

*World
Christian
Bible Study*



Lesson 1
Becoming a World Christian
What it means to be a World Christian
by David Bryant

What, then, shall we call this discovery that can change us so radically and yet make us so healthy? And, what shall we call those who have experienced it?

By now, it should be obvious that all Christians are born again in order to fulfill God's world-wide purpose. But there's more than one kind of response to this responsibility.

Some are asleep, some are on retreat, and some are determined to stand in the gap where billions await the opportunity to hear of Christ for the first time. Some are heading into the heat of battle while others are hiding in fear. Many moving along slowly, because of unbelief or personal interests and ambitions. Others run the race before them setting no limits on how, where, or among whom God will use them.

Some have a small worldview and also view their God as being small. They do not know about the unreached, and they don't care! Others are ready to reach out with God's love to the ends of the earth. They are determined to make Christ's global cause the focus of who they are and all they do. They are surrendered to Christ; they are willing to be broken and remolded to fit into God's plan wherever they can make the most strategic impact. This person is growing to know Christ, obey Him, and glorify Him in all that he does.

So, what shall we call the discovery that redirects Christians toward the needs of the world? And how shall we distinguish those who have made it?

Some Christians are stunted by selfishness and petty pre-occupations or by a cautious obedience and love reserved for the closest and easiest to care about. How shall we distinguish the others whose growth in discipleship is unmistakable, with a vitality that comes only to those who help bring lost sinners from many nations home?

What shall we call this distinct group of Christians who have taken a stand that says: We want to accept personal responsibility for reaching some of earth's unreached, especially from among the billions who can only be reached through major new efforts by God's people? Among every people-group where there is no vital, evangelizing Christian community there should be one, there must be one, there shall be one. Together we want to help make this happen.

For a moment, let's call them WORLD CHRISTIANS. Of course, any new term might be misunderstood. For example, some might think I said *worldly* Christians, not World Christians. By now we know, however, if you are one you can't be the other. If you are one you don't want to be the other.

No, the term is not in your Bible concordance. Nor is it an attempt to label some new spiritual elite who have a corner on a super-secret blessing. Rather, the term describes what all of us are meant to be and what some of us have started to become.

The term "World Christian" may have been coined first by Daniel Fleming in a 1920 YMCA book entitled *Marks of a World Christian*. More recently the term has appeared in publications of such groups as the WorldTeam missions, Conservative Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, United Presbyterian Center for Mission Studies, the Mission Renewal Teams, Inc., and the Fellowship of World Christians, as well as Campus Crusade for Christ and Inter-varsity Christian Fellowship.

A World Christian isn't better than other Christians, but by God's grace he has made a discovery so important that life can never be the same again. He has discovered the truth about God's plan for the world and what still needs to be done. He has heard the call of Christ to do something about it.

Some World Christians are missionaries who stand in the gap by physically crossing major human barriers (cultural, political, etc.) to bring the Gospel to those who can hear no other way. But every Christian is meant to be a World Christian, whether you physically "go", or stay at home to provide the sacrificial love, prayers, training, money, and quality of corporate life that backs the witness of those who "go."

World Christians are day-to-day disciples for whom Christ's global cause has become the integrating, overriding priority for all that life is for them. Like disciples should, they actively investigate all that their Master's Great Commission means. Then they act on what they learn.

World Christians are Christians whose life directions have been solidly transformed by a world vision. This term *World Christian* is not a term for frustrated Christians who play a little and give a little and think they have done their part.

World Christians are those who have left their hiding places to seek those who are lost without the Savior. They are sojourners, camping where the Kingdom is best served.

By taking three steps we become World Christians. First, World Christians **catch a world vision**. They see the cause the way God sees it. They see the full scope of God's world and his plan. Next, World Christians **keep that world vision**. They put the cause of Christ (missions) at the heart of their Christian life. Then World Christians **obey their world vision**. Together, they develop a strategy that makes a lasting impact on the world.

Many years ago, a World Christian named John R. Mott, leader of the Student Volunteer Movement that sent out 20,000 new missionaries, outlined similar steps.

An enterprise which aims at the evangelization of the whole world in a generation and contemplates the ultimate establishment of the Kingdom of Christ, requires that its leaders be Christian statesmen with far-seeing views, with comprehensive plans, with the power of initiative, and with victorious faith.

Catch! Keep! Obey! - these are the three steps to becoming a World Christian.

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Lesson 1 Follow-Up Questions

1. There are at least 4 or 5 different ways a World Christian is described in this short article. Can you find one of these definitions and read it?
2. Is a World Christian a missionary? How is a missionary defined? Someone who crosses human barriers (_____, _____). Are there other tasks a World Christian does?
3. At the beginning of the article, there are several things talked about that keep people from becoming a World Christian. What are some of those things? Are there things in your own life keeping you from becoming a World Christian?
4. What are the 3 steps in becoming a World Christian?
5. What would begin to change in your life if you begin to put the cause of Christ (missions) at the center of your life? Would it affect how you spend your time & money? If so, how? How might this affect your relationships? Friendships & dating relationships?

Becoming a World Christian may be the most dangerous thing that happens to you this summer. For the next 11 lessons, there are 3 over-arching themes to help move you forward in understanding and applying what it means to be a World Christian. These themes are: God's Word, God's World, & God's Work.

Lesson 2
Biblical Basis of Missions
Genesis to Revelation: God's Heart for the World
by Todd Ahrend

What verses come to mind when you think of the word, "MISSIONS?" Most of us are hard pressed to name more than the old faithful Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:18-20. For years our church culture has singled out this passage to be the theme of our mission conferences and the motivation for those who go. It's no wonder that our obedience is slow - who wants to hang their future on one verse? The Bible has a lot more to say on this subject than just the Great Commission. We need to understand the concept of a Biblical basis for missions. Maybe you're saying, "The Biblical basis, is there one?" YES! And not only that, but missions permeates every book of the Bible. It is in fact the theme of the Bible. If you don't believe that all 66 books can be reduced to one theme, keep reading. You will see that missions is not your pastor's idea, or your campus minister's idea, or even your idea... it is God's. Since creation, God has been interested in redeeming all peoples to Himself. As Christians, it is vital that we see the world as He sees it.

Let's look at the Bible in light of God's heart for the world, and we will see that from Genesis to Revelation. He is beckoning you and me and all of His people to join Him in bringing every people group to His throne. The Bible is not a collection of separate books with no common theme or story. It is one book with an

Introduction: Genesis 1-11

Plot: Genesis 12 - Jude

Conclusion: Revelation

Let us begin where God begins, in Genesis.

Genesis 1:28 *God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth...*

This is an interesting command. Be fruitful and multiply. Now why wouldn't God just want the Garden of Eden populated? Why the whole earth? Because God knew that as Adam would populate physically, he would also populate spiritually. Can you picture that? The planet covered with worshippers of Him as Adam and Eve "filled the earth." However, we know that by Genesis 3 sin had crept in and by chapter 6 the world was not looking good. So, as God floods the earth and starts over, listen to the command He gives Noah, just after he steps off the ark.

Genesis 9:1 *Then God blessed Noah and his sons saying to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."*

"Hey Noah, don't just populate a city, fill the earth." There it is again, the command to multiply. So, as we come to chapter 11 there should be one simple question on all of our minds: Does God get the earth filled? Let's keep reading,

Genesis 11:1-4 *Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there... Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.'*

Can't you hear the talk of the town? "You know, we all look the same, act the same, talk the same, eat the same, and dress the same. Let's just stay right here and make a name for ourselves. Do we really want to be scattered?" This does not exactly sound like they are excited about obeying God's command. Because of man's urge to *settle*, God is forced to step in and *scatter*, filling the earth just as He desired.

Genesis 11:7-8 *'Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.'* So, the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

So, as we end the introduction, we see that God has a problem: people scattered all over the earth speaking many different languages. How is He going to reach all of them? What will He do? Who will He use?

The plot begins.

Genesis 12:1-3 *The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you...I will bless you...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'*

Hey Abram, leave. Leave your country, your people, your family, your life, your dreams, your ambitions, your future as well as all that you know and are familiar with and go to the land, I will show you. Now if you keep reading, something really weird happens...

Genesis 12:4 *So Abram left, as the Lord had told him.*

He leaves. Man obeys God. This is a pretty weird concept especially in today's world. So, Abram is off to establish a nation that will bless *all peoples*. Interestingly, this command was not for Abram alone. Watch God continue to call succeeding generations to reach all nations. Next in line is Abraham's son, Isaac.

Genesis 26:4 *I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed.*

And to Isaac's son, Jacob:

Genesis 28:14 *Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.*

The rest of the Old Testament is filled with God using Israel to make His name great among the nations. Here are just a few examples:

The 10 Commandments

Deuteronomy 4:5-6: *Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'*

His reputation spread after parting the Red Sea

Joshua 2:9-10: *I (Rahab) know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us...we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt...*

Solomon and his wisdom

1 Kings 4:34: *Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.*

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace

Daniel 3:29: *Therefore, I (Nebuchadnezzar) decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces... for no other God can save in this way.*

Daniel in the lions' den

Daniel 6:26: *I (Darius) issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom, people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel...*

For further study see Psalm 33:13-14, 67:1-7, 86:9-10, 96:3; Isaiah 11:9-10, 49:6, 52:10, 61:11; Jonah 4:11, Habakkuk 1:5, Zephaniah 2:11, Haggai 2:7, Zechariah 8:20-23, Malachi 1:11.

As we transition to the New Testament the plot only thickens. Now Christ, God in flesh, enters the scene and what do we see in the pattern of His life and ministry? Nothing different. Whether it is taking a longer route to reach a Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42) or healing various Gentiles to teach His followers (Mark 5:1-20, 7:24-30). Christ in the New Testament maintained the pattern established in the Old Testament. Here are a few more examples.

Clearing the temple

Mark 11:15-17 *On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area designated for the*

Gentiles to worship and he found people buying and selling there. As He drove them out saying "Is it not written; 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'?"

The sign of His return

Matthew 24:14 *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

Jesus' ministry

Luke 4:42-43 *...they tried to keep him from leaving them, but He said, 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.'*

The mandate to His followers

Mark 16:15 *Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.*

The book of Acts is a testimony of the account of the gospel spreading to the ends of the earth. It begins with Jesus echoing what He had taught the disciples for the past 3 years.

Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

As the persecution begins so does the scattering (Acts 8:1), and the Lord adds great numbers to their missionary force.

Acts 9:15 *...Go! This man (Paul) is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles...*

The rest of the book of Acts and Epistles give a detailed description of Paul and the rest of the missionary band struggling to raise up churches all over the world.

For further study see Matthew 9:35-38; 28:18-20; John 20:21; Romans 10:11-15; 15:20; Galatians 3:13-14; 1 Timothy 2:4-6; 2 Peter 3:9, 1 John 2:2

The introduction: Genesis 1-11, the plot: Genesis 12-Jude, so what is the conclusion?

Revelation 7:9 *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb...*

It is important to connect what is happening in Revelation with what God started in Genesis 12 in the life of Abraham. God will do it. There will be a representative from every nation, tribe, people, and language bowing and worshipping at His feet. Heaven is multicultural. God is a missionary God, and from cover to cover He is showing us His mission. Will you join Him in bringing a representative from every people group to His throne? It will happen. It will happen through us. Our obedience matters!

Lesson 2 Follow-Up Questions

1. What did you learn about God after reading this article?
2. If the Bible does have one theme-- missions or all nations-- how does that change the way you study Scripture?
3. What does it mean that God is a missionary God and why is that important?
4. Why don't most people see God as a missionary God?
5. If the Bible has one over-arching theme summarized as "all nations," how should that begin to change my life?
6. What did you like the most?

Make sure you have underlined important concepts and/or things that you liked, spoke to you, and challenged you. Be ready to discuss with your team.

Lesson 3
A Missionary Call
by Robert E. Speer
(spoken to students in 1898)

What constitutes a missionary call? It is a good sign that men ask this question. First, because it suggests that they think of the missionary enterprise as singularly related to the will of God. Second, because it indicates that they believe their lives are owned by a Person who has a right to direct them and whose call they must await.

But when we have said these two things, I think we have said everything that can be said in favor of the question because, far too often, it is asked for thoroughly un-Christian reasons.

For instance, Christians will pursue a profession here in the United States having demanded far less positive assurance that this is God's will than it is for them to go out into the mission field. But by what right do they make such distinctions? Christianity contends that the whole of life and all services are to be consecrated; no man should dare to do anything but the will of God. And before he adopts a course of action, a man should know nothing less nor more than that it is God's will for him to pursue it.

If men are going to draw lines of division between different kinds of service, what preposterous reasoning leads them to think that it requires less divine sanction for a man to spend his life easily among Christians than it requires for him to go out as a missionary to the unreached? If men are to have special calls for anything, they ought to have special calls to go about their own business, to have a nice time all their lives, to choose the soft places, to make money, and to gratify their own ambitions.

How can any honest Christian say he must have a special call not to do that sort of thing? How can he say that, unless he gets some specific call of God to preach the Gospel to the unreached, he has a perfect right to spend his life lining his pockets with money? Is it not absurd to suggest that a special call is necessary to become a missionary, but no call is required to gratify his own will or personal ambitions?

There is a general obligation resting upon Christians to see that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached to the world. You and I need no special call to apply that general call of God to our lives. We do need a special call to exempt us from its application to our lives. In other words, every one of us stands under a presumptive obligation to give his life to the world unless we have some special exemption.

This whole business of asking for special calls to missionary work does violence to the Bible. There is the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." We say, "That means other people." There is the promise, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." We say, "That means me." We must have a special divine indication that we fall under the command; we do not ask any special divine indication that we fall under the blessing. By what right do we draw this line of distinction between the obligations of Christianity and its privileges? By what right do we accept the privileges as applying to every Christian and relegate its obligations to the conscience of the few?

It does violence to ordinary common sense and honest judgment. We do not think of ordering other areas of our lives on this basis. I think ex-president Patton of Princeton was representing the situation accurately when he used the following illustration. He said, "Imagine I was employed by the owner of a vineyard to gather grapes in his vineyard. The general instructions were that as many grapes as possible should be gathered. I went down to the gate of the vineyard and found the area around the walls well plucked and the ground covered with pickers. Yet away off in the distance no pickers at all are in sight and the vines are loaded to the ground. Would I need a special visit and order from the owner of the vineyard to instruct me as to my duty?"

If I were standing by the bank of a stream, and some little children were drowning, I would not need any officer of the law to come along and serve on me some legal paper commanding me under such and such a penalty to rescue those children. I should despise myself if I should stand there with the possibility of saving those little lives, waiting until, by some legal proceeding, I was personally designated to rescue them!

Why do we apply, in a matter of infinitely more consequence, principles that we would

loathe and abhor if anybody should suggest that we should apply them in the practical affairs of our daily life? Listen for a moment to the wail of the hungry world. Feel for one hour its sufferings. Sympathize for one moment with its woes. And then regard it just as you would regard human want in your neighbor, or the want that you meet as you pass down the street, or anywhere in life.

There is something wonderfully misleading, full of hallucination and delusion in this business of missionary calls. With many of us it is not a missionary call at all that we are looking for; it is a shove. There are a great many of us who would never hear a call if it came. Somebody must come and coerce us before we will go into missionary work.

Every one of us rests under a sort of general obligation to give life and time and possession to the evangelization of the souls everywhere that have never heard of Jesus Christ. And we are bound to go, unless we can offer some sure ground of exemption which we could with a clear conscience present to Jesus Christ and be sure of His approval upon it. "Well," you ask, "do you mean, then, that I should take my life in my own hands?" No! That is precisely what I am protesting against! That is exactly what we have done. We have taken our lives in our own hands and proposed to go our own way unless God compels us to go some other way. What I ask is that, until God reveals to us some special, individual path on either side, we should give our lives over into Jesus' hands to go in that path which He has clearly marked out before His church.

I want to say one last thing.

I think love will hear calls where the loveless heart will not know that they are sounding. If there were a hundred little children crying, a mother would be able to pick out the voices of her own – especially if they were voices of pain and suffering.

There is a mighty keenness in the ears of love, and I wonder, after all, whether that may not explain a great deal that one is perplexed over in this matter of a special missionary call. Is it possible that, in many cases, it is just a matter of a callused heart, a reluctant will, or a sealed mind?

God so loved the world that He gave. It was need in the world plus love in God that constituted a call for Jesus. Do we need more than what sufficed for Him? If they were our own, would we hesitate and hold back?

Let us lay aside all double-dealing, all moral subterfuge, all those shuffling evasions by which the Devil is attempting to persuade us to escape from our duty and let us get up like men and look at it and do it.

Students are old enough to decide to do their duty. They are old enough to decide to go to college. They are old enough to decide for law and medicine and other professions. They are old enough, too, to decide this question. God forbid that we should try to hide from solemn consideration of our vital duty behind any kind of pretext.

Lesson 3 Follow-Up Questions

1. What do you normally think when you hear someone talk about a "call to missions?"
2. Speer talked about all of us having a general obligation to make sure that the gospel is preached to the world? What does obligation mean? Is obligation more clear than "calling?"
3. Speer said that the students of that day were hypocrites because they expected God to give them a "special call" to go as a missionary, but did not seek God for clear direction to stay in America, or choose their profession; in other words to live their lives for themselves and follow their own ambitions. Was he fair to say that? Is that true today?
4. When someone demands a special call, Speer said that does violence to the Bible. What did he mean?
5. Speer also said that when we demand a special call to missions it does violence to common sense. What were the illustrations he used? What do you think about his illustrations?
6. Speer was very bold in his last challenge. He said that many do not hear a call maybe because of a callused heart, a reluctant will and a closed mind. What do you think?

You are obligated in your lifetime to make sure that the gospel gets to as many of the unreached

as possible. The Great Commission is not the Great Suggestion. The questions now are, how should I live, where should I go, what should I major in, etc.? How can I best prepare myself to make the most impact on the most people in my lifetime?

Lesson 4
The 10/40 Window
by Piper Black

The 10/40 Window is the area of the world between 10- and 40-degrees latitude north of the equator in the Eastern Hemisphere, covering North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. This "window" contains most of the world's areas of greatest physical and spiritual needs, most of the world's least reached peoples, and the most anti-Christian governments in the world. Two-thirds of the world's population is located in the 10/40 window. In areas of the 10/40 window, there is only one missionary for every one million people. There are now over one billion Muslims and one billion Hindus in the 10/40 window. Some of the problems of the 10/40 window are starvation, disease, economic disaster, religious persecution, government and political breakdown, and insufficient living conditions. But far above all of these is the need of the gospel of Christ. The gospel is the hope for all nations, including the ones in the 10/40 window. Jesus said to His disciples during His time on earth, *the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few* (Matt 9:37). As we can see, His statement is no less true today...

1. More than 95% of the world's unreached peoples live in this area.
2. The 10/40 window outlines the heartlands of the major non-Christian religions of the world - Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Confucianism, etc...
3. About 80% of the poorest of the world's poor live in this region, enduring humanity's lowest standards of living.

We know what God's desire is for the nations: *May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on the earth, your salvation among all nations.* (Psalm 67) There is nothing magical about this window, nor does it mean that missions cannot be done outside of this geographical area. However, the 10/40 window has been placed before the church so that we might see the need and respond; knowing where to go and knowing who to go to. For many years, we have used a special world map to explain to children about the great need for the gospel and our responsibility. The map we use is colored. Green meaning "reached" and red indicating "unreached." On this map, the area of the 10/40 window is almost completely red. After explaining the color code to the children, they always know immediately what needs to be done. They say, "The green needs to go to the red."

The answer seems simple, but... The Philippines is one of the most evangelized countries in Asia. It is strategically located and Filipinos can adapt and blend into other Asian Cultures. Yet among Southern Baptist Churches, there are very few missionaries being sent out. In America, Southern Baptists are still the largest evangelical denomination, yet less than ½ of one percent of its members are going as missionaries!

Currently, in the 10/40 window, each missionary is responsible for at least 10,000 people and sometimes as many as 1,000,000! While in America, there is one trained Christian worker for every 250 people. This number is grossly disproportionate. We must ask ourselves if God is really that bad at math and percentages or is there something else wrong. Our funding missions is also askew. "Out of every \$1,000 dollars given by North American Christians, the amount going to ministries reaching Muslims in the Middle East is five cents" (B. Stearns). We give five cents out \$1,000 dollars to share the gospel to over one billion Muslims in the 10/40 Window who will spend eternity in hell apart from Christ. Jesus said, *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* (Matt 6:21). God's heart is with the nations... where is ours?

The Global Quiz

Think about the following questions for a moment then look at the answers.

If the world's population were reduced to 100 people...

1. How many would be Asian?
2. How many would be European?
3. How many would be African?

4. How many would be Americans?
5. How many would be white?
6. How many would be malnourished?
7. How many would live in a below-standard housing condition?
8. How many would be unable to read?
9. How many would hold a university degree?

(Answers: #1: 57; #2: 21; #3: 8; #4: 2; #5: 30; #6: 50; #7: 80; #8: 70; #9: 1.)

Lesson 4 Follow-Up Questions

1. What statistics surprised you the most and why?
2. How can knowing about the 10/40 Window help you? In your praying? In your giving? In your going?
3. Do you think as a Christian in the Philippines or in America that you have added responsibility? If so, why?
4. What did you like the most or what was the most helpful from this article?
5. What was the most challenging thing you read from this article?

Remember to write down or mark the things in the article that you want to discuss with your team.

Lesson 5
Five Major Religion Blocks
(Part 1: Muslim and Hindus)
by Bob Sjogren and Bill and Amy Stearns

Muslim Unreached Peoples

One night, in the year A.D. 610, a vision came to Muhammad: "O Muhammad, thou art the Messenger of God." Thus, the religion of Islam was born.

The word "Islam" means "submission," and "Muslim" means "one who is submitted to God (Allah)." To be a Muslim, one must say with conviction at some point in his life the creed "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet." Upholding the five "pillars of Islam" is also expected.

These are:

1. Recite the creed.
2. Pray five times daily at specified times.
3. Fast for the lunar month of Ramadan. (The fast includes abstaining from food and drink during the day. After sundown one is able to eat and drink).
4. Give alms. (Alms constitute 2.5% of one's income and are given for the upkeep of the mosque and to help the needy).
5. Make the hajj, the holy pilgrimage to the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, at least once in one's life. (The more times one makes the hajj, the more spiritual he is considered).

Muslims consider their religion to be an extension of Christianity and Judaism, but they believe the Christian Trinity to be blasphemous and they deny the deity of Jesus. Although the Qur'an instructs Muslims to "listen to the people of the Book," (referring to the Bible), Muslims believe that Christians have corrupted the Holy Injil (the Gospels of the New Testament), so the Bible today is not accurate.

Whenever a crowd of Western Christians is asked whether they've heard that Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world, hands shoot up to acknowledge this awareness. It is true that Islam is the fastest-growing major religion in the world, growing at 2.9% annually-- beating Christianity as a whole, whose growth is 2.3%. Yet if we were to break down Christianity into various groups, the evangelicals and Pentecostals are the fastest-growing major religious grouping in the world-- evangelicals growing at 5.4% and Pentecostals at 8.1% annually.

Although Islam is a growing religion, a high birthrate among Muslims is responsible for most of the growth. Nevertheless, says Chicago-area writer Deb Conklin, Islam is claiming many new converts because:

1. Islam is an uncomplicated religion. The only thing one needs to do to convert to Islam is to wholeheartedly recite the creed. There are only six major doctrines: belief in one God; in angels; in the Holy Books- including parts of both Testaments as well as the Qur'an; in the prophets- among whom are Jesus and Muhammad; in a day of judgment; and in predestination. The five practices (pillars) of Islam are external and equally simple to learn.
2. Islam is an adaptable religion. It has contextualized itself into hundreds of cultures. Since there is nothing in Islam contradicting the existence of a spirit world, it easily absorbs the animistic worldviews and practices of peoples to whom it is brought. In fact, even today, the vast majority of Muslims embrace such "folk Islam."
3. Islam is a zealously "evangelistic" religion. The purpose of Muslims is to win the Western world to Islam. If you think that can't happen, think again. Some areas evangelized by Paul are now firmly under the sway of Islam. So are the cities of Istanbul (once Constantinople) and Alexandria, both once thriving centers of Christianity.

One out of every five persons living on the earth is a Muslim. Perhaps more significantly, about 35% of all unreached people groups are dominantly Muslim. With evangelistic zeal backed by oil dollars, Muslims are willing to go anywhere and spend whatever it takes to win the world to Islam. In North Africa, the governments of Muslim countries in one recent year spent more to promote missionary activity in eight North African countries than the total Western missionary

expenditure for the entire world. In countries with a Christian population, plans are to exterminate Christianity.

Hindu Unreached Peoples

Hinduism is nearly impossible to explain simply since it is actually a conglomeration of ideas, practices, beliefs, and convictions. Hinduism is therefore often puzzling to Westerners; it revolves around a totally different center than does Christianity, asking fundamentally different questions and supplying different answers:

1. As a philosophy Hinduism states: There is a spark of divinity in every human. To call a human a sinner, then, is virtually blasphemy and there is, of course, no need of a Savior. The writing of Vivekananda says, "It is sin to call anyone a sinner." Good and evil are only illusions. And illusions are dispelled by knowledge. "Salvation," then, is being freed from ignorance, not from our sense of biblical sin. Probably a typical Hindu definition of sin would be "causing grief." Each soul - a "drop of God"- is reborn over and over in higher or lower incarnations of humans, animals, or vegetables according to that soul's karma. Karma is the sum of a person's good deeds. These deeds are in a ceremonial sense, not so much in the Western sense of moral good deeds. These good deeds accumulate to allow a person to reincarnate to a higher position in life- for example from a woman to a man- while bad deeds demand a person become a lower form in the next life cycle.
2. As a world religion, Hinduism teaches that people are free to choose their own god from among about 330 million. Ultimate salvation is gained through (1) the way of knowledge, (2) the way of devotion, or (3) the way of good ways. This salvation is a release (Moksha) of the soul from the cycle of rebirth to reunite with the Absolute- as a drop of water falls into the ocean.
3. As a popular religion, Hindus believe that Hinduism is a mixture of ancestral tradition, animal worship, temple cults, magic, exorcism, astrology, and the teachings of gurus (avatars or incarnations of gods). General beliefs include: regard of the cow as a goddess; the material world is just an illusion; the world is growing progressively worse; the old is better than the new; and what will be will be regardless of man's efforts to promote or hinder it.

The West has seen a glimpse of Hindu philosophy in many New Age Movement teachings, in the Transcendental Meditation practices of Mahesh Yogi, and in the Hare Krishna converts asking for donations in airports. These mostly negative impressions unfortunately color Western perceptions of the individuals caught in Hinduism- individuals whose relentless quest for peace (shanti) can be God's way of bringing them to himself. Yet most Hindus have no access to the true Gospel; All they know of Christianity is what they have seen in the lives of "Christians."

Today nearly 24% of Asia's three billion people are Hindus. Most live in India, Nepal, and Bali in Indonesia, with large numbers in Bhutan, Fiji, Mauritius, and Suriname and Guyana in South America.

To the Hindu, God is not personal: "It moves. It moves not. It is far and it is near. It is within all this and it is without all this" is a common statement about the god - force of the universe called Brahma. God - the Absolute - neither loves nor hates human beings, neither helps nor hinders them.

God is to be worshipped in the forms one's ancestors worshipped - in the forms of trees, animals, images, persons, and millions of gods. Two gods are prominent: Vishnu, preserver of the world, and Shiva, the destroyer. Vishnu is usually worshipped through one of his incarnations - Rama or Krishna. Many Hindus live in deep fear that they will invoke the wrath of the Kula Devata - the family god - on themselves and their families if they, become too interested in Jesus Christ.

Hinduism generally fosters a sense of despair and pessimism, since it is never clear whether one is offending some god, or whether one is effectively progressing or falling behind in the pursuit of salvation. Poverty also easily pervades a Hindu community, since, to the Hindu, holiness and affluence are incompatible. Also, the sacredness of all forms of life - since ancestors may have reincarnated into animals - paradoxically fosters poverty. In India, for example, 30% of each year's grain crop is destroyed by rats, which must be allowed to live, and the sacred cattle that wander the streets of India could feed the entire country for five years if used for food.

Hinduism, with its caste system, is a form of social security - everyone knows where they belong. With Christianity's insistence on abolishing the caste distinctions, Hindu converts would lose their standing in society- their privileges, employment, and wealth. Hindu students who convert to Christianity regularly lose their government-sponsored financial aid. Conversion to Christianity often leads to excommunication from the community, damage to the entire family's reputation, termination of marital prospects, and even physical persecution. A recent poll suggested that fully 20% of Hindus would consider becoming followers of Jesus Christ if they didn't have to be cut off from their families and their society in order to do so.

Hindus in general are very open to all sorts of new religious ideas. In Hinduism, all roads lead to God, so all religions are basically good. Generally, any form of worship is right if one's ancestors or one's caste have practiced it. Hindus will often "accept" Jesus as one of their many gods. Because of this eclectic acceptance of all gods, it is difficult to reach out to Hindus. They may readily bow in prayer to receive Christ into their life, but they are simply adding "one more god" to be worshipped.

Look up these verses:

John 14:6

Ephesians 2:8-9

Zephaniah 2:11

Jeremiah 1:16

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Lesson 5 Follow-Up Questions

1. What are some key differences between Muslims and Christians?
2. What are some key differences between Hindus and Christians?
3. What fears would you have in sharing the gospel with a Hindu or Muslim?
4. How can you use this information in a practical way this week?

Lesson 6
Five Major Religion Blocks
(Part 2: Buddhists, Tribals, and Chinese)
by Bob Sjogren and Bill and Amy Stearns

Buddhist Unreached Peoples

Every morning in Sri Lanka, Tibet, Thailand, Vietnam, and dozens of other Buddhist countries, orange saffron-robed monks move quietly from house to house collecting food. The priests do not say thank you for the offerings, since they feel they are allowing the people a favor, which gains them merit to achieve higher status in the next reincarnation.

Buddhism is based on the sixth-century B.C. teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, later known as Buddha. His focus was on man, not on gods. He taught that life is basically a pattern of pain and suffering that results from desire. The ceasing of all human desires, then, would signal the end of suffering. The goal of life is to move as rapidly as possible toward the absence of desire, known as nirvana.

By the third century B.C., Buddhist teachings had been crystallized in written form in a language called Pali (related to Sanskrit) on the island of what is now Sri Lanka.

The nonreligious, philosophical aspects of Buddhism - that it has nothing to do with a Deity - is obvious in the doctrine of anatta. This teaching asserts that a person has no soul - no personal center exists. A human, rather, is composed of five khandas, or "aggregates," that give the illusion of identity. That illusion can be swept away only when the tensions of suffering and desire are erased through discipline. Discipline eventually leads to nirvana ("emptiness" or "nakedness"), the state in which the lack of desire allows perfection and pure peace.

In common practice, Buddhism usually takes the form of merit - making acts and Buddhist festivals and ceremonies. Throughout Buddhist countries, citizens invite monks to chant the Sutras, protective formulas for blessing and protection, in all household ceremonies and in funeral and memorial services for the benefit of the cremated deceased.

For the layperson, the principles of Buddhism's Noble Eightfold Path consist of five don'ts: Don't steal, lie, take a life, engage in illicit sex, or drink liquor.

Most Buddhists also reduce their religious commitment to a simple pattern of gaining merits for good karma, the sum of the positive and negative actions in a person's life. Buddhism, as practiced by common folk, is generally an outward activity of doing good to the monks who can give merit, of participating in ceremonies and rituals, and of contributing toward the construction and maintenance of the local Buddhist temple.

Although Buddhism teaches that people are caught in samsara, an eternal cycle of birth and death by which a person's karma moves perpetually on to rebirth, or reincarnation, few typical Buddhists place much emphasis on these cycles and levels of future existence or on gaining nirvana because their life is occupied with the simple struggle to survive. Their interest in gaining merit has more to do with an improved life now.

Many laypersons following Buddhism simply feel that no one can protect himself from the eternally linked laws of karma because a previous form of life has dictated one's level of suffering. This fatalism leads most people to practice the forms of Buddhism, while still believing in the existence of various spirits. Beneath Buddhism's philosophy - in which there is no God and man has no individual soul - most Buddhists harbor a deep, ancient belief in spirits, which they fear.

Tribal Unreached Peoples

Depending on how a researcher defines "people group," there are from 3,000 to 6,000 unreached groups of Tribals worldwide. They are found in places you would expect, such as Irian Jaya, Papua New Guinea, the Amazon Basin, and in parts of the African continent. But they are also found in virtually every country of the world, according to Dave Sitton, director of the Institute of Tribal Studies, headquartered in Los Fresnos, Texas. Most of the world's 2,000,000 nomads are actually tribal.

The typical remoteness of tribal groups enforces their distrust of outsiders. Fear of unknown spirits inhibits their exploration of new territories as well as new ideas. But often the toughest problem missionaries to tribals must overcome is "cargoism"- the appeal of outsiders', particularly white men's, gadgets and wealth.

In order to find out more about the Tribal peoples of the world, check out the following resources:

- Don Richardson, *Peace Child* (Regal Books/Gospel, 1974).
- Don Richardson, *Lords of the Earth* (Regal Books/Gospel, 1977).
- Don Richardson, *Eternity in Their Hearts* (Regal Books/Gospel, 1981).

Chinese Unreached Peoples

The only major unreached people block less defined by religion than by political boundary is the Chinese peoples. What makes it difficult to adequately characterize this block is that the Chinese government and, to some extent, the people of China have pursued the idea of the "Great Tradition"- that the Chinese are one people, sharing culture, communication, and ways of conducting affairs. In the light of this view, the Chinese government recognizes one majority people, the Han, and only 55 minority peoples within the borders of the People's Republic of China.

In spite of the diversity, some generalizations may be made about the Chinese block of unreached peoples. For example, this block reflects two influences, ancient Confucianism and modern communism.

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) emphasized the order necessary to society. His teachings urged the Chinese to value social relationships, to live properly in courtesy and common respect, and to admire self-denial as the key means of benefiting all. Confucianism teaches that humans are basically good, although a person's goodness can be weakened and distorted by greed, selfish ambition, or corrupt leadership.

The fact that communism eased into Chinese society on the coattails of Confucianism is no surprise. Although hundreds of millions of Chinese don't really think of themselves as communists, their cultural thought patterns do reflect the communist ideals of (1) submission of the individual to the good of the whole, (2) the evils of a society based on economic classes, and (3) the eventual workers' paradise.

Chinese communistic/Confucianistic thought holds that:

- Humankind determines its own destiny.
- Religion is a dangerous fantasy - "the opiate of the people."
- Rational thinking - science - leads to truth.

With this mind-set, many of the people groups of China reject Christianity. That rejection is especially acrid when merged with the anger that many Chinese still feel at the historic blunders of "Christian" countries that meddled in China's affairs.

Classifying more than a billion Chinese citizens is anything but simple. And yet these basic characteristics help explain that, while in the midst of the greatest church growth on earth, scores of Chinese people groups comprising hundreds of millions of individuals are still very much unreached.

Look up these verses:

Hebrews 9:27

Psalms 14:1

Joshua 24:14-15

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Lesson 6 Follow-Up Questions

1. What do you know about Tribal religions? What do you think of when you think of Tribals? What do you think are some of the barriers of reaching Tribals?
2. How do Buddhist beliefs differ from Christian beliefs?
3. Are there any Buddhists or Chinese in your area? Where?
4. What points would you bring out if you were sharing the Gospel with a Buddhist?
5. Why are internationals often overlooked on campuses?

Lesson 7
Most Commonly Heard Excuses Not to be a Missionary
by Todd Ahrend

"But I don't feel called?"

This is one of the most prevailing excuses around today. The infamous... "God hasn't called me overseas!" So how are we to respond to this excuse? First, if you do a word study on the word "called" you will find that the majority of uses in scripture are the calling to come to Christ for salvation. As a matter of fact, Paul the apostle equated his coming to Christ with his responsibility to reach all nations. Listen to what he says to the Galatians, "But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles (Nations)" (Galatians 1:15-16). Paul understood he had a general obligation to take the gospel to all nations simply because God had extended salvation to him. Second, when Paul received a "call" into a specific place for ministry, it was while he was actively ministering and fasting (Acts 13:1-4). Most people, while lamenting, "I am not called" are just using that as an escape and are far from ministering and fasting before God to find direction. Oh, and by the way the last verse in Acts 12 talks about how Paul had just returned from his first mission trip! Apparently, Paul thought it best to be obedient to the purpose of God in the world instead of being hung up on the specifics. So next time you think you don't feel called ask yourself how many mission trips you have been on, what are you doing for the Lord right now and how often are you fasting about the decision?

"It will not do to say that you have no special call to go to China. With these facts before you and with the command of the Lord Jesus to go and preach the gospel to every creature, you need rather to ascertain whether you have a special call to stay at home." -J. Hudson Taylor

"But my parents would never let me go."

Let's just admit it; historically we have made some bad decisions. Everyone has! It's a part of growing up! As true as this is, it is also true that parents have seen every single one of our lousy choices. Dating and breaking up with all the wrong people, discontent with cars and jobs, changing majors 2-3 times and this list goes on. And now a mission trip for the summer in North Sudan! Sounds like another bad idea to mom and dad. Can we blame them? There are really two types of parents who say no to their child going on a mission trip - those who mean it and those who don't.

There are some parents who say, "If you go on this mission trip don't bother coming home ever again and plan on paying for your car and college when you get back." In this case I would highly advise waiting until they are a little more softened to the idea. Heed your parents' advice while you are under their authority. In the meantime, spend your summer reaching out to internationals in the community. The other parent says no as more of a smoke screen to see if their child is serious or if it's just a passing phase. The difference with this type of parent is that as they are consistently informed, see their child taking responsible steps toward the trip and growing increasingly interested, they grow in confidence of their child's decision and will eventually concede. Most parents fall into the latter category. Most of the time it is really not the parent who is the main issue but the student hiding behind a situation that doesn't really exist.

"Obedience to the call of Christ nearly always costs everything to two people, the one who is called, and the one who loves that one." -Oswald Chambers

"But I am not ready spiritually to go."

When I was in college this is the one excuse I fell back on. I was challenged to give my summer to reaching out to the Muslims in North Africa for 8 weeks by an individual who was a missions zealot. My response to him was "But I am not ready to go!" He didn't hesitate with his response, "Ok, I'll give you 20 minutes... get ready." "What, no wait! I don't think you understood what I meant!" I thought. In reality, he understood me perfectly. Often, what we are waiting for is to become sinless, to have totally pure motives or to love the people as Christ does! If that's the case, we will never be "ready." Missionaries are real people that have real problems. No one

reaches a certain spiritual state and then becomes qualified. Actually, the process works in the reverse order. Once a person goes and catches a real vision for the nations, realizes the incredible task at hand, they will see an increased intimacy with Christ. If the goal before us is small, our dependence on the Lord will be small. On the other hand, if our aspirations are great, our reliance on the sufficiency of God will be great. K.P. Yohannan, Director of Gospel for Asia, says if someone has been a Christian for longer than 8 weeks, they are qualified.

"All the resources of the Godhead are at our disposal!" -Jonathan Goforth.

"But I don't have that kind of money!"

This is a common excuse heard. "I cannot go to that village and start a church, because I don't have any *pamasahe* (bus fare)." "I would go there, but how would I eat?" It may be true that you do not have much money, but God wants you to learn two things; He is the owner of everything, and whomever He calls to go, He will be the provider. Abraham learned that God was the provider after he had obeyed (Genesis 22). Peter found the coin in the mouth of the fish after he obeyed and went fishing. Elijah was provided food after he obeyed God and went and lived by the creek. Lack of money is never a reason; it is an excuse! Start obeying God in the little things. Start trusting God to meet your needs. Learn to know him as the provider. Then, when he asks you to go, you will obey promptly, knowing He will provide.

"God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supplies." -J. Hudson Taylor

"But what about the needs here?"

This is another very common excuse. I usually answer it with the example of triage. It is a medical term that means that those who have the worst injuries get priority over other injuries. So, if someone comes in the emergency room with a leg that has been cut off, they will take priority over the person who is waiting with a sprained ankle. Why is that? Do the doctors love the person with the severed leg more than the sprained ankle? Of course not. His need is more urgent and therefore takes priority. What if we appropriated that to missions, missionary triage? Its application would be simple: those with the greatest need, the least reached, without a church get priority over those cultures with established churches. Keith Green, a zealous musician who recruited for missions, says "Since America has only about 5% of the world's population, then only about 5% of the believers would really be called to stay in this country as a witness (that's only about 1 out of 20) while the rest of us should go into the parts of the world where there are almost 0% believers." Unfortunately, that is not the case. On the contrary, 95% of believers will stay within the United States. Are there needs in the United States? Without a doubt. It is impossible to walk around a college campus in America without seeing the need for more Christian laborers. But there's one thing to remember, there will always be a need in America. Needs are everywhere. Maybe it's time to stop focusing on the needs and instead focus on the greatest need - those with no gospel access.

"A tiny group of believers who have the gospel keep mumbling it over and over to themselves. Meanwhile, millions who have never heard it once fall into the flames of eternal hell without ever hearing the salvation story." -K.P. Yohannan

"But isn't the mission field a dangerous place to be?"

The Israelites were faced with an interesting choice after leaving their slavery in Egypt. As they got to the edge of the land that God had told them to possess, they began to count the cost of obedience. The land was inhabited by fierce, giant-size men! They found themselves questioning God's command, His promise and His deliverance from Egypt. All of a sudden disobeying God and returning to slavery seemed more appealing in light of the danger and certain death that awaited them. Here is their response: *Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?* (Numbers 14:3). Keith Green explains: "It is all a matter of our priorities - do we look at the temporary or the eternal in making our choices? It's true that you will probably

be in more physical danger on the mission field than you would be in the suburbs of America, but that is part of the cost that we need to count when it comes to serving God. The question should not be, 'Will I be kept safe wherever I go?' but rather, 'What is on the Lord's heart for me to do?' If Jesus decided to go the way of least pain, He would have never gone to the cross. There is no place of greater blessing for you than in the center of God's will. You must stop to count the cost, but remember one thing - the privilege of serving God always outweighs the price." This is only going to grow as an issue because of the increase in wars, threats of wars, kidnappings and terrorism. The measure of a man is what it takes to stop him. What will it take to stop you? Go back to the Word and look toward those who have gone before and made their life a living sacrifice. There is no promise of safety and the dangers are real, but His grace is sufficient for us.

"Some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell, I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of Hell." -C.T. Studd

"But I am not ready for that kind of sacrifice."

This is the root of all excuses - abstaining from sacrificial living. For some when they come to Christ, they just Christianize the things they did before. Their logic goes something like this: "I was going to be a teacher, so now I guess I am a Christian teacher. I was going to be an engineer, so now I guess I am a Christian engineer." It is easy to just add Christ to our pre-existing plans. If this is your excuse you may have fallen into this trap. Therefore, the mindset becomes "why would I want to go to the mission field, that is serious sacrifice!"

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 we read, *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!* Notice the key phrase, "the old has gone." This means that all we desired and lived for under our lordship is done away with. Jesus becomes Lord to guide us in His agenda, not just offer us council about our agenda. This is the minimum, the entry level of commitment not an elite, super-spiritual commitment that few attain to. Jesus challenges us to consider the cost of following Him before salvation not after.

Luke 14:28-33: *Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."*

Erwin McManus, in his book *An Unstoppable Force*, discusses his experience in growing as a new Christian. After his decision to follow Christ and be saved he was faced with another altar call, a calling to Lordship. A few weeks later, there was another altar call, a calling to the ministry. After that, two more calls - a calling for home ministry and a calling to foreign ministry. He explains:

"So now I had discovered five levels of callings from God - a calling to be saved, a calling for Jesus to be Lord, a calling to ministry, a calling to home missions, and a calling to foreign missions.... Why are there so many levels of Christian calling in our contemporary Christian community? Where are they found in the biblical text? I have a strange suspicion that the nuances of these "callings" have less to do with theology and more to do with the condition of the church. Paul seemed to think there was only one calling. He writes to Timothy, '*So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace*' (2 Timothy 1:8-9). The scriptures seem to simplify the process of calling. The one call is to lay your life at the feet of Jesus and to do whatever he asks."

"If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him." -C.T. Studd

Lesson 7 Follow-Up Questions

1. In the 7 excuses given, which one do you relate to the most? Which answer to the excuses helped you the most?
2. What, in your own opinion, is the most common excuse among college students not to go? Is there an excuse you have heard or offered that is not on this list?
3. What do you think about the author's statement, "The one call is to lay your life at the feet of Jesus and do whatever He asks"?
4. Todd Ahrend has said, "We are to go as far as we can to as many as we can unless God stops us." I would add, or he makes it clear that I am to stay in my home culture instead of spending my life among those who have never heard. What do you think of Todd's statement? Has God made it clear to you to spend your life staying? That should be a clear calling. Is it clear? What will you do if you stay? Hint: Keep reading. Understanding and living out the World Christian lifestyle is the key.

Lesson 8
People Groups
by Claude Hickman

When someone gives you a job, it is important to get a good handle on the task, including the definition of the task. When God gives you a task, it is infinitely important that you know the definition of the task. God has promised to reach all the nations of the earth and commissioned us as His ambassadors in that work. In order to be good stewards of this mission we must have a firm grip on the extent of the task, which, in the work of world missions, brings us to look closely at the terms that the Bible uses for the task. Some of these include nations, peoples, tribes, and tongues.

In the New Testament, the Greek word for "nations" is the word *ethne*. We get our word ethnicity from it. It means something like an ethnic group. The idea is much more specific than the political nation-states we think of such as Indonesia, Turkey, or Nigeria. An anthropologist would call this *ethne* a "People Group." **A people group is the largest group within which the gospel can spread without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance due to culture, language, geography, etc.**

Take the country of India for example. In India there are hundreds of different ethnic races of people, but even among those ethnic groups there are divisions made according to the thousands of languages they speak. It gets more complicated. Among one language and ethnic group there are religious divisions that keep people from interacting with one another, and will, at times, even result in violence between neighboring groups. Now, even among those same ethnic, language, and religion groups there will be more divisions; social divisions. In India it is called the Caste System. Basically, what this all results in is over 4,600 people groups in India that see themselves as a distinct people from those around them. And because of their differences, most are isolated from the gospel. Even though it may be nearby, the message of Christ may be in a language they don't understand or in a culture that is unaccepted. In other words, they have no interaction with those people groups around them who may have the gospel. Someone must cross these cultural boundaries to get it there. This is the work of missions: to take the gospel into each people group. When the Bible speaks of nations, tribes, tongues, peoples, it is referring to the same mission; the reaching of all people groups.

The promise of God is that all nations (people groups) will be blessed through you (Gen. 12:1-3). This means that God is infinitely concerned with reaching each and every people group that exists.

In fact, He is so concerned with reaching all of them that He is keeping a meticulous record of the fulfillment of His promise. In Psalms 87:4-6, the Lord says, "I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me... The LORD will count when He registers the peoples, 'This one was born there.'" We see that God is recording in the Register of the Peoples all those that He is bringing to heaven. They will one day make up the multicultural worship service seen in Revelation 7:9.

So, if God has promised to reach them all and we are commanded to go to them all, we must be familiar with the task remaining and rally the church to target them all. There are currently 24,000 people groups on planet earth and there are about 6000 that are considered unreached. The Great Commission is finish-able. It is measurable and something that can be completed. The question now is: what is an unreached people group?

Ed Dayton says, "It is a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people. In other words, unreached people groups lack a church that has the numbers and strength to reach their own people. Obviously, if there are no Christians within this group, there will be none who can share the gospel with them. And this is the situation in which we find over 2.1 billion people of the world. They are the people groups in which there is no church that is able to tell them the good news of Jesus Christ."

Tom Smith clarifies what is not an unreached people group by saying, "Since 'unreached group' refers to a group of people with no viable and relevant church, a non-Christian neighbor of most Americans would not be termed 'unreached.' They are unsaved and need the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet they probably have a church available in their own language and culture. They

could go to church if they chose. In other words, they may be termed 'unsaved' or 'unevangelized persons,' but not 'unreached' because they are part of a 'reached' group."

God is not just concerned with reaching more and more people as He seems to be with reaching every People Group. I would like to borrow an illustration from John Piper in which he compares the situation to two sinking ocean liners. If the promise of the Navy General was that no matter what ship in his fleet went down there would be some rescued from that ship, and if he enlisted his crew for that one purpose, what would they do if there were two ocean liners sinking at the same time? After reaching the first sinking ship you might see that there is great need and that you could justify staying to save as many as you could from the first ship, rather than going to the second. You could even argue that in the effort and time it required to get to the second ship, you could be a better steward by staying at the first. Perhaps the people at the other ship are unwilling, and this seems to be a fruitful ground for desperate swimmers. There is plenty of need here. However, this was not the General's command. He specifically ordered his crew to save some men from both ships, not just one. This is why it is necessary for men to take the rescue boat to each ship. There must be representatives and survivors at the General's banquet from every ship. God has promised to reach some from every tribe, tongue and nation and people. He has enlisted us to rescue them and one day there will be a banquet, where all nations and people groups are represented before the throne.

The task is finish-able. *God blesses us that the ends of the earth may fear Him.* Psalm 67:7. God has indeed blessed us with all the resources that we need to finish His Great Commission. For each of the 6,000 unreached people groups there are over 600 churches. That means if your church teamed up with 599 other churches to send a team of 8 people and financially support them, do you think they could pull it off? How much money would it take anyway? If we sent 8 people to each unreached people group, it would take about \$1.2 trillion dollars to fund our missionaries. Sound like a lot of money? Well, evangelicals alone have \$850 billion in disposable income. That means, AFTER you have paid for your rent, your car payment, your bills, your food, what you have left - to go shopping at the Gap, Wal-Mart, buy a Coke - to do whatever you want with - equals \$850 billion. It is equivalent to about a quarter per believer per year. The task of world missions is not being held up by a lack of finances, or churches, or people.

Now, with a solid grip on the *definition of the task, a confidence in the resources available, and an unyielding obedience to the mission of the General,* let us throw off everything that hinders and run with perseverance the race He has set before us.

Lesson 8 Follow-Up Questions

1. What is the difference between a reached and an unreached people group?
2. Is it possible for a country to have many followers of Christ, but still have unreached people groups? Explain.
3. What is the difference between an unreached person and an unevangelized or unsaved person? Why is this important to know?
4. What hinders us from reaching the whole world?
5. What was John Piper's illustration of the 2 sinking ships? Why is it important to understand this parable?
6. How can you, right now, (this next year or the next 5 years) begin to reach an unreached people group?
7. Why is finishing the task of reaching every unreached people group "finish-able?"

Lesson 9 Students in Missions by Kevin Little

"The evangelization of the world in this generation." This was the vision or passion of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM), which became the greatest mobilization movement in the history of the church. From its beginning, the SVM called students to commit their lives, first, to the person and lordship of Christ, then, to taking the gospel of Christ to the unevangelized portions of the world. Students, looking for a cause worth giving their lives to and moved by the Holy Spirit, committed themselves in unprecedented droves to the *evangelization of the world in their generation*. At one point in history, 75% of all long-term female missionaries and 70% of all long-term male missionaries were a result of the SVM! In its history, the SVM was responsible for over 20,000 missionaries who actually went to the field long-term. Twenty thousand college students actually abandoned their dreams for the adventure of following Christ to the nations. Four times this number, over 80,000, remained at home, educating and mobilizing the church and supporting the 20,000 that went!

Small Beginnings

This mobilization effort began in 1886 as a result of the outpouring of God's Spirit at a summer conference at Mt Hermon School in Northfield, Massachusetts. The focus of the conference, led by D. L. Moody, was evangelism and Bible study, not missions, but the hearts of Luther Wishard, the organizer of the conference, and Robert Wilder, a senior from Princeton, longed for a nationwide movement of God's Spirit for the purpose of missions. At the beginning of the conference, Wilder pulled together eighteen other men who had committed themselves to going to the unevangelized portions of the world for daily prayer and conversation on the topic of world missions. By the end of the conference, this small group of missionary zealots grew to one hundred individuals, nearly half those in attendance. Each of these men signed a declaration that read, "We, the undersigned, declare ourselves willing and desirous, God permitting, to go to the unevangelized portions of the world." From the momentum of this event arose the Student Volunteer Movement.

Catching Fire

Desiring to promote and conserve the missionary zeal that had begun at the Mt. Hermon conference, Robert Wilder, accompanied by a fellow Princeton graduate, toured 167 universities, mainly in the Northeastern part of the United States sharing the story of Mt. Hermon, as well as challenging students to join them in their declaration. In the 1886-87 academic year alone, over 1,500 men and women signed the declaration. The next year saw an increase of volunteers to over 3,000! God was moving the hearts of college students to give up their own ambitions and to lay down their lives for God's pursuit of the nations.

Those who toured the campuses of the United States for the SVM, beginning with Wilder, presented a message that confronted complacency and excuses and clearly gave students a goal to which they could cling and pursue. The SVM mobilizers put the burden of proof on the students to give a clear explanation before God of why they should stay. Robert Speer presented it best when he used an illustration of a drowning man. The one who sees the drowning man must explain why he stays on the bank, not why he dives into the river. These students were called by Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations;" however, they lived then in a nation that had been discipled, while other nations had not yet been discipled; therefore, the student who chose to stay in his reached nation was forced to explain why the Lord had called him to that path, while the student who chose to sign the declaration and to go was simply obeying the commands of Christ. This argument caused that generation to confront their obligation to the commands of Christ and the role they would play in the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Also, the SVM leaders called these students to a goal that was clearly and simply stated. This gave students a north star to pursue. "*The evangelization of the world in this generation*" became the watchword of the SVM. Students responded to the challenge of these mobilizers because they knew what they were giving their lives to ("the evangelization of the world in this generation") and they knew why (Christ commanded them to go to those who had not yet heard).

Conclusion

Today, these conditions remain. Christ's command to go and make disciples has lost no authority since they were given 2000 years ago. His command remains binding upon his people, for all the nations have yet to be reached and discipled.

For this reason, the burden of proof once again falls on those who would choose to stay in an evangelized nation. How are you fulfilling your obligation to the Great Commission? This is the question you must answer whether you stay or go. At no point in history has the watchword of the SVM been nearer to fulfillment and within the grasp of a generation. We, like the students of the past, are called to make the evangelization of the world in this generation our heart cry and the purpose of our life, to the glory of God.

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Lesson 9 Follow-Up Questions

1. What do you attribute as the beginning of the Student Volunteer Movement? Think about the different possible factors listed under the section "Small Beginnings."
2. What are some of the factors that made the SVM so successful, in that, so many went and even the ones who stayed, stayed with purpose?
3. What was the "watchword" or vision of the SVM? Why do you think that generation liked it so much?
4. What will it take to see another Student Volunteer Movement in this generation? What do you think will challenge students today?
5. How are you going to apply what you learned from this article?

Lesson 10 Local Church

Friend, Foe, or Failure in the Great Commission

Trey wants to be a missionary; to go to a Muslim country in North Africa as a tentmaker. We were catching up on the events of the past few months since he graduated from college.

In the course of the conversation, I asked what I thought was a fair question: "Trey, if you desire to go overseas as one of our missionaries, why haven't you been involved in some aspect of the ministry?"

I expected comments about his being newly graduated or not knowing where to help or being too busy. I got something else.

"Well," Trey replied, his eyes widening as he got agitated, "this church and all the churches that I know of don't care about the Great Commission. All I see are people who are self-centered and preoccupied with their own pet peeves, like the time of the services, whether or not there is childcare, and improving the church grounds, with very little interest in winning the world for Christ."

Trey's countenance changed from anger to shame. He had spoken his mind but had forgotten that he was talking to the minister of missions, who represented both the "self-centered" people and the funding that he needed to go overseas. I think he expected me to defend my case.

Instead, I simply replied, "Trey, I cannot disagree with your observations, although I think you have overlooked some fine people and churches. But this is exactly why I asked for your involvement. We need people like you to be catalysts towards greater mission involvement while you are here. You see, Trey, whether we like to admit it or not, the local church is primary in God's worldwide purposes."

In my conversation with Trey, I pointed out the primacy of the local church in the Great Commission by highlighting four truths.

Truth #1: **The Local Church is Primary in World Missions Because Jesus said it is.**

The promise of Jesus to Peter (Mt. 16:18) states that He will build His church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. The image is one of a forceful organization of believers representing one Kingdom on the march against another. When the gates of that second kingdom - hell - are attacked, they will fall.

Who is supposed to be on this attack? Jesus says it's His Church. For each of us, this manifests itself in the local assembly of believers. The church fails in its task when it loses the mentality of advancement.

The local church that is a foe to world missions or a failure in doing its part in the Great Commission has usually degenerated from being a "Kingdom-advancer" to a "fortress-builder." Rather than taking new ground for Christ, we spend our time protecting the ground we have.

The missions-minded person who sees this happening in his or her local church should get involved and try to influence church thinking. Without our involvement, the local church will plunge deeper into a fortress- mentality, the missions-minded will become more cynical about the local church, and we all will move further from Jesus' promise that his Church will defeat the gates of hell.

The Association of Church Missions Committees (ACMC) publishes a book entitled *The Local Church Can Change the World*. The title is not some vain wish, but rather a statement in keeping with the vision that Jesus has for his Church.

Truth #2: **The Local Church is Primary Because the Body of Christ is there.**

Peer groups and campus fellowships can be wonderful stimuli towards discipleship and missions, but they do not present the whole cross-section of the body of Christ

Trey was correct in his evaluation of some Christians as being petty in their self-centeredness and being opposed to the Great Commission. But these are still members of Christ's body, the Church. If we are to be faithful to *Him*, we must be faithful to *them* by seeking to love and serve them in our desire to help them expand their worldviews.

The fuller representation of the body of Christ, we call the local church, also puts us in the presence of older believers, whose accumulated wisdom will be our training ground for realistic ministry - in this culture or another.

Truth #3: The Local Church is Primary Because It Affords Us Training and Care.

Do you have the patience needed to persevere for years in a Muslim culture without seeing anyone become a Christian? No one really knows, but ministry to the younger teens at the local church can certainly help develop patience.

And will you desire to lead people in another culture to Christ, disciple them, and encourage them to be "world Christians?" If you plan to do this, you should take every opportunity to test your skills, methods, and relational abilities right in your own church.

Local church training may be formal-missions candidate programs, evangelism training, or teacher training. But the more valuable training may be the informal character training that comes from loving the unlovely people at church, persevering with those that are belligerently anti-missions, or listening to the rebukes from elders at the church.

The pre-field formal and informal training is essential in helping potential missionaries get sent to the field by local churches, but the ongoing care that a local church can give will help keep the missionary on the field.

Every missionary suffers at times from the "Does anyone know I'm here?" syndrome. Missionaries who receive letters, packages, or calls from a caring home church are glad for the relationships established in the sending church before they left.

Truth #4: The Local Church is Primary Because It is Both the Beginning and the End of Missions.

In his book, *A People for His Name*, Dr. Paul Beals identifies a three-part cycle in the book of Acts regarding the mission effort:

- Evangelizing non-believers.
- Edifying the saints.
- Establishing churches.

As soon as a church was established, the cycle resumed: evangelizing- edifying- establishing. The problem of the established church is that we perceive ourselves as being the end of the cycle, but not as the beginning of a new cycle, i.e. the fortress mentality again.

Some, like my friend Trey, want to circumvent the church and be involved only at another part of the cycle (evangelizing or edifying), but they fail to see the fact that evangelizing should emanate from the church and edifying should lead to the establishment of churches.

Another way to put this same truth: one of the basic purposes of any missionary endeavor is to establish local, indigenous congregations of believers. These new congregations like the ones out of which we come may also suffer from self-centeredness, erroneous priorities, or a fortress mentality, because even though the cultural forms may differ, people are sinners in every culture! The best way to combat these errors in the future is to get experience combating them in our present local church.

Friend, Foe, or Failure?

The local church; is it friend, foe, or failure in world missions? Preparing missionaries will see it as a foe if the spirit of criticism or negativism prevails. There are plenty of problems in the local church, but it doesn't give any of us the freedom to avoid the local church to do our own thing.

Preparing missionaries, members of mission organizations, or college fellowships may see the local church as a failure in world missions, but this should call us to action, not avoidance. We should get involved and try to make the church a success in fulfilling its Christ-ordained calling.

The local church is the missionary's friend...a true partner in the sending process. Jesus established it. We are part of the body of Christ, expressed in local congregations. We need the training and discipline of life in the local church because it is local churches that we go to plant.

*Rise up, people of God,
The church for you doth wait.
Her strength unequal to the task-
Rise up and make her great!*

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Lesson 10 Follow-Up Questions

1. What did you think about the article? Which of the 4 points discussed did you like the best and why?
2. Why do some Christian students not plug in to a local church?
3. Has your local church been more of a friend, foe, or failure? Why?
4. How can you encourage your church towards the great commission?

Lesson 11
Prayer
Apart From Prayer We Can Do Nothing
by David Smithers

The Law of Asking and Receiving

Did you know that the Kingdom of God will not come apart from PRAYER? The unreached will never hear the sweet name of Jesus without the labor of someone's Spirit-led prayers. Regardless of how things may appear on the surface, nothing of eternal value is ever released without somebody, somewhere PRAYING. Because prayer by its nature is often a HIDDEN work, being done in the SECRET closet, many come to false conclusions. Often credit is given to the more obvious and outward ministries of preaching or administration for what has actually been accomplished through prayer.

In spite of appearances, prayer is one of God's primary means of GRACE to achieve the desires of His heart. Our Lord has sovereignly chosen to govern His Kingdom by the simple law of asking and receiving. Prayer is not some human contrivance or scheme; it is the anointed strategy of God. King Jesus bids us, *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives* (Matt. 7:7-8).

Today the Church and the world are both sin-sick and suffering because those who call themselves believers have not taken these promises seriously. *We have not because we ask not* (James 4:2). Hell is larger today than it was yesterday, because many of us have not prayed.

God has ordained that ALL believers everywhere should expand His Kingdom through the WORK of prayer and intercession. Jesus has emphatically instructed us ALL to pray for His Kingdom to come. (Matt. 6:10) We may not all end up going to the ends of the earth, but every one of us can GO to the closet and PRAY!

Prayer that Makes a Difference

Yet what kind of prayer does God require from us? Are all prayers as equally effective? Does a mechanical two-minute prayer truly usher in the Kingdom of God? The Epistle of James teaches us exactly what an effective, Kingdom prayer looks like. James writes, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit* (James 5:16-18). Effectual prayer claims the promises of God by FAITH with FERVENT and UNRELENTING passion.

James 5:18 says that Elijah prayed again, and the heavens gave rain. That has to be one of the biggest understatements in the whole Bible. I Kings 18:41-45 tells us that Elijah prayed not once, not twice, but seven times before the fruitful rains of revival came. Prayer that truly affects the world around us is extremely intense and persistent. Like everything that God requires of His children, prayer must be done with ALL of our heart, ALL of our soul and ALL of our strength (Deut. 4:29, Deut. 6:5).

The Prayer life of Jesus

Unless some should think that such prayer is only for the faithless or legalistic, let me remind you that Jesus also gave us an example of this kind of intense and fervent prayer. In Hebrews 5:7, the scriptures tell us that, *During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears...* Jesus consistently gave Himself to the practice of agonizing and fervent prayer. Did Jesus weep and pray with such an intense fervency because of a lack of faith or because He was experiencing condemnation? Certainly, Jesus had nothing about which to be condemned. Unlike us, He spent hours in prayer every day and never used any of that time to mourn over sin or a lack of faith.

Without question, Jesus prayed as no one else has ever prayed. The fervent prayer life of Jesus was driven by His love for His Father and his unlimited vision of ETERNITY (Prov. 15:11). Jesus was consumed with the sight of multitudes of lost souls, past, present and future, all rushing into the ever-growing mouth of HELL. (Is. 5:14) I believe that it was this vision that gripped His heart as He knelt and prayed with broken cries and hot tears streaming down His

face. Is there any other kind of prayer consistent with such an overwhelming view of eternity? Our lack of fervent prayer is the direct result of our blindness to the realities of an eternal HEAVEN and an everlasting HELL. Many of us are still motivated far too much by the temporal and sensual realm, the things we can personally see, taste and touch. *Where there is no vision, the people perish* (Prov. 29:18). Where there is no vision of ETERNITY, there is no prayer for the PERISHING.

Embracing the Broken Heart of Jesus

Prayer opens prison doors and preaching doors. Prayer binds the enemy and opens the heavens. Prayer is the plow that breaks up the hard ground for the Gospel seed. Prayer ushers in the manifest glory of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, is there really any such thing as a Christian who genuinely LOVES the souls of men who fails to passionately pray for them? Can anyone truly preach about the world's unreached millions and then fail to fervently pray for them? NO, of course they can't, but I am afraid that's exactly what MANY are doing. Many, out of a false sense of accomplishment are talking and writing and preaching, while never FERVENTLY praying!

Today, God the Father will witness the death of every lost man, woman and child as they slip into a burning HELL. He will observe every brutal act of child molestation, incest, murder and rape. Today His heart will be broken and tormented by every vile act of sin that happens on the face of the earth. Yet does He turn His head or hide His eyes? No, He purposely sees it all and WEEPS and grieves.

Today the heartbroken cries of Jesus are echoing throughout the heavens. Have you ever heard that haunting cry? Do you ever embrace the broken heart of Jesus? He longs for His Bride to enter into His BROKENNESS through fervent and loving prayer. The Spirit of God is crying out to each of us today, *the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore PRAY...* (Matt. 9:37,38).

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Lesson 11 Follow-Up Questions

1. What is the relationship between prayer and missions? What do you think about this quote? "Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world." Do you really think your obedience in prayer matters?
2. How would you describe your prayer life?
3. Describe how your prayer life could be changed because of the truths in this study?
4. How can you make your prayer life more God-centered and strategic for reaching the nations?

Suggested books about Prayer:

Prayer with No Intermission, Bill Elliff

A Passion for Prayer, Tom Elliff

Answers to Prayer, George Muller or Biographies about George Muller

Mountain Rain, a biography about James O. Fraser

Lesson 12

Finding Your Role in World Evangelization by Todd Ahrend

Ingrained in the minds of many Christians is the idea that to be involved in mission work means one thing only: living overseas long-term. This is an unhealthy way to approach missions because it excludes most people. Even those that go long-term will eventually come home and need to appropriate their vision in another way. If it is an attribute of God to desire the redemption of all nations, then it must be cultivated into every one of His followers as an attribute. That is why it is vital to the Church that other avenues of involvement are explored. The following five habits are not to be viewed in terms of "which one is for me?" The idea is that a person who prioritizes God's global plan will do all or most of them. The main habits are:

- Going
- Praying
- Sending
- Welcoming (reaching internationals)
- Mobilizing

Going: This habit is most commonly associated with missions. In the past and even still today when someone thinks about missions this is the most natural association. A definition of the go-er is the person physically present, laboring on the mission field. Going may mean a short-term trip or an extended amount of time.

Ultimately, the go-er is willing to completely immerse herself in an unfamiliar culture with the intention of furthering the gospel in that culture. They are innovative, low maintenance, steadfast, and persevere with little fellowship. In Exodus 3:7-10 God mentions nine different times to Moses that He is concerned with the Israelites and their condition as slaves and is getting ready to bring them into the promise land. During this discourse, God has one reference to Moses. Look at Moses' reaction. *Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"* (Ex. 3:11). Sounds like us sometimes doesn't it? Our temptation is to focus on ourselves and our insufficiency! We think there is no way God could want us involved and so many of us never enjoy the blessing of participating. Look at God's reaction; He puts the focus back on Himself in the next verse, *I will be with you* (Ex. 3:12). Before Robert Morrison left to be the first Bible translator in China someone asked if he really thought he could change the 2,000-year problem of idolatry in China, his response, "No I don't, but I expect God can."

As you begin to consider going on a short-term trip, it will be natural for you to look at your abilities (or inabilities) and become discouraged. It is at this point that you must be reminded that *God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things - and the things that are not - to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him* (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

In light of this truth we are all overqualified!

Praying: If you could ask Jesus to teach you anything what would it be? Personally, I think I would want to learn how He multiplied the bread to feed the 5,000! Can you imagine? Well, in all of the scriptures we see only one time when the disciples ask Jesus to teach them something. The request, *Lord, teach us to pray* (Luke 11:1). Isn't it interesting that after knowing and living with Jesus, their desire was to pattern His prayer life? Maybe after following Him around for a few years they realized that when Jesus prayed, things happened. Listen to Christ's response, *This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...* (Matt. 6:9-10).

Jesus was saying that when you pray, you should ask God to bring the activity of heaven down to earth. In other words, pray that what is going on up there, would go on down here. Well, what is going on in heaven? Right now, in heaven all eyes are on Jesus, as a multicultural worship service is being held. Sound like your church? This is what Jesus asked his disciples to

pray. Another passage that challenges us to pray for the world is found in Matthew 9:36-38, *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'* Jesus saw the vastness of lost souls compared to the scarcity of the laborers and He looks to the disciples and says, "Ask." What a powerful image! Not go, or preach, or have a conference, but ask. It's hard to read this passage and not get convicted about your prayer life. Let's evaluate our own prayer lives and see if we come to God with our desires or if we are concerned with His. Obviously, we need to pray for ourselves and yes, we need to lift up our family and friends, but God also desires that we join together and intercede on behalf of all nations and beg Him to send forth laborers into the field.

Sending: Paul the Apostle has an interesting observation, *and how can they preach unless they are sent?* (Rom. 10:15). The unreached do not have a chance at hearing the gospel if there are not people on the home front funding and praying for those that are going. It is like asking the question, "Which is more important, the rescuer who goes down into the well to save a life or the man at the top holding the rope?" You can't have one without the other. There was a principle in Israelite warfare, *the share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle. All will share alike.* (1 Sam. 30:24-25). Why? Because they are equally important in God's army. In our culture we think we are entitled to live at whatever standard matches our income. Our reasoning is that since a person makes \$60,000 a year, they should live at \$60,000. When a person gets a raise, their standard of living gets a raise too! But the World Christian should have a different mindset. Maybe when a Christian gets a raise or comes into unexpected financial gain God intends that person to be a resource for someone else! This thinking is so contrary to our culture.

The role of a sender is not only integral, but diverse as well. The most obvious aspect of sending is giving of one's financial resources to support a missionary. But this is certainly not the only facet of sending. A sender may work in one or all the following specialized roles: logistics, prayer coordination, communications, research, finances, or re-entry coordinator. A specialist in logistics deals with the practical side of sending. They deal with packing the missionary's goods, travel plans, cost and acquirement of items needed on the field. The prayer coordinator can find specific prayer needs based on research, missionaries in the field and mission societies. They are also needed to enlist others in intercessory prayer for the team and organize special prayer meetings. For prayer needs to be known, a communications specialist is enormously helpful. It is their responsibility to open lines of communication to the team so that prayer requests and equipment and other needs are known. The role of sending is neither glamorous nor easy. The task of dealing with the day-to-day, behind the scenes tasks of mission work may even seem thankless, but it is not without reward.

This is a seemingly difficult habit for college students to develop because they always feel broke! But the point is not the amount that is given. The point is that they are building a habit of sacrifice.

Welcoming: America is hosting the largest number of internationals of any country and the world is at our doorstep! Over 650,000 international students and scholars are studying here from 188 countries of the world. What a perfect opportunity to extend God's grace and love to the world!

And you don't even have to leave. The Welcomer gets his name from the idea that he welcomes those from other countries to his country. The foreigner is close to the Lord's heart. Over forty times in the Old Testament alone we are commanded to care for the foreigner in our land, *The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God* (Lev 19:34).

He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt (Deut 10:18-20).

God reminds the Israelites of their past exile in Egypt so that they will be motivated to love the foreigners, for they once were foreigners. Similarly, we should be reminded of our past, how we were foreigners to God and yet he had mercy on us. Sadly, as available as this ministry is to college students, it is going sorely overlooked. Did you know that 80% of the internationals

on your campus will never be invited into an American home? With high hopes they come to study, but soon realize that the hospitality they are used to is just as foreign to America as they are. So, they live in their isolated community with fellow internationals and eventually return to their homeland. I wonder what they tell their friends about this renowned Christian nation.

Everyone can be a welcomer. All it takes is a little time, energy and a willingness to say hello. There is no reason that Christians on campus shouldn't have 2-3 new international friends each semester. Can you imagine how the gospel would spread if that were a reality? At the college where I worked, there were 80 students from Saudi Arabia who hung out in their corner of the Student Center. I can remember the first time I took two guys from my Bible study to meet and get to know them. After a few weeks of just saying hello and making ourselves available we became part of the group. We shared the gospel with about 10 of them over the next year. It's amazing to think of the hardship I would face should I go to Saudi Arabia and try to do the same thing! Yet here we have complete freedom to share with otherwise unreached people!

The need for welcoming is great. Brainstorm ideas to show love to the foreigners among you. A simple beginning step is to initiate conversation with an international on your campus. There are tons of questions you could ask to get to know them:

- Where are you from?
- How do you like the food?
- How do you like it here?
- Is English harder than you thought?
- How is it different from your country?
- Are you finding your way around?
- Can we help you in anything?

You might choose a specific group of them to focus on. Here are some suggested ways to serve them:

- Run errands for them or be willing to take them on errands.
- Invite them over for holidays.
- Practice English with them.
- Invite them to Bible study.
- Invite them just to hang out with you and your friends.

The one who welcomes is willing to serve them and reach out to them in the hopes that Christ will be glorified. They will see how easy it is to get involved and soon they will be loving internationals and this strategic ministry.

Mobilizing: A mobilizer is a normal, everyday Christian who walks with God, yet has a global perspective and stays on the home front to rouse others to action. Anyone who has a vision for the world has at one time been mobilized. Whether someone asked them to go on a short-term trip, invited them to a mission conference, took them to a Bible study on the topic or introduced them to a missionary, somehow, they were recruited. And that, in a nutshell, is a mobilizer, **a recruiter**. Mobilizers are out looking for others to enlist in God's agenda with their entire life. Their focus is Christians who are unaware of God's global plan and they consistently seek to raise the mission awareness in creative ways whether it is in a small group or large group setting. Like Habakkuk, they *Write down the vision and make it plain on tablets so that the one who reads it may run* (Hab. 2:2).

A friend of mine has a saying that I have adopted. "Every Christian a World Christian and every World Christian a mobilizer." Think about the awesome potential in that statement. Every Christian is orchestrating their life around God's heart for the world and fulfilling the Great Commission and at the same time passing on that vision to the new believers and next generation. Unbelievable!

So, what exactly are the characteristics of a mobilizer? Bill Stearns and Bob Sjogren list ten:

1. Needs to be able to be a servant.
2. Desires to see laborers raised up to finish the task of world evangelization.
3. Possibly has the gift of encouragement and exhortation.

4. Is "apt to teach" but may be more effective in recruiting others to teach.
5. Speaks in front of groups without (too much) fear.
6. Leads others well.
7. Has a general heart for the world, possibly focusing in on one people group.
8. Sees the priority of waiting and mobilizing others as well as going.
9. Is part visionary- seeing what can happen as God matches empowered believers with key opportunities of ministry.
10. Is part implementer- driven to see a vision become a reality.

Whether it is just the right missions book or a short video, magazine, agency, prayer profile, etc. you need to be able to show others the resources that are available. I can remember when I was in college gathering my own collection of tools. I labeled a manila folder "Mobilization Resources." Now it fills two filing cabinets! Part of being equipped with resources is being a networker. You will need to know what God is doing and who He is doing it with. I challenge anyone trying to cultivate their mobilization skills to help others collect and learn how to use the resources and material available in missions. As they are collecting and learning this material, they are building a confidence that will enable them to teach others.

The mobilizer is a key player in the process of raising up laborers. It takes a burning heart for the world and yet a willingness to stay. It has happened to every World Christian and every World Christian can do it!

Lesson 12 Follow-Up Questions

1. What role do you identify with the most and why?
2. Which role scares you the most and why?
3. How can you apply these roles from where God has you now?
4. What do you think about Todd's statement, "Every Christian a World Christian?" What do you think would happen if every Christian was a World Christian? What would happen to your life if you lived out all 5 habits of a World Christian lifestyle?

We have taken several thousand students through this World Christian Bible study. Some finish, missing the point, thinking that the only challenge presented in these articles is the challenge to go. Listen! Our prayer has been, that as you have read, discussed and studied these lessons that you have become more convinced than ever about your obligation to the Great Commission and how to carry this out. We believe it is clear. The best way to live our lives for the glory of God and the salvation of the nations is to make a full commitment to **be a World Christian.** As a World Christian, you should go as far as you can to as many as you can, stopping where you can make the most impact for His kingdom among the unreached. In your going or staying, the Revelation 7:9 compass and the World Christian habits should impact how you live, and pray, and send and welcome... until you die or until Jesus returns!

Missions Bible Study

Read Genesis 11:1-9

What was man's main reason to build the city and not scatter over the face of the earth?

Why did the Lord want them to scatter? (Gen. 1:28 & 9:1)

What was the result of man's disobedience?

Read Genesis 12:1-4

What did God command Abram (Abraham) to do?

What did God promise He would give Abram (Abraham) if he obeyed?

Read Genesis 26:1-5 and Genesis 28:10-15

How did this promise continue on to Abraham's descendants?

Read Deuteronomy 4:5-6

Why did God give His people the 10 Commandments?

Read Joshua 2:9-10

How did the nations respond to God parting the Red Sea?

Read 1 Kings 4:29-34

Why did God give Solomon wisdom? What did God get?

Read Daniel 3:28-4:3

How did King Nebuchadnezzar respond to God rescuing Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the furnace?

Read Daniel 6:25-28

How did King Darius respond to God rescuing Daniel from the lion's den?

What does Jesus have to say about the nations?

John 3:16

Matthew 24:14

Luke 24:46-47

Mark 16:15

Acts 1:8

What was Paul's ministry philosophy?

Romans 10:14-15

Romans 15:20-21

Read Revelation 5:9

What is significant about this passage and how does it relate to the promise God gave to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-4?

How should God's heart for the world affect our lives as Christians?

How can we cultivate a heart for the world?