our Lord is greater than all gods” •Psalm 138: 4 — “ may all the kings of the earth praise you, O Lord”

•Isaiah 2: 3 — “ Many peoples will come and say, “ Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. •Isaiah 6: 3 — “ They were calling to one another: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.

” •Isaiah 11: 9 — “ fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord” •Isaiah 11: 10 — “ in that day a Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples, the nations . . . ” •Isaiah 12: 4 — “ Make known among the nations what He has done” •Isaiah 24: 16 — “ From the ends of the earth we hear singing: Glory to the Righteous One.

” •Isaiah 25: 6 — “ the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples” •Isaiah 42: 6 — “ I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles. •Isaiah 34: 1 — “ Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! ” •Isaiah 37: 16 — “ O Lord Almighty . . . , you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth.

” •Isaiah 42: 4 — “ He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope. ” •Isaiah 43: 6 — “

I will say to the north, ' Give them up! ' and to the south, ' Do not hold them back. "' •Isaiah 45: 6 — " from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting men may know there is none besides me. " •Isaiah 45: 22 — " Turn to me . . .

. Il you ends of the earth" •Isaiah 49: 1-6 — " I will make you a light for the Gentiles" •Isaiah 49: 22 — " The Sovereign Lord says: " See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples. " •Isaiah 52: 10 — " The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God. " •Isaiah 56: 7 — " my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" •Isaiah 59: 19 — " From the west, men will fear the name of the Lord, and from the rising of the sun, they will revere His glory. " •Isaiah 60: 3 — " Nations will come to your light"

Isaiah 62: 11 — " The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of the earth"

•Isaiah 66: 19 — " They will proclaim my glory among the nations" •Jeremiah 3: 17 — " All nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord"

•Jeremiah 16: 19 To you the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say, " Our fathers possessed nothing but false gods, worthless idols that did them no good. " •Ezekiel 36: 22-23 — " The nations will know I am the Lord" •Daniel 2: 47; 4: 1-2; 6: 25 — " Surely your God is the God of gods"

•Daniel 7: 13, 14 — " all peoples, nations and languages should serveHim"

•Micah 1: 2 — " Hear, O peoples, all of you, listen, O earth and all who are in it.

" •Micah 4: 2 — " Many nations will come" •Micah 5: 4 — " His greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. " •Habbakuk 2: 14 — " The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the water cover the sea"

•Zephaniah 2: 11 — " Nations on every shore will worship him" •Zephaniah

3: 9 — “ Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord. ” •Haggai 2: 7 — “ Desire of all nations” Zechariah 2: 11 — “ Many nations will be joined with the Lord in that day and will become my people” •Zechariah 8: 20-23 — “ Many peoples and inhabitants of many cities will come” •Zechariah 9: 10 — “ He will proclaim peace to the nations” •Zechariah 14: 9 — “ The Lord will be king over the whole earth. ” •Malachi 1: 10-11 — “ My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun” New Testament and missions •Matthew 4: 8-11 — Temptation of Jesus •Matthew 6: 9-10 — The Lord’s prayer •Matthew 10: 18 — “ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. •Matthew 13 (Ezekiel 17: 23) — parables of sower, weeds, mustard seed, fishing net •Matthew 24: 14 — the gospel will be preached in the whole world •Matthew 28: 19-20; Mark 16: 15 - The Great Commission (which many say is a re-statement of God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12) •Mark 11: 17 (Isaiah 56: 7) — a house of prayer for all nations •Mark 13: 10 — “ the gospel must first be preached to all nations” •Mark 16: 15 (see Matthew 28: 19-20) •Luke 2: 32 — “ a light for revelation to the Gentiles” •Luke 10: 2 — “ harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few” •Luke 10: 27 — “ love your neighbor as yourself” •John 3: 16 John 12: 32 — “ I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.

” •John 21: 4-14 — some Biblical commentators have said the 153 fish equals the number of all the tribes and nations which the ancients thought existed on earth •Acts 1: 8; 2: 5-12 13: 47 (Isaiah 49: 6) — witnesses in all the earth •Acts 3: 25 — “ He said to Abraham, Through your offspring, all

peoples on earth will be blessed. ” •Acts 9: 15 “ Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings. ” •Acts 11: 18 — “ They praised God, saying, So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life. ” •Acts 13: 47 — “ I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth. ” (Isaiah 49: 6) •Acts 14: 27 — “ They reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. ” •Acts 28: 28 — “ Therefore I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen! ” •Romans 1: 5 — “ We received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to obedience.

” •Romans 3: 29 — “ Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too. •Romans 10: 12-15 — “ How can they hear? ” •Romans 15: 10 “ Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people. ” (Deuteronomy 32: 43] •Romans 15: 11 “ Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples. ” (Psalm 117: 1) •Romans 16: 26 — So that all nations might believe •2 Corinthians 4: 15 — “ grace that is reaching more and more people” •2 Corinthians 10: 16 — “ so that we can preach the gospel to the regions beyond you” •Galatians 3: 8 — “ The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: All nations will be blessed through you.

” (Genesis 12: 3; 18: 18; 22: 18) •Galatians 3: 14 — “ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles. ” •Ephesians 1: 10 — “ To bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. ” •Ephesians 2: 11-19 — “ you are no longer

foreigners and aliens” •Philippians 2: 10 — Every knee shall bow •1 Thessalonians 2: 15-16 — “ to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved” •Hebrews 6: 13-14 — God’s promise to Abraham •2 Peter 3: 9, 12 — “ not wanting anyone to perish” •1 John 2: 2 — “ He is the atoning sacrifice . . . or the sins of the whole world” •Revelation 5: 9 — “ you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation” •Revelation 7: 9 — Every tribe, tongue, people and nation

- Revelation 14: 6 — “ The angel had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth — to every nation, tribe, language and people.
- ” •Revelation 15: 4 — “ all nations will come and worship before you”
- Revelation 21: 23-24 — “ The Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light”

The First Missionary Besides the above scriptures, the stories from Biblical characters also clearly illuminate God’s mission on earth. One such example is from the life of Abraham. Abraham, the Great Patriarch of the Bible. He could be the first missionary to be sent out by God when He called him to leave the city of Haran (Gen 12: 4) and to go and dwell in the land of Canaan.

Here we see Abraham was specifically called by God to uproot himself and his family and to be planted in another culture among the Canaanites. God’s mission for Abraham was that he would bless him and make his descendants into a great nation and they in turn would be a blessings to the other nations. Likewise, believers of Jesus Christ are also commissioned by him to go to the nations to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to make disciples. (Matt 28: 18-20) Interestingly, the word “ nations” in Greek is ethnos and from Thayer’s definition it means a tribe, nation or a people group. Based on <https://assignbuster.com/the-calling-of-missionary-essay/>

Thayer definition, a nation can be made up of many people groups within itself.

For example, in Malaysia, we can have a number of people groups such as the Iban, the Melanau, the Kenyah, the Malays, the Chinese, etc and though they differ with each other in term of languages and cultures, nevertheless they are all Malaysian by citizenship. Thus going to a “ nation” does not necessary mean going to a nation outside one’s nation e. g. going to China for instance. It may mean reaching out to one of the tribe in one’s own nation and be a missionary among them.

The Command So a true disciple of Jesus Christ, if he wants to obey the Master in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28: 18-20) must be able to discern where and when God is calling him to work in the harvest field. Is it to another country or among the tribes in his own country? Supposing if one is called to be a missionary to another nation or a particular people group, how does he know it? What are the signs to look for and what are the practical steps he need to take? The story of Mary Slessor Here is another example in the year 1876 when a Scottish woman by the name of Mary Slessor obeyed the missionary call to go the mission station at Duke Town at the slave coast of the Calabar River in Africa. Mary was then 29 years old and came from a poor family. Her harsh family condition had helped to prepare her for the tough and dangerous life in Africa.

The missionary call to go the Calabar was tugging her while she was serving God faithfully in Scotland. After many years of hard missionary works in Africa, Mary Slessor was affectionately known as “ White Ma ” to the various

tribes such as the Okoyong and Azo. She was able to bring transformation to these cannibal tribes into a civilized communities through the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Practical Steps Here are some practical steps that one can explore: 1.

Read everything about missions and missionaries that you can get your hands on. 2. Get involved in the missions mobilization and education program of your local church 3. Go hear every missionary speaker that you can. God sometimes chooses that time to clarify His calling to young people.

4. Talk to your pastor. Verbalizing your thinking with him and enlisting his prayer support may help you sort through various issues. 5. Throw yourself into active ministry through your local church. Learn to minister effectively in your own culture before you attempt cross-cultural ministry.

6. Go on a short-term missions trip. A rural mission trip will give you a taste of life on the mission field and a good opportunity to sense God's leadership.

7. Contact a missionary sending agency. .

Consider giving a year of volunteer service overseas before deciding whether you should offer the rest of your life. 9. Persevere. Here is another advice from Merle Dye, who served for 21 yrs in Ethiopia and Sudan, and is now southeast regional director for SIM.

She called it the 3 C's. According to Merle Dye, the 3 C's that are vital to knowing and following God's will are: • Conviction: This comes from Bible study, prayer, hearing messages, reading mission material, and focusing on God's plan for the world and my part in fulfilling it. Counsel: Share your

thoughts with godly leaders and friends for prayer and suggestions. •

Contact a mission agency, go on a short term exposure trip, talk to missionaries. She said to keep marching ahead as doors continue to open.

Her caution was not to mix the order above, i. e. , don't look at circumstances before the inner conviction and Godly counsel. Also, attend mission conferences, talk to missionaries, subscribe to missions magazines and read missionary biographies. Get in touch with missionaries who serve in a country or inistry in which you have an interest and then pray for them.

When does God call people to long-term missionary service? Dr.

Terry Read, missionary and missions professor has this to report in response to the above question: •20% felt God calling them after listening to missionary speakers •21% were called as a result of a missions education service in their local church •19% were called because of their own family's missions vision and conversations •10% heard God's call through reading missionary booksSo from all that have been written, we can concluded that every believers are called to preach the gospel and some will be involved in international cross cultural missionary works while the others may be localized missionary work in one's own country. Nevertheless, all believers are part of the missionary community that reach out to a lost and dying world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. BIBLIOGRAPHY