

**Commission Fulfillment:
Evangelism, Church Planting, World Missions
By Bill Scheidler**

1. The missionary heart of the local church springs from the heart and nature of God Himself.

God's nature is missionary or outgoing. Notice the definitions of God found in the Bible.

- A. God is **Spirit** (Jn. 4:24). God is effulgent, pervading, and impossible to contain.
- B. God is **Light** (I Jn. 1:5). God is ever penetrating, diffusive and dispelling darkness.
- C. God is **Love** (I Jn. 4:16, 18). God is always reaching out to include more and more as objects of His love.
- D. God is **Consuming Fire** (Heb. 12:29). God, like fire, is never satisfied, burns passionately and always hungers for more.

2. The missionary heart of the church springs from that fact that the local church is the instrument of God to fulfill His Eternal Purpose.

The Eternal Purpose of God involves the following (Gen. 1:26-28):

- A. A Spiritual offspring in the image of God.
- B. Offspring reproducing after the likeness of God.
- C. Offspring who come to a place of maturity and authority.
- D. Offspring who are instrumental in bringing the entire earth under the order of God.

In other words, God wants a large family or a company of people in His image, reflecting His character and heart that would grow to maturity and be able to come to a place of sharing in His work. The local church is the instrument that God will use to accomplish and fulfill that purpose.

3. The missionary heart of the church finds its impetus in the commission given to it by Jesus Himself.

The commission that Jesus gave to the church included the following elements:

- A. Preaching the Gospel to **every creature** and **every nation** under heaven (Mk. 13:10; 16:15; Lk. 24:47).
- B. Witnessing of Christ to **the ends** of the earth (Acts 1:8).
- C. Baptizing **all** those who respond to the Gospel (Matt. 28:19).

- D. Making disciples out of **all** those who were converted (Matt. 28:19).
- E. Bringing healing and deliverance to **all** those in such need (Mk. 16:15-18).
- F. Teaching the converted a lifestyle of obedience to **all** of God's commands (Matt. 28:20).

4. The missionary heart of the church is further fueled by the condition of mankind apart from Christ.

- A. Apart from Christ all people are sinners and are under the sentence of death (Rom. 5:12).
- B. Apart from Christ all people are children of wrath (Eph. 2:3).
- C. Apart from Christ all people are alienated from the life of God (Eph. 4:18).
- D. Apart from Christ even upright, moral and decent people are lost and need to be saved (Rom. 3:23; Jn. 3:3; Acts 11:13-14).
- E. Apart from Christ all people are destined for eternal damnation (Rev. 20:10-15).

5. The missionary heart of the church is inspired by the message that it bears.

- A. Jesus is the **only way** of salvation (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Cor. 8:4).
- B. The message of the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).
- C. The message of the Gospel is a message of reconciliation (II Cor. 5:18-19).
- D. The message of the Gospel opens the door to abundant life (Jn. 10:10).

6. The missionary heart of the church must be challenged by God's desire for all men to be saved (II Pet. 2:9).

This heart is seen in the following:

- God's challenge to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3).
- God's challenge to Israel (Ex. 19:5-6).
- Solomon's prayer of dedication (I Kgs. 8:28-30, 41-42, 59-60).

7. The missionary heart of the church must be activated by the realization that the commission of Christ will only be fulfilled by the church in the church age.

- A. God does his work through His Church (Matt. 16:18; II Cor. 5:9-21), not angels (I Pet. 1:12).
- B. The message of the Gospel must find its voice in God's people (Rom. 10:14-15).

C. The church must reach the world prior to the Second Coming of Christ, because after that there will be no more opportunity (II Thess. 1:3-12; I Thess. 4:13-18).

D. If the church does not do it, it will not get done (Eph. 3:8-13).

8. The missionary heart of the church should be motivated by being a mature expression of the local church.

A. Every mature local church should be autonomous, that is, self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating.

1. Every mature local church should be self-governing, that is they contain within themselves the power to make all final decisions regarding the vision and function of the local assembly.
2. Every mature local church should be self-supporting, that is they have the ability within themselves to fund the vision and the functions of the local assembly.
3. Every mature local church should be self-propagating, that is, they have the ability to reproduce themselves in spiritual offspring and perpetuate themselves into the next generation.

B. The local church propagates in several ways:

1. Reaching **individual souls** through aggressive evangelism in its local community.
2. Raising up and equipping **leaders** to carry responsibility and vision.
3. Extending the Kingdom of God in their nation by **planting** other reproducing local churches.
4. Touching **the nations** of the world through their own or cooperative efforts with other local churches.

C. Every mature local church should take seriously the commission of God given to mankind (Gen. 1:26-28) and of Christ given to the church (Matt. 28:18-20).