

Women & More

If We Don't Go, Who Will

October 31, 2013

Someone has said: “The loss of wealth is a terrible loss. The loss of our health is more.... But the loss of a soul is such a loss that no one can restore!” A soul-winner hears the sound of marching feet on the way to a lost eternity. “It cannot but grieve gracious souls to see what pains men take to go to hell,” says Charles Spurgeon. “They know the evil of sin, experimentally, and they are alarmed to see others flying like moths into its blaze.”

Here is the world's need today—people who have seen their Lord, and want others to see Him too! One measure of our love for God is what we are willing to do to share the gospel with others. Henry van Dyke: “The inspiration of the service that we render in this world to our homes, our country, our fellow human beings, springs from the recognition that a price has been paid for us...God has bought us with his own precious life.”

If those of us who have tasted God's love and have been redeemed and reconciled—brought into the very family of the Divine—if we won't go and tell others the good news—we that have it—then there is no one left to go. And what would be the point of their going: to what end would be their purpose?

We must not go just...

—to show them a way...	without introducing the Way
—to ease their suffering...	without prescribing the Savior
—to point out creation...	without giving God credit
—to give of ourselves...	without offering God's gift of Himself
—to help to grow grain...	without championing the Bread of Life
—to build them a house...	without describing God's 'home'-plans
—to provide clean water...	without proffering the Living Water
—to teach the unlearned...	without preaching the Truth
—to demonstrate our love...	without sharing God's love
—to represent democracy...	without presenting Christianity

Matthew 28:16-20: “*Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.** 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”*

Verses 18-20 contain *The Great Commission*, the Great ‘Send’ or the Great ‘Carry-out’!

The word commission is defined by *Webster* as: 1) a warrant granting certain powers and imposing certain duties; 2) authority to act as agent for another, and 3) a body of persons charged with performing a duty. I love that word because it sounds like **co**-mission! Remember, God never asks us to do anything that he intends for us to do without him! The Great Commission is definitely a mission with Him doing the Lion-share of it! So, then, we are simply to...

Go in the assurance that God is sending;
 Go—*make disciples*—certain that He goes with us,
 Go with the message of salvation by grace,
 Go baptizing those who would believe and receive,
 Go teaching them to observe God's commands, and
 Go with the love and authority of the Divine!

● *Time Magazine* called them The Worst People on Earth.... In his book, *People Whose Faith Got Them into Trouble*, John Cowart explains: "Until January 8, 1956, few people had heard of the Auca Indians of Ecuador. They were just another backwater primitive tribe scratching out a mean existence in jungle clearings. But on that day on a sandbar in a river near two Auca villages, two alien cultures—one dedicated to spreading the gospel of Christ, the other to war and murder—clashed. And the Aucas' murder of five American missionaries catapulted the tribe into worldwide news."

Life photographer Cornell Capa reported: "Among the effects of the missionaries...were three diaries in which the men had recorded, step by step, the progress of their mission." Their reports indicated that they had been well prayed and equally prepared. They had had aerial contact with the tribe, dropping gifts and notes indicating their intentions and they had received positive responses from the Indians.

The five murdered missionaries represented several Christian denominations and three different mission groups. Excerpts from their personal writings reveal individuals who were committed to the Lord and his command to 'go'!

- **Nate Saint** (Pennsylvania), a pilot with Mission Aviation Fellowship, had written, "**The old life of chasing things that are of a temporal sort seemed absolutely insane.**"
- **Roger Youderian** (Michigan), with Gospel Missionary Union, recorded in his diary: "**The Holy Spirit can and will guide me in direct proportion to the time and effort I will expend to know and do the will of God.**"

- **Ed McCully** (Wisconsin), one of the three with Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML), wrote: “**I have one desire now—to live a life of reckless abandon for the Lord, putting all my energy and strength into it...** If there’s nothing to this business of eternal life we might as well lose everything in one crack and throw our present life away with our life hereafter. But if there is something to it... **Well, that’s it.**”
- **Pete Fleming**, (Washington), with CMML, wrote concerning his decision to go to Ecuador: “**A call is nothing more or less than obedience to the will of God** as God presses it home to the soul by whatever means he chooses.” About the Aucas he said, “It is a grave and solemn problem; an unreachable people who murder and kill with extreme hatred. **It comes to me strongly that God is leading me to do something about it**, and a strong idea and impression comes into my mind that I ought to devote the majority of my time to collecting linguistic data on the tribe... **I know that this may be the most important decision of my life, but I have a quiet peace about it.**”
- **Jim Elliot** (Oregon), also with CMML wrote to a friend about his motive for being a missionary: “The command is plain; you go into the whole world and announce the good news... To me, Ecuador is simply an avenue of obedience to the simple word of Christ. There is room for me there, and I am free to go... **The will of God is always a bigger thing than we bargain for.**”

Cowart says, “The widows of the five missionaries asked the outraged Ecuadorian government not to send the army against the Indians. These women continued to study the language (Waorani) of the Aucas and pray for access to the tribe. Within three years, Mrs. Jim Elliot, her daughter, Valerie, and Rachel Saint, sister of the pilot, were living in an Auca village teaching the Indians about a forgiving Christ.”

And it gets better! A church was started and Nate Saint’s own son was baptized by an Auca pastor—one who had been in the murderous group that killed his father. Since those years, each man in that raiding party came to know the Lord Jesus Christ; thousands of Christians committed to serve as missionaries because of the sacrifice of the five, and in 1996 translation of the Waorani New Testament was completed by the Summer Institute of Linguistics and published by *Biblica* (formerly International Bible Society).

These men did not know that they would die for their Lord...but they were ready! Their deaths did not result in the Aucas not being reached—far from it!

Months before his death, Jim Elliot had written these precious words: “**He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.**” Who do you think prompted him to write such a thing? Answer: God who knew that this servant was going to be one of *His Missioners* to the whole world!

The Apostle Paul was missionary to the Gentiles, after the Jews rejected his message. And in Acts 26:12 we see him address King Agrippa and his wife Bernice. He has already appeared before the court of the 1) Sanhedrin, and in trial before 2) Felix, and then with his successor 3) Festus, **and now Paul shares his testimony—start to finish—with 4) King Agrippa**, who says in verse 28: “*Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?*” And Paul responds in 29 “...Short time or long—I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.”

Paul had just asked the King a question—“*do you believe the prophets, I know you do*”—and King Agrippa was embarrassed in front of the other dignitaries; his reputation was at stake (not to mention his soul)—and he was not going to commit to what others had called madness. It is not known what the King thought about Paul’s message, personally, but his question was clearly a worldly-wise and clever jest. And “*Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian*” in the **KJV** sounds as though Agrippa was “almost” ready to believe, but translation evidence supports his rejection.

God allowed Paul to be imprisoned on trumped-up charges to begin to fulfill his witness—Paul was able to share the gospel with all these leaders because of his chains. And though none of these four audiences received the gospel message, Paul was faithful to go. The imperative is to ‘go’ and be obedient, so that the lost will have the opportunity to hear and call on the Lord to be saved!

Romans 10:13-15 “...for, *Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*”
“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”

Four questions are asked in this passage:

- How can they call on the one they have not believed in? ANSWER: They can’t.
- How can they believe in the one they have not heard? ANSWER: They can’t.
- How can they hear without someone telling them? ANSWER: They can’t.
- How can someone tell them unless they are sent? ANSWER: They can’t.

1) We have to go 2) and tell, so that 3) they can believe in the one that they hear about 4) and call on Him to be saved!

In case we have imagined that we are somehow exempt, personally, from being witnesses, Acts 1:8 says, “...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” And for us, that would be in Grove, then Oklahoma, followed by the United States, and then the world. We are to do good works, yes, but we are to tell the good news while we do the good work! **The greatest need people have anywhere at anytime is to know the Lord!**

If we went to the doctor and he performed some tests, and found something wrong with us, would we want to know the truth about what was wrong? Or would we want him to keep it to himself, or only tell us what wasn't wrong with us? Would that be good enough? No! We would want to know the ‘bad news’ of what was wrong with us, so that we could receive the ‘good news’ about the appropriate steps or treatment to make things right and to get well?

If someone asked us how to be saved, today, what would be our response? The five missionaries to the Aucas shared the Gospel of Christ by giving their lives—the ultimate witness. Paul shared his testimony. We cannot know if we would ever be called to die for Christ, but we absolutely know we are called to live for him! And we can share the message of salvation by giving our own testimony. And we live our lives so that all the words we speak match with that, because no witness is as powerful as the *influence* of a good example. In God's service, our greatest ability is our availability—to ‘go’ and tell!

In his book *What in the World is Going On?* Dr. David Jeremiah lists ten things that believers must be about as the end-times advance on us. And on this list is *reaching lost people*. What if Paul had not obeyed God's command to ‘go’ to the Gentiles in Acts 22:21? But he did...and in 2 Corinthians 3:2-3, he writes, “*You yourselves are our letter written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. 3You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.*”

One of the most amazing things God does, since he sent his Son to die for us, is to entrust the spread of the Gospel to believers. The reason Jesus came in the flesh—to redeem sinners—the plan God put into place before ever the first garden-dwellers sinned, the deliverance of that message has been left to us to broadcast. We're to be the *influence* of His fragrance to the lost, so that they will make the most important decision they'll ever make. And there is no alternate plan!