

The Ministry of Missions: To the Nations - Romans 15:14-16:23, Acts 14:19-23

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This evening we will spend some thinking about the ministry of missions. There is much to cover but we will focus our time together thinking about how we do Chapel missions rather than the biblical mandate for missions.

Because even a cursory look at the Scriptures reveals that God has and has always had a redemptive plan to gather people from all nations, tribes, and tongues to call His own. God told Abraham in Genesis 12 that, “in you all the families of the world shall be blessed”. In Isa. 42:1, God tells Judah in view of their idols and idolatry to, “Behold My Servant, whom I uphold, My Chosen, in whom My soul delights; I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.” God’s scope for missions is to all nations.

In Matthew 28, the risen Christ gives His final instructions with all authority to the twelve minus one, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Jesus also tells them in Matt. 24:14 that the end will not come until the gospel is “proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations...” Our Lord has not yet returned so we continue forward.

But as is true in all ministry and kingdom work, God’s will is clearly given in the Scriptures and then we rely on His Spirit and Word for wisdom to carry out the particulars in our generation, in our culture, and in our circumstances. So it is with ministry of missions; we must answer the specific questions of who, what, where, when, and how. But the Scriptures are rich in giving us some insight and principles to how proceed. One helpful place to go is the book of Romans.

Paul after taking the reader through a breathtaking explanation of the gospel and the sure obedience which follows by those who receive it, he turns to the “what kind of people ought we to be” in chapters 12-14 which concludes with a call to welcome one another in the gospel as Christ welcomed them; the strong with the weak and for unity between Jews and Gentiles (Romans 15:6-7). The outcome is “that together they (you) may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. “

And not only Jews and Gentiles but Gentiles and Gentiles as well which is more relevant in our day and our experience.

Paul then begins to close the letter in verse 14 by encouraging them, stating his purpose for writing, and giving them a reminder and update on his ministry. From this section, we can glean insight into ministry and into missions specifically in four areas.

Purpose (15:14-21);

He first states purpose for ministry and mission in verse 14-21:

I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience--by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God--so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."

In these verses we see Paul's ministry has purpose. He acknowledges that those in the Roman church are full of goodness, filled with knowledge, and able to instruct one another. They were competent and functioning Christians. But they needed a reminder – a reminder of the gospel and how to live the Christian life in light of the gospel. For Paul's goal and purpose was to ensure that the quality of their lives before God was "acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit" – that they would continue as "living sacrifices", with lives characterized by obedience, and that they would finish well. The goal was for the Gentiles to live up to the standard of God in Christ as obedient disciples and if I may add, able to make disciples themselves. For this reason we need reminders as well. Have you forgotten our purpose in ministry?

And so it is for missions. Our aim in missions is to preach the gospel and to make disciples. Digging wells in Africa for drinking water, building houses in Sao Paulo Brazil for the homeless, or providing medical care for people in India are good things to do for our fellow man but our primary purpose is to preach the gospel and to make disciples. There have and will be times when we see need among the people we are reaching and among our brothers and sisters overseas where we will be compelled by Christ love for them and send help – this is right and biblical. But all of it proceeds from a mission that is gospel centered.

Nor are we primarily concerned about elevating a people's standard of living – and this is especially hard for American Christians. Our tendency is to rush in and "raise" living conditions to that of Americans as if that is the only legitimate way of living. Biblical missions is not about changing environments but about transforming hearts and lives by the gospel in the midst of such environments – the result is saved people who walk obediently before God and man with God receiving all the glory.

So Paul's entire apostolic ministry is summed up in these verses; sent by Jesus Christ and enabled by God's grace to administer the gospel of God for the express purpose of bringing Gentiles to obedience to God. Paul's apostolic ministry had specific purpose – it was not vague. He could not free lance for God had compelled him to a very narrow and specific purpose – to preach the gospel.

So let's look further at his purpose as stated in the text. First, he is looking to finish his ministry in verse 15 hence his letter of reminder to the Romans plus he points to the fact in verse 19 that he has fulfilled

his ministry to-date – we must always look to finish the job in ministry and in the missions in which we commit.

Second, he indicates his ministry is only by God's grace (v 15) and that it is done with a disposition of and heart attitude of service (v 16). He also expresses humility in giving Christ the glory for any fruit resulting from the work, speaking only of what Christ has done through Him whether by word and deed, by signs and wonders, or by the power of the Spirit. And so it is true in missions – we do it with humility and with full reliance on God's grace giving him the glory for any fruit which results. It is easy for us as a church to take the applause seriously and think our approach and methods are the reason for missions "success".

In verses 16 and 18, Paul indicates his clear target – the Gentiles. It is not as if Paul does not care about the Jews. In fact, he cares deeply for them and says back in 9:3 that he was willing to be accursed and cut off from Christ for their sakes. It is not that he is unconcerned for the Jew but rather that the Gentile is the one for which God has set him apart. His ministry and mission are to the Gentile.

He is also purposeful in the "where" of his God given ministry – verse 19 tells us "from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum". {Illyricum is that region bounded by Germany, Italy, Macedonia, and Northwest Turkey – Paul apostolic ministry to that point had been from Jerusalem through modern day Turkey and touching on the southern border of the Illyricum region}. Paul had a specific "where" to his ministry.

And so it is with missions at the Chapel. We are working to sharpen our focus – we are thinking in terms of people groups - distinct groups of people characterized by a combination of language and culture. To say we have a mission to India is too broad for there are a multitude of people groups within its borders. No, we are thinking about distinct groups of people who have need of the gospel. And some people groups cross geographies so we narrow our focus further. The work with the gypsies is a good example – they live on more than one continent and in multiple countries so we have narrowed our focus to eastern and now southern Romania.

Identifying a people group or groups to direct our missions effort is important. As a church, it gives us a clear line of sight, understanding, and a growing competency in the mission; we can absorb the culture, understand and even learn the language. We demonstrate a commitment that over time the people we are trying to reach begin to trust us. We can develop key relationships with gifted Christian men and women who God has brought to faith and by doing so, a foundation can be established to where additional missions can be launched within the people group and this has a multiplying effect. So by focusing on "less", we can do far more.

So what people groups do we choose to pursue? That is a big question. But let's start with the ones we do not choose – the bible gives us wise guidance in verses 20-21.

Given that he is nearing completion of his work from Jerusalem to Illyricum, Paul's purpose remains the same; to preach the gospel. Despite the fact that the "where" is changing, his ministry purpose is unchanged. He is simply moving on and where he is moving is instructive to us. For his ambition is to

preach the gospel where Christ has not been named yet – there is no use building on someone else’s foundation. This is a good example of biblical wisdom worked out in view of the Great Commission. He references in verse 21 Isaiah 52:15, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.” This is practical guidance. What is the use of duplicating effort? The world is large and we only have so much time.

Sadly, there are many mission efforts across the world where missionaries are sent over and over to the same places with the effect that missionaries are poorly dispersed across the world. One particular statistic from Joshua Project is eye-opening. Approximately 40% of the world’s population and 40% of the world’s people groups are unreached. Muslims make up the majority of these unreached. However, less than 1% of missionaries are being sent to the Muslims¹. How can we not go to the 40%?

So we take the gospel where it is not. In Paul’s day, this was more obvious. The gospel was newly expanding into the Gentile world. Today, the choice is more complicated since the landscape is ever changing. The gospel may have reached many countries already but within particular countries unreached people groups remain. Countries that Paul and the apostles reached in the 1st century need the gospel all over again. Much of Paul’s work was done in modern day Turkey – today we send missionaries there. And countries such as South Korea, Brazil, and China, which were missions targets in years past, are now sending missionaries themselves

And then there are areas where the gospel exists in a weak or defective form and in this case, we need God’s wisdom to choose. Our work among the gypsies fits this category.

So in choosing we pray much and keep our eyes open to the opportunities God brings to our attention. There is no specific formula – often these doors open by past and current relationships with other churches and with missionaries. We are also given further insight in verses 22-29 as Paul now shifts from purpose to planning. We read:

Planning (15:22-29);

This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

Paul finds himself at a point of transition; the work from Jerusalem around to Illyricum is coming to a close. Now he can go onto Rome and to Spain of which he has hoped and longed for some time. New

¹ Dalton Thomas, *Unto Death – Martyrdom, Missions, and the Maturity of the Church* (Maskilim Publishing, 2012), 75-76

places to preach the gospel are where Paul wants to go – his eagerness and anticipation just pour out of the text.

But his eager planning is tempered by responsibility - responsibility up to this point in that he would finish his current work (v 22) described in the preceding verses and to finish the Jerusalem aid project in-progress. You see there was great need among the believers in Jerusalem, and the Gentile believers in Macedonia and Greece rose to the occasion to help their brothers and sisters with material aid. Paul would deliver this aid and then embark on his plan to go to Rome and to Spain. He was responsible in ministry and it is no surprise after we have read the book of Romans to this point that he would seize an opportunity to express Christian unity between Jews and Gentiles.

But we also see realism in his plans; his target of Spain was a logical extension of his work in the Mediterranean region and stopping to see the Roman church along the way would give him practical help.

He also demonstrated flexibility for you see this was not a new plan – verse 22 tells us he has been hindered repeatedly to come to them. Paul simply rolled with the God ordained obstacles until he could launch new plans knowing and trusting our sovereign Lord's plan and timing were perfect. And he could say with confidence in verse 29 that if God allowed him to come to Rome finally that it would be in the full blessing of Christ. If God permitted it, then it had His approval. Paul would be at the right place and right on time. Do you think this way?

Similarly, we aim to reflect the same responsibility, realism, and flexibility in Chapel missions. We receive frequent inquiries from people or missions endeavors seeking support or a partnership. However, we cannot accept every opportunity which comes along. We must choose carefully according to the need, the capabilities and resources God has given us, and the current commitments we have already made. This often means saying “no” regardless of how attractive or how compelling the opportunity might be. It might even mean saying “no” or “not yet” to someone desiring to be sent from the Chapel itself – and this can be hard. Paul knew this – the passage shows us he greatly desired to go to Rome – verse 22 says he was hindered from coming to them – he loved them much as we can see from the letter but maintained a single-minded course to finish the work before him.

And we also need to be flexible for ultimately our plans are subject to the King – our vision, hopes, and timing need to be open to a continual re-shaping by the Lord as revealed to us over time through circumstances and increased understanding.

This realism and flexibility also guides us in whom we might partner with on the mission field. Our first preference is people from the people group itself. And this is for a number of reasons; evangelists and church planters can start and be effective much faster since they know the language and the culture. It can take an American missionary several years to catch up. And generally it is far less expensive and complicated to work through the indigenous peoples especially in the Third World;

Now again, working through indigenous missionaries is a preference. There is a need for American Christians to go overseas to join the work and in doing so, it is a good thing. The greatest need is when a

new work is starting – the gospel does not exist there and it needs to someone to start it. Some of the missionaries we support fall in this category. It also occurs for training pastors and church leaders - in the States, we have a wealth of biblical knowledge and ministry experience to share. A fair amount of our mission dollars support this type of activity through Dave, Mark, and Pastor Russ. But regardless of our hands-on role, the objective is to cause the indigenous church to eventually stand on their own and perpetuate gospel work through their own people.

Again, this is our general approach. Circumstances and needs require us to be realistic and flexible and will certainly require wisdom. It seems though that our most important hands-on contribution to missions is ultimately in a support role – supporting indigenous believers do the work among their own people. This involves biblical training, advising and strategizing with them on reaching the lost, and providing for their basic needs.

And as we plan, we need to ask what a church planting missionary should be doing on the field. Paul gives us some insight in Acts 14 so hold your finger in Romans 15 for a moment and turn with me to Acts 14: 19-23. Here we see Paul on his first missionary journey having already evangelized in the city of Iconium but now being stoned by the Jews in Lystra and left for dead. But God did not allow him to die and he walked right back into the city and the next day onto Derbe where the Scripture says they preached the gospel in that city and made many disciples. Having done this, they returned to the previous cities on the circuit (Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch) and strengthened the souls of the disciples, encouraged them to continue in the faith, and told them that through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom of God. And when they appointed elders, they prayed and fasted committing them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Notice the activity and progression; evangelize, people receive Christ, baptize, make disciples, plant a church, develop and put elders in place (Titus 1), continue teaching, strengthen the church, and then move onto the next area of unreached people within the people group and start all over again. You then periodically return, strengthen the souls of the disciples, encourage them to continue in the faith, and remind them the trials they are facing are normal and God ordained / authorized. But then return to the new areas and return less and less with increasing focus on the people of the new areas.

The point is for a church planter / missionary to keep on moving and not stay in one place. This is often a pitfall for American missionaries – often they do an initial work but then stay there. The planted church then does not mature and its leadership often does not develop because everyone looks to the American. It is neither healthy nor biblical. Rather they need to keep moving or find other indigenous peoples to move out in different directions using the same process.

And what is our role? We help our missions partners set goals, help them carry out their work with support for living, equipment, biblical training, teaching materials, and also encourage and advise them through correspondence and periodic visits. We also seek to hold them accountable – keeping them on track. For many missionaries have been rendered ineffective on the field since they have no plan to get things done nor anyone to help them stay on track.

So purpose and planning in missions – tackling the why, the what, the who, and even the how questions but there is more from the text - we read 15:30-33.

Prayer (15:30-33)

I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Here Paul makes a strong appeal or plea for the brothers at Rome to join him in the work – and specifically to “strive together” with him in prayer. The sense of this striving is to “wrestle” alongside Paul in the mission in prayer to God on Paul’s behalf.

He appealed to them to pray for delivery from unbelievers and that his service and his work would be acceptable to the saints. At first glance, it seems peculiar that he would ask for delivery from unbelievers – is that not whom he was seeking? Do we not go to and send missionaries to foreign lands to make disciples among unbelievers. But not all are receptive to the gospel – in fact, most are not. And they often do not stand idly by letting God’s work be carried out. Rather there is opposition; verbal, physical, and sometimes murderous opposition to the gospel and God’s people. For the gospel is offensive in its exclusive truth and in its exposure of men’s hearts.

And such opposition can come from those who name the name of Christ. There are betrayals – Pastor Russ experienced this in one of his recent trips. There are brothers who simply walk away from the work and those whose hearts are revealed by the trials which arise during the work; selfish motives and pride. We have faced this in our work among the gypsies.

So we can participate in missions in prayer – this may seem obvious but is it? Do you realize the weight of what we are doing each month when praying over the requests listed on the green sheet? We are wrestling in prayer to God on behalf of our mission partners – for a people and for God’s work thousands of miles from here. In effect, we are joining the mission from here. And we can keep on praying throughout the days and weeks – if you are not already, consider praying regularly for missions.

And look what we can pray for; deliverance from enemies and opposition (Paul was always being threatened by enemies of the gospel). We pray for basic needs and for effective and fruitful ministry and open doors for the gospel. We pray that the plans and objectives of the mission come about - Paul asked them to pray in verse 32 that he would be able to come to them as he planned.

So we can see missions work and ministry involves purpose, planning, and prayer. But then we read on concerning one more area - people.

People (16:1-23)

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has

been a patron of many and of myself as well. Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you. I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naïve. For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord. Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

So what do we see here? Well, there are three groups of people; a traveler, a church, and a missions team. First, the traveler is a woman named Phoebe (verses 1-2) – one who many think was the carrier of this letter to the Roman church. Can you imagine a 1st century woman carrying this letter from Greece to Rome, over several hundred miles? This was not like traveling around the world today where often the biggest danger is the airline losing a piece of luggage. She likely traveled by ship and then over roads where many thieves and robbers lay in wait. Phoebe was a financial supporter and host to Paul and many other Christians and now a traveler bringing God’s Word from one of the apostles.

And then in verses 3-16 we see people from the Roman church; people with first names only, some were Gentiles, some were Jews or Paul’s “kinsmen”. Is it not surprising that Paul devoted much of the last couple of chapters of Romans on being one in Christ regardless of race and welcoming one another? We see brothers and sisters beloved of Paul. We see people who risked their lives for the gospel, we see transplants from the work on the other side of the Mediterranean who had worked with Paul previously – remember Prisca and Aquila – the husband and wife team? Other transplants included Epaenetus, the first convert to Asia and Andronicus and Junia, fellow prisoners and workers with Paul. We see multi-generations such as Rufus and his mother who was like a mother to Paul as well. We see entire families who were likely slaves and Paul makes sure he greets them. We see people who have and are serving one another on the mission and people commended by Paul for their hard work. We see families of believers and multiple house churches – in fact Paul was writing to not a single gathered church but likely to multiple church bodies in Rome.

Then Paul sends greetings from those with him in Corinth. Timothy is a familiar name from the New Testament, the faithful companion of Paul and loyal disciple and friend. Remember Timothy had Jewish and Gentile parents. Greetings are also sent from Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater – Paul’s kinsmen. And you can almost picture Tertius, writer of the letter, put his pen down, wave, and send greetings.

We also see the familiarity between these groups – that despite the miles separating them, they have some history together by serving and fellowshiping with one another.

And notice how all the people Paul mentions, whether its Phoebe the letter carrier, the church in Rome, or the missions team in Corinth, they are bound by the mission – doing their part as God has gifted and given opportunity to serve, consumed by the mission, and risking their very lives for Christ and one another. Paul said back in 15:14 that they were filled with goodness and knowledge able to instruct and their obedience was known to all. Ministry and mission were not something they did from time-to-time – they were ministry and mission. It flavored their entire lives.

After working and planning with purpose and praying much, ministry and missions involves people – people to be saved by God and people to carry out the work. And along the way these people become not only family but good friends. It is no accident Paul wrote this part of the book of Romans. Paul not only preached the importance of bringing Jew and Gentile together but then shows that by God’s Spirit working in His people that it really can be done.

So just as we experience community at the Chapel, there is community in missions as well. For in it, we see the larger work, the larger canvas on which the Lord is painting – a people not just in SW Ohio (our “kinsmen”) but people from all people groups, of different languages, skin colors, cultures, experiences – all drawn by our God to himself through the gospel of Christ and indwelt by the Spirit of God. And to the extent God permits, we can serve and enjoy fellowship with them.

But there is even more. For there is a tendency for us to think the people group we are working among to make disciples need us and that is it. No, we need them too. About 15 years ago back at my previous church home in Wisconsin, we had the opportunity and privilege of beginning a mission and ministry in eastern India among the lowest of low in that country – they were lepers living in a segregated colony – outcasts of society. There were 54 people at the beginning; men, women, and children. And by God’s grace and through the work of an Indian pastor just a few years before we came, they received Christ. And the first thing we did as part of the mission was to send regular monthly funds to feed, clothe, and provide basic medicine for them. For up until that time, they would forage for their daily food in the city garbage dump across the road from the colony – you see, lepers cannot mingle with Indian society – because of their caste and their condition. In reality, they have what we call Hansen’s disease a very treatable condition if caught early enough. Once fed though, they then took gospel tracts into the city and shared the love of Christ with the lost of India.

There was among them a brother named Govinda. His body was ravaged by many years of untreated Hansen’s; his face marred, his limbs having lost fingers and toes, running a continual high fever. He had open wounds and was unable to walk. Others would move him on a cart. Despite his condition, he suffered well.

Some of the men from our church traveled there periodically and one particular trip one of the men asked Govinda through a translator how he was doing. And in one short sentence, he has encouraged a small body of believers in Wisconsin to this day. His response through the Telugu translator was, "I am trusting Jesus."

Govinda went home not long after that and today he is more alive than ever...

Yes, we not only need one another here but we also need to know God's people in faraway lands. And I would contend that we as American Christians need them even more. We need to see their trials, their struggles, their hardship, and their persecution. We need to see the two room straw hut that houses a Christian family of twelve with very little to eat in the deserts of Africa. We need to see Gheorghe, the gypsy evangelist and pastor moving around Romania and eastern Europe with nothing but a backpack and a dream to make disciples of many of his "kinsmen", the gypsy people. We need to see our brothers in faraway lands, meeting secretly in fear of reprisal by their government to hear more of the Bible so they can go back to their cities and villages and pastor and shepherd their gathered churches. We need to hear their stories, understand their persecution, hear how God is persevering them, and how at times they lose their lives and go home to be with the Lord. Our vision of what God is doing must broaden. And through all they face, we must not miss their smiling faces – there is real joy in their eyes – a joy that is heavenly, that unmistakably comes from knowing the risen Christ and experiencing him in their suffering.

Yes, we need one another in community here at the Chapel but we also need one another across the globe – unified by Christ Jesus and by all for which His great name stands.

You may ask, "Why do we do overseas missions?" Well, we are commanded by the Lord to take the gospel to all nations and make disciples. This is our purpose in missions – to obey. We plan to accomplish it and then pray to God for wide and effective doors for the gospel to be opened, to deliver the mission and the missionaries from the enemy and from enemies, and to do it well. But we then see that it involves people – God's people – good friends – friends from different people groups – people that we can learn much from – people we can be encouraged by in our own trials – people who praise God because of us and our labor on their behalf – people whom we can be of service – people who one day will gather around the throne of God with us and together we will fall on our face before the One who gave all He had to save us and praise Him for eternity.

Reflect and Respond

So in summary, our vision for Chapel missions is to:

- Make disciples among the people groups God has placed in our reach and where Christ is not named
- Work through indigenous peoples where possible – send when necessary
- Experience missions directly
- Pray
- See:

- what God has to teach us in the process through believers across the world
- the fullness of what God is doing in kingdom building
- Praise and worship of Christ emerge and abound from places and hearts where it does not today (may God use us to that end!)

Do you have a global missions mindset?

Do you see that people of all nations desperately need the Lord?

Do you identify with God's people across the world – especially those God has placed in our path?