**Home Missions**

**Matthew 9:35-38 –** “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. (36) But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. (37) Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; (38) Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”

I have been asked me to address the issue of Missions – both **Home Missions** and **Foreign Missions**.

My purpose will be to lay out a biblical foundation (1) for evangelism in general (2) for evangelism which relates to the organizing of local churches close by – **Home Missions**, and (3) for evangelism which relates to organizing local churches upon foreign fields – **Foreign Missions**.

**Note**: In one sense the distinction of Home Missions and Foreign Missions is unbiblical. The Lord’s churches are to be involved in evangelizing the world – at home and abroad – at the same time. But for our purposes we will make a distinction.

My desire in this message is to set forth our biblical responsibility to consider what we as Baptists refer to as **Home Missions**.

I believe that we need to consider **Home Missions** as absolutely critical and necessary in our fulfillment of our Lord’s commission to preach the gospel in the whole world.

I also believe that we will never be able to fulfill our responsibilities with regard to **Foreign Missions** without an aggressive **Home Missions** program.

We need more local churches that are like minded to help us in our efforts on the foreign mission field. Our churches are the training ground where men are prepared for the gospel ministry and that includes those who are ordained and sent to the foreign mission field.

It is through local churches that men are saved, taught, trained, and called by God to go to the foreign mission field.

When men from our churches surrender to God’s call to go to the foreign field, others must be raised up to take their places in their local churches. And thus begins the whole process again.

In addition, as a God given burden begins to increase for the foreign field and the way is opened for more and more to go, there will be an increasing necessity to support them. That support must come for our churches.

The need for more local churches on the home front becomes as critical as the need for men for the foreign field.

**First: An earnest approach to Home Missions begins with a proper view of our God given commission.**

It is important to understand that all mission activity – whether at home or abroad – flows from our obedience to what our Lord has called His churches to do.

If we do not fully understand and accept that mission activity is God’s will for our churches, then we will not be fully involved in the activity of missions.

This brings us to what is commonly called the Great Commission: It is expressed in all four Gospels and in the book of Acts.

From these texts one great question arises: To whom was Jesus Christ speaking when He said – “Go ye into all the world?”

**Matthew 28:19-20** – “(19) **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

**Mark 16:15** – “And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world**, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

**Luke 24:47** – “… that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name **among all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem.”

**John 20:21** – “Then said Jesus to them … as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”

**Acts 1:8** – “… ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and **unto the uttermost part of the earth**.”

There can only be three answers to our question: (1) He was speaking to the apostles and therefore the great commission was completed at the end of their lives, or (2) He was speaking to all Christians in general and all Christians are responsible to obey all that is involved in the great commission, or (3) He was speaking to the local church which He had organized during His earthly ministry.

The conclusion must be that He was speaking to the local church which He had organized.

Therefore, the commission is incumbent upon every local church which has been organized since then.

The Lord has deposited His truth in each of His churches and has commissioned them to take that truth to those who do not know it.

Remember that when Jesus Christ spoke the words of the great commission – there was only one local church in existence!

Surely the words of **Acts 1:8** – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and **unto the uttermost part of the earth**.” – were believed and practiced.

One church could not do it alone – but beginning in Jerusalem and organizing more churches - and then to Judaea to organize more churches - and then moving to Samaria to organize more churches – they could accomplish reaching the uttermost parts of the earth!

**Second: An earnest approach to Home Missions begins with a proper view of our own country. America is a mission field that needs to re-evangelized with the true gospel of the grace of God.**

**Note: If we look at our country from a religious point of view:**

The largest religious group in American is Baptists. Then there are Protestants which include all other main line religions in America. Then the non-denominational groups (Charismatics) and after that Catholics and then the rest of religions like – Mormons – Seventh Day Adventist – Jehovah Witnesses, etc.

An examination of all the religions mentioned will reveal that most have lost the gospel message and those who still claim to have the gospel have a watered down easy-believism message.

What does all this mean? With millions of souls in our country and the majority of them lost, I believe God has given us the responsibility to reach them.

**Note**: If we look at our country from a political point of view:

We are moving further and further away from the Christian principles of our founding fathers to a more oppressive form of government where our population is viewed as serfs and not as free men. This will undoubtedly lead to greater poverty and the degradation of our populace.

**Note**: if we look at our country from a moral point of view:

We are moving closer and closer to the darkness which will eventually consume men’s souls and make them like those during Noah’s days – **Genesis 6:5** – “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

While I was pastor of Community Baptist Church in the San Antonio area, we were blessed of God to establish four churches in our area. Three of those remain today. But San Antonio is an area of more than a million and a half people. We could put 100 churches there are still not reach the masses.

But, this effort should be duplicated all over America and in every city where Sovereign Grace Baptist Churches are maintaining a testimony. I believe we need to think in terms of more than just maintaining our churches. We need to think in terms of multiplying our churches.

**Third: Our Foreign Mission effort needs a good foundation of Home Missions from which to flourish.**

Certainly, our goal in **Foreign Missions** should be to establish self-sufficient churches that can multiply themselves. However, in the meantime, we need qualified men and the means to support them.

Our country sends more money to the foreign mission field than any other country. That is good. However, the need is greater than what we are presently able to do. This is especially true when we examine the amount of money coming from Sovereign Grace Baptist Churches. The need is great.

We need to face the fact that we will not receive help from those who are the enemies of the doctrines of grace. We will not receive help from those whose methodology flies in the face of our doctrine. We will only be supported by those who are in agreement with us doctrinally and practically.

If this is true then we need more and more who are in agreement with and who bear a burden for the spread of the gospel of the grace of God.

We need a supply of missionaries. Where will we get them if we do not get them from our churches? This leads us to two considerations:

First: We must think in terms of giving up that which God gives us (both finances and personnel) for the furtherance of the gospel.

Second: We must think in terms of establishing other churches who will have the same vision and who will do the same.

**Fourth: Home Missions by a Plan –**

**Mark 1: 38** – “And he said unto them, **Let us go into the next towns**, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.”

**Luke 8: 1** – “And it came to pass afterward, that **he went throughout every city and village**, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,”

**Luke 10: 1** – “After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and **sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come**.”

**Acts 1: 8 –** “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in **Jerusalem**, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

**Fifth: Home Missions by Prayer –**

**Matthew 9: 35 - 38 –** “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. (36) But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. (37) Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; (38) **Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.”**

**Pray for:** Specific areas around your Church (North, South, East, West, Inner city, certain communities (Black, Mexican, Asian) **-** Specific towns and villages around your Church

**Pray for:** Men to be raised up in your church **-** The ability to train them - The ability to let them go.

**Pray for:** Open doors in your area **-** An open heart within your church **-** An ability to support those sent out.

**Note**: If your church does not have the ability to support those who are sent out it does not mean that you should not be thinking of Home Missions. I had to work when I organized my churches. Every one sent out of our church to start another church has had to work. We helped where we could but it was not enough to cover all the expenses. So, they worked while they built a church.

**Sixth: Home Missions by Pain (Sacrifice)**

An aggressive Home Missions program will cost you and your church:

It will cost the loss of good men – send out your best!

It may cost the loss of members – send out your best!

It will cost in time in prayer, fasting, and communion with God.

It will cost money.

**Seventh: Home Missions in Conjunction with Foreign Missions**

**Acts 1:8 –** “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me **both in** Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

As you seek to accomplish the Lord’s will regarding Home Missions – do not forget Foreign Missions – the command is **“both”** Home and Abroad.

**Eighth: Home Missions on the Foreign Mission Field**

Those churches established on the Foreign Mission field should carry the same burden to see other churches organized in their areas.

When pastors are raised up in churches organized upon foreign fields, they should be (1) praying for more laborers, (2) training their men, (3) praying to the Lord of the Harvest to send them out, and (4) looking for open doors for other churches to be established. They should also be taught that the support of the spread of the gospel is their responsibility – not America’s!

**Note:** The day may come when we will not be able to have an influence on the foreign field. Will we leave behind a people who understand their biblical purpose? Will we leave behind a people who carry of the spread of the gospel into all the regions around them and beyond?

**I Thessalonians 1:4-8** -- “Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. (5) For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. (6) **And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: (7) So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. (8) For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing**.”