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Missions: A Renewed Focus

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From the Editor's Desk

Missions: A Renewed Focus

Jeffery Nelson, Editor

Introduction

In this issue of the International Journal of Pentecostal Missiology, authors explore missions with a renewed focus on the Bible. Wrestling with current issues such as a proper exegesis of the Great Commission, keeping missions alive through the Spirit, ensuring *koinonia* exists in our fellowships, the foundations of Pentecostal hermeneutics in modern Kenya, the Philippian church and Paul as a model for biblical partnership, and a comprehensive model for the story of the Bible and motivation for missions. Authors take examples from their experiences around the world (Ethiopia, Kenya, rural USA, Iran, Albania, Burkina Faso, and Dominican Republic), and through unique illustrations from horse training, fire, and slavery. You are challenged to read these articles with an open heart. Many of the terms and topics are familiar, but the authors have tackled the topics with new approaches.

Having Gone, Disciple All Nations

Doug Lowenberg, Ph.D., lays out the exegesis of Matthew's Great Commission. The author shows that going, baptizing, and teaching are all related to making disciples. He emphasizes that living in a cross-cultural setting is necessary to fulfill the Great Commission. Then, he focuses on the theological institutions and encourages them to be preparing and inspiring students to go into distant cultures to make disciples. The concluding directive is this: All believers must heed the commission of our Lord inscribed in the canon of Scripture, live in the charisma of the Spirit, and go where others have not yet gone—to disciple the nations.

Re-Ignitional Missiology in an Era of Decline

In this article Fred Farrokh, Ph.D., calls for a missiology that reignites, or "Re-ignitional Missiology." The paper begins by explaining an analogy of the stages of a fire: Ignition, Growth,

Fully Developed, and Decline. It then addresses “the Missiology of Decline,” which is a phenomenon plaguing much of missiology today and is manifested in an overly-broad view of missions, and missiologically-induced syncretism. The article then pivots to consider the importance of revivalism and spiritual re-awakenings in church history. The conclusion outlines steps toward Re-ignitional Missiology. These steps include keeping a narrow missional focus on “apostolic function,” as proposed by Alan Johnson; that is, preaching the gospel where it has not been preached, and planting churches where they do not exist. Additional steps include resisting missiological decline in all its forms, and reapplying movements of the Spirit, by fire and by wind, in a revived and renewed missiology of the *Pneuma*.

The Slave is Your Brother

Rev. Rennae de Freitas, Ph.D. student, takes Paul’s letter to Philemon as a call for believers to serve as loving witnesses in the world. Unlike his other epistles, Paul does not overtly instruct the believers in Philemon, but rather he deals with a personal conflict between the master of the house church, Philemon, and his runaway slave, Onesimus, by summoning them to an alternative, missional way of living. This paper examines Paul’s vision of this *koinoniac* witness of the church in the society at large, what it means for this community to relate to each other as siblings, the implications of this household’s loyalty to King Jesus, and what is meant for Philemon and the entire house church to welcome a slave as a brother. In addition, it will discuss how Paul himself embodied the gospel to demonstrate the work of reconciliation. Finally, this paper examines the Holy Spirit’s role in Philemon and in key moments of church history that demonstrates the power and potential of the *koinoniac* witness of the church. This discussion aims to challenge the modern church to exhibit this barrier-breaking *koinoniac* witness to the divisions that continue to plague society.

Theological, Practical, and Missional Implications of Lukan Pneumatology

Leo Kihara Kinuthia addresses the theological, practical, and missional implications of Lukan pneumatology within the Kenya Assemblies of God. He addresses the theological implications from the historical debate of hermeneutical approach looking at the pertinent issues including evidential tongues, and the doctrine of subsequent to and separate from

conversion/initiation. He presents the Pentecostal responses and implications for future Pentecostal theology and missiology. He concludes with application to his ministry as pastor and Bible educator.

Partnership in the Gospel

Dwight Sandoz, Co-Director of Rural Advancement, uses an analogy from horse training as a model for partnership in the gospel. This article examines partnerships in ministry reflecting upon the relationship of Paul and the Philippian church with practical application to rural ministry. Paul established a model of relationship with the Philippian church that informs believers today. Sandoz examines the foundations of biblical partnership and in the Philippian church. He looks at the elements of the Philippian partnership which include prayer, humility, unity, and the gospel. Then he examines the progression of the Philippian partnership: walking together in fellowship, walking together in partnership, and serving together in mission. A true partnership in mission provides a secure launching place for ministry. Partnership accomplishes more than any solitary effort working toward personal or organizational goals to fulfill the mission of God.

The Story of the Bible and Motivation for Missions

This article addresses the various terms forwarded by authors as the central theme of the Bible and looks at the historic terms regarding motivation for missions. These terms are placed on models in their relationship to eternal and temporal relevance; plots, and themes; and finally, motivations, actions, and results. The resulting theme distilled from these models shows how God loves people and how He wants an eternal relationship with them and He wants us to invite others into relationship with Him.

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