

THE MISSIONARY CALL

BIBLE TEXT : **Luke 24:46, 47; 14:21-23; Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18-20.**

LESSON 365 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, Amen" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 24:46-47

⁴⁶ And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

⁴⁷ And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Luke 14:21-23

²¹ So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

²² And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

²³ And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

Mark 16:15

¹⁵ And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I The Macedonian Call

1. Jesus commanded His disciples to proclaim the Gospel message everywhere, Luke 24:46,47; 14:21-23; Matthew 10:23; 28:18-20.

Luke 10:1-2

¹ After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

² Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

Matthew 10:7-14

⁷ And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

⁸ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

⁹ Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

¹⁰ Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

¹¹ And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

¹² And when ye come into an house, salute it.

¹³ And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

¹⁴ And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

Matthew 10:23

²³ But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

2. The preaching of the Gospel is urgent business, and the people of God are to be busy publishing the news of salvation to every creature, Mark 16:15;

John 4:6-8

⁶ Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

⁷ There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

⁸ (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

John 4:31-38

³¹ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

³² But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

³³ Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat?

³⁴ Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

³⁵ Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

³⁶ And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that

of the world. Amen.

reapeth may rejoice together.

³⁷ And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

³⁸ I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

Matthew 20:6-7

⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

⁷ They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

Romans 13:11-12

¹¹ And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8

⁴ But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

⁵ Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

⁷ For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

⁸ But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

Matthew 25:24-30

²⁴ Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

²⁶ His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

²⁷ Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

²⁸ Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

²⁹ For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

³⁰ And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

2. The vision of the Macedonian, given to Paul, is typical of the Gospel call to every Christian

Acts 16:9-10

⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

¹⁰ And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Acts 26:16-20

¹⁶ But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

¹⁷ Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

¹⁸ To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them

which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

¹⁹ Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

²⁰ But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

3. The outermost parts of the earth are to be reached with the Gospel message,

Matthew 24:14

¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Psalms 96:3

³ Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

Isaiah 42:4

⁴ He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.

NOTES:

Whitened Harvest

When the demoniac of the Gadarenes was delivered from demon power by Jesus, he greatly desired to accompany Jesus wherever he might be going. However, Jesus told him to return to his own house and show what great things God had done for him. Whereupon he returned and published throughout his town what great things God had done for him, and in so doing he became a home missionary. No one who has become truly converted has lacked a desire to publish the news of God's great salvation. The missionary spirit cannot be separated from the Gospel, because the Gospel message concerns all the peoples of the world.

While the skin of a man may be white, black, yellow, or red, the soul of man is the same in any part of the world. Sin is sin anywhere, and in any generation; and the necessity of the Blood of Jesus Christ to wash away that sin is the same everywhere.

The Gospel is to all, and for all, and it is the happy business of God's people to proclaim its truth wherever man can be found. Many times God prospers His people; He gives them an abundance of material good, Christian companion-ship, fellowship, happiness, peace. But these things are given only on one condition: that they be used to help others. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because they were proud, full of bread (things), they were idle, and they did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. (**Ezekiel 16:49** ⁴⁹ Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.) Israel is today a byword, a persecuted people because they refused to use what God gave them for the benefit of a brother. But happy are those who are putting forth every effort for the extension of the Gospel.

The world is large, and its peoples are many, and urgency is the watchword of the Christian. Never a day goes into yesterday that does not see countless numbers of human souls pass into eternity, their destiny forever settled by the way they have lived. It is to hasten the work of God that the Lord calls to all Christians: "Why stand ye here all the day idle? . . . Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive" (Matthew 20:6, 7). It is the business of the Holy Spirit to convict sinners of their sins, and to reprove, and to call men to judgment, and tell of things to come. A child of God, and especially one who is sanctified and has the baptism of the Holy Ghost — the Holy Spirit

leading and guiding — is going to be out working for God, working in co-operation with the Holy Spirit.

When the disciples came to Jesus who had been talking to the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, they asked Him to eat. He informed them that He had meat to eat that they knew not of. They, not understanding His meaning, thought that someone had given Him food. But He clarified His thought to them by telling them that the meat He had which gave Him strength was to do the will of His Father who had sent Him, and to finish that work. In that sense every true child of God is speeded on his way by the knowledge that he is doing the will of the Father. Such knowledge often makes Christians seemingly tireless and inexhaustible in pressing the Gospel cause. The work of the Father was the all-consuming passion of the life of Christ, and it is said of Him, "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (Psalm 69:9). The life of Christ was consumed by His efforts to do the will of His Father; and in like manner, and in proportion to the ability and grace that God gives, the Christian should have a love and a passion for the souls of men that transcends all other loves and desires.

We have an obligation before God. Let us not lose the vision of what we are supposed to do. We need to pray desperately that God will bring these many weary, sin-sick souls in, and that God will give us a cup of cold water to give to them — the cup of consolation, of good news that there is a way out of sin and a way to escape eternal death through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Each one of us cannot go into every nation. But, thank God, He has given us the privilege of going into all the world through prayer and through faith and through the yearning of heart that brings the power of God down to save, to sanctify, to baptise with the Holy Ghost and fire — to lead out of darkness into light. Those who cannot go can give of their substance; they can do with their heart what their hands find to do — preparing the house of God, or ministering to the sick, or telling the Story on the street corner, or going to the hospitals, spreading the Gospel through the literature, or whatever it might be that God has given them to do. And whatever is done, let it be done not for the honour and glory of self, but for the honour and glory of God alone.

Missionaries, Home and Abroad

Most Christian organisations and church groups divide their missionary programs into two groups; namely, home missionary endeavours, and foreign missions. Home missions usually consist of any and all efforts being put forth to evangelise and convert the great number of people at home and in nearby neighbourhoods. The building of local churches and the establishing of congregations of believers in the homeland is usually classified as "home missions." It should not be thought that home missionary efforts are less in importance than those of the foreign field. In some instances, foreign missions can only be carried on because of the support lent to them by Christian groups at home.

Where people are active in home missions they usually branch out into greater fields of endeavour. It is true that when a group of Christians send some of their number to the foreign field for the preaching of the Gospel, God prospers the church at home to provide support for those sent abroad.

A unique example of a missionary group was the Bible class, sponsored by Christian sailors aboard the aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Enterprise, in World War II. These men formed an

evangelistic group to supplement the regular services aboard ship, for the purpose of converting some of their shipmates to Christ. Despite the adversities of shipboard life during wartime cruising, men were converted to Christ. Also, an active part was taken by the Bible class in foreign missions. These men were true missionaries, and laboured to convert the men near by, and also helped some who were labouring in other fields.

To Every Creature

It is the express will of God that every living soul know of the saving grace of Christ. God has blessed every effort that has been made by the few or the many, to carry out Jesus' great command to "preach the gospel to every creature."

In Every Language

Charles Wesley wrote, "O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise." While it is hardly possible for one man to sing the Lord's praises in a thousand different languages, yet it has been done in the printed Word. The American Bible Society, in their 1952 report, declared that the Bible, or some portion of it, has been published in 1059 languages. The whole Bible has been published in 197 languages, a complete Testament has been published in 257 different languages, and at least a Gospel or some other whole Book of the Bible has been published in 605 languages. There are also some 90 other languages in which some portion less than a whole Book of the Bible has been published.

The Psalmist said, "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it" (Psalm 68:11). The work of publishing the Gospel, and bringing about the conversion of sinners is mostly unnoticed by the world. Nevertheless, it goes on daily, by the consecrated few, and is a literal carrying out of the parable of the leaven and the bread. The leaven hid in three measures of meal leavened the whole amount. (**Matthew 13:33** ³³ Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened..) It is not said in the Scripture that the world will be converted to Christ, but it is said that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

Throughout the centuries, the Gospel has been preached in the face of bitter opposition. The men who translated the Bible into other languages often paid for their labours with their lives. God has not left Himself without witness, and no book ever published has ever come near reaching the continuous popularity of the Bible. Year after year, it is the "Best Seller" of all books. In 1952 the American Bible Society circulated over 13 million Bibles and Testaments.

Despite contrary opinions, nothing has ever held the interest of the individual person as the Bible has, for it is alive, and eternal. It tells of the love of God for the individual man, and is the road map to Heaven. Its appeal can be seen in the example set by natives in the Hebrides Islands in the South Pacific some years ago. The whole tribe laboured for five years to earn money to purchase a printing of the Bible in their own native dialect, that they might read of Him who loved their souls and gave Himself for them.

QUESTIONS

1. Where did Jesus command His disciples to preach the Gospel?
2. Why is the preaching of the Gospel an urgent business?
3. What is meant by the expression, "The Macedonian Call"?
4. Define the terms "home mission" and "foreign missions."
5. In how many languages has some portion of the Bible been published?
6. What is the most popular Book of all times?
7. Explain what Jesus meant when He told His disciples that He had "meat" they knew not of.