

# Understanding the Need for Foreign Evangelism

One of the greatest experiences I have had in preaching came from my trip to Belize in 1998. Over four weeks, I took part in more personal bible studies and witnessed more baptisms than many congregations see in one year. The trip forever changed my perspective on preaching, and served me with notice about the tremendous need for preaching in areas outside the United States. Before going, I was reminded from a few brethren about the need here in the United States. *There are so many areas right here at home where the church is not strong, we need to work there first*, were among the comments I received. And no doubt there are areas here at home that need attention – such as the upper Midwest, the Rocky mountain region; and the Northeast. Many men and their families labor in these areas – with success! Let's continue to pray for, support them, and thank God for their desire to serve God in difficult places!

But what about the rest of the world, and what of our ability to teach the saving gospel of Christ to those who are desperately searching for God's truth? In answering this, let us examine an underlying principle expressed throughout the Scriptures. In Luke 10:30-37 Jesus tells us of a man robbed and left for dead. A priest and a Levite walk by and refuse to help. In verses 33-34, a Samaritan *came upon him, and when he saw him, he felt compassion...bandaged up his wounds...brought him to an inn...and took care of him*. In the story of the *Good Samaritan* who was more guilty: the robbers or the priest & Levite? We would all agree that the robbers were evil and needed to be punished for their actions. But we must not forget the priest & Levite. They were accountable for their **inaction**. They were presented with an opportunity to demonstrate mercy and compassion – and ignored it. A verse in James' epistle comes to mind: *Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.* (4:17) This verse teaches us that **ability + opportunity = responsibility!** American preachers have a responsibility to spread the gospel, not only here at home but abroad as well!

Millions around the world die each year without hearing the gospel. **What are we doing about it?** We cannot sit around and be spectators! We have to heed Jesus' command: *Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.* (Mk. 16:15) We cannot afford to sit around and be comfortable while the rest of the world is lost! Reaching the lost was **the** mission of Jesus. (Lk. 19:10) Are we following after the mission of Jesus in spreading the gospel overseas? While all preachers may not be cut out for foreign work, there is a crying need for men to go and brethren to support them in their efforts! Tremendous opportunities are presenting themselves in Mexico and Central America. Over the years, this has been an area neglected by American preachers. Many men are now laboring in South America with success. New congregations are being formed in Europe, Russia, and Australia. Work is being conducted in Japan, China, the Philippines, and other parts of Southeast Asia. I know of good work being conducted across Canada – from Alberta to Ontario. The opportunities are limitless and the rewards gained from the work of spreading the

gospel are priceless! All we have to do is **open our mouth** and plant the seeds of the gospel!

In 2 Kings 7:1-8 we read of a few lepers who stumbled into a Syrian camp. They find food, water, money, and horses! In verse 9 we read of the conversation between themselves: *we are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent; ...let us go and tell the king's household.* They knew it would be wrong to keep their good fortune under wraps. Brethren, how many people in the world know how wonderful it is to have salvation in Christ? How many people know how wonderful it is to understand the Bible without a theology professor, or know about true hospitality among Christians? **They need to be let in on our feast! Let's not keep the feast to ourselves!** *Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? ...How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!* (Paul, Romans 10:13-15)

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