

“MISSIONS – THE MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH”

ACTS 1:1-14

INTRO: Most people who have been brought up in a **BIBLE BELIEVING CHURCH** are familiar with the word **“MISSIONS.”** And yet, if you were to ask most of those same people to define **MISSIONS** or to state the **EFFECTUAL PART MISSIONS** plays in the ministry of the local church, many would have a hard time giving the biblical answers. So, what about you? **WHAT DOES THE WORD “MISSIONS” MEAN and WHAT EFFECTUAL PART DOES “MISSIONS” PLAY IN THE MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH?** By reading through the Book of Acts and the Epistles of the New Testament we learn that **MISSIONS IS THE CENTRAL CORE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND SHOULD BE ITS PRIMARY MINISTRY THAT IS PRAYERFULLY AND FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED BY EVERY CHILD OF GOD.** I am certain that many of you understand what I have just said, but it is also possible that some of you do not have a biblical concept of missions. (I do not say that critically). So today for a few minutes we are going to focus on **“MISSIONS – THE MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.”**

THE DEFINITION OF MISSIONS

- 1) The Foundation of Missions – Based on the **GREAT COMMISSION** given by Jesus Christ – **THE DIVINE ORDERS FOR THE CHURCH FOR THIS AGE.**
- 2) The Focus of Missions – The Book of Acts is the **HANDBOOK ON MISSIONS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH.** By studying Acts, missions can be defined as: **THE LOCAL CHURCH SENDING FORTH INDIVIDUALS AROUND THE WORLD TO EVANGELIZE THE LOST, TO DISCIPLE NEW BELIEVERS AND TO ESTABLISH LOCAL CHURCHES. (NOTE ACTS 14:20-23)**

I. THE FOUNDATION OF MISSIONS PROCLAIMED

THE GREAT COMMISSION GIVEN BY CHRIST (FIVE TIMES RECORDED)

- A. Matthew 28:18-20: **THE STRATEGY OF THE MINISTRY OF MISSIONS**
 1. To Teach All Nations – To Evangelize all peoples.
 2. To Baptize – To Identify new believers with Christ
 3. To Teach them (New believers) to Observe all things – Discipleship
- B. Mark 16:16: **THE SCOPE OF THE MINISTRY OF MISSIONS**
 1. To Go into All of the World – No Geographical or Racial Boundaries
 2. To Preach the Gospel – The Good News about the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ – 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
- C. Luke 24:46-48: **THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MESSAGE OF MISSIONS**
 1. To Preach Repentance – To turn from unbelief and sin to Christ
 2. To Preach Remission - Forgiveness of sin through Christ alone
- D. John 20:21 – **THE SOURCE OF THE MANDATE OF MISSIONS**
 1. God the Father Sent God the Son into the world – To provide Redemption
 2. God the Son Sends believers into the world – To Proclaim Redemption
- E. Acts 1:8 – **THE SUSTENANCE OF THE MESSENGERS OF MISSIONS**
 1. The Power of the Holy Spirit enabling believers to preach the Gospel
 2. The Presence of the Holy Spirit directing believers to preach the Gospel

II. THE FOCUS ON MISSIONS PRACTICED

BY THE EARLY CHURCH (THEY OBEYED THE GREAT COMMISSION)

- A. The Church was Born on the Day Pentecost in Acts 2
 1. The Church Birthed – 2:32-41
 2. The Church Functioned – 2:42-47

B. The Church was Activated after the Day of Pentecost

THE CHURCH STARTED RIGHT AWAY FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION...

1. As Revealed by Peter and John – 3:1-19
2. As Revealed by other Believers in Christ – Acts 8:4
3. As Revealed by the Church at Antioch – 13:1-5
4. As Revealed by the Epistles – Colossians 1:5,6,23

III. THE FULFILLMENT OF MISSIONS PURSUED

BY THE PRESENT DAY CHURCH (TO OBEY THE GREAT COMMISSION)

A. The Current Church is still to Send forth Missionaries

- The Great Commission has never been rescinded.
- In over 51 years of ministry, I have been honored to lead churches to send forth many people into various forms of ministry including missions.

B. The Current Church conducts Missions through Individual Believers

1. Note 2 Corinthians 4:3-5

- The Gospel is Hidden to those who are lost and blinded by Satan and thus the church is to send forth believers locally through evangelism and world-wide through missions to preach Jesus Christ to the lost.

2. Note 2 Corinthians 5:20

-Each local church and each Christian are an **AMBASSADOR FOR CHRIST** to represent Christ and preach His Name to the lost in the world.

LESSON/APPLICATION

THE MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE DISPENSATION OF GRACE IS TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION THROUGH INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANS PERSONALLY AND THE LOCAL CHURCH CORPORATELY. EVERY CHRISTIAN HAS THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING INVOLVED IN THE FULFILLMENT OF THE GREAT COMMISSION AND NO CHRISTIAN IS EXCLUDED FROM THE HONOR OF FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS DO TO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO SEE THAT IT, THROUGH IT'S CONGREGATION, IS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION. OTHER MINISTRIES MAY AND WILL STEM FROM THE GREAT COMMISSION, BUT THE GREAT COMMISSION, FROM CHRIST'S PERSPECTIVE, IS TO BE THE PRIORITY AND THE VERY CENTRAL THRUST OF THE LOCAL CHURCH.