

THE CHURCH'S MISSION . . . Jn 17:18-19 (Read vs. 6-14)

"As thou didst send me into the world,
so have I sent them into the world."

I. The Church exists as a necessary part of God's plan
for the salvation of the world.

Missionary Hymn "From Greenland's icy mountains"
Story behind the composition of the hymn. 1819.
Written by a man who later became a missionary.

II. When the church loses its sense of mission,
it loses its reason for being.

Story of delegation of villagers in India who expressed
their thanks to the missionaries.

One said, "Three years ago I was sent here by the
Communist Party of India to destroy the Christian work
of the missionary. But when I saw the hungry being
fed and felt lovingkindness all around me, I discovered
that I was starving in spirit.

Last Christmas I was baptized.

You see, I was dead before, but now I live.

So I thank you not for saving my life,
but for GIVING me life."

III. The periods of missionary zeal have been the great
periods in the church's life.

The "great Century" of world missions was one of
the most adventurous, heroic, sacrificial, and
rewarding chapters in church history.

Kenneth Scott Latourette says that during the
great century of achievement between 1830-1930
75,000 missionaries went out from Europe and North
America to the ends of the earth.

The fact that 10,000 of them died and 20,000 of them
returned broken in health indicates the risks this
peaceful army took.

IV. The great need facing the church is the need to recover
its missionary vocation.

It is not easy.

The church is today facing a crisis more challenging
than any since the time of the Renaissance or the
Reformation.

Missionary Herbert Morrison and President Teddy Roosevelt returned from Africa on the same ship. Teddy Roosevelt had been on a safari, hunting big game. There was a brass band out to meet him. There was no one present to meet the famous missionary. He commented to his wife, "Well, we haven't arrived home yet." He was speaking about the eternal home-going. He had been in Africa trying to win souls rather than trying to kill big game.

CONCLUSION: Each follower of Jesus Christ must in some voluntary and deliberate manner relate himself to the great commission.

And we must not make the fatal mistake of limiting the great commission to a charter for evangelism on an international basis.

Actually, each of us is commissioned to be a missionary, an evangelist, a personal witness and servant of Jesus Christ in our own personal world.

We must cease treating the great commission as the **GREAT OMISSION**.

May God help each of us to be a communicator of the good news of the coming of Christ, who was sent by his Father to be our Savior, because he sends us today to be his messenger.

59 H. Mayel, 75. ord. apr 69
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