First Baptist Church Yucaipa, CA Dr. Rick Griffith

1990 Single Message

NIV 20 Minutes

**“What in the World is God Doing?”**

**Genesis to Revelation—A Sample Topical Sermon (Abbreviated)**

**Topic:** Missions-God's Perspective

**Subject:** God has always been actively concerned in world missions

**Complement:** so every believer should make his decisions based upon how they will fulfill the Great Commission

**Purpose:** The listeners will see God's priority in missions and decide how they can best be used in the fulfillment of the Great Commission

**Attribute:** We Worship Our God of World Concern (Missions-Active God)

**Introduction**

1. A deacon was briefed just before a missionary banquet and cautioned to be very sensitive to guests there from foreign countries who were not accustomed to American culture.

During the banquet, he found himself seated next to an African man who was hungrily devouring his chicken. Trying to think of some way to communicate with the man, the deacon leaned over and said, "Chomp, chomp, good, huh?" The man, gazing back at the deacon simply replied, "Mmm, good."

A little while later the African man savored a delicious cup of coffee, so the deacon leaned over and said, "Glug, glug, good, huh?" The man, a bit uncertain replied, "Mmm, good."

Then the banquet speaker was introduced and—to the deacon's utter dismay—the African man next to him got up, went to the platform, and delivered a flawless message, even with an Oxford accent. Upon concluding, he headed towards the deacon, who was red with embarrassment. The speaker simply replied, "Blah, blah, good, huh?"

2. You might consider that funny only because you've had some embarrassing moments in relating to people from other cultures yourself. Let me assure you, you're not alone.

a. I think of one foreign guest invited to an American family's home for dinner. When offered tea, he confidently tore open his tea bag and emptied the contents into his cup. The hosts corrected him, "Ah, no... You're supposed to put the bag in also." When he was offered some "Sweet & Low" he followed their advice and confidently tossed the sweetener in his cup, bag and all.

b. The point is that we're often uncomfortable with things that aren't that familiar—and missions is no exception. When the average person hears the word "missions" a shudder comes up the spine and ties the tongue! No one wants to show his ignorance.

3. But I also think that maybe missions is scary to some of us because we haven't seen God's view of the subject clearly. Today we're going to learn a bit more about how God views missions, but first we need to define what we mean by "missions." Let's look at what it **isn’t** and what it **is**.

a. Missions is **not** evangelism…(explain).

b. Missions **is** sending forth people from your church to reach people for Christ who are beyond your borders or natural influence. So missions is reaching people who you normally wouldn't or couldn't reach in the normal church ministries (examples).

Sub4. So where we're headed today is to take a look at two things: (1) what God thinks of missions, and (2) what we should do in response. First, we'll see God's involvement in world evangelization as seen in the Scripture, then second, we'll see what we can do.

(First, what does God think of missions/world evangelization? Well…)

**I. Missions is God’s highest priority**.

A. God's missionary concern is first seen way back at the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:15).

B. God promises to reach the world through Abraham and the Jewish nation (Gen. 12:1-3).

(Well, did Israel accomplish her purpose? Hardly! But the church has a job now…)

C. Our commission is to reach the world for Christ (Acts 1:6-8).

(Well, that still sounds a bit optimistic, some of you might be saying. I'd like to see this from an infallible source. You got it, because...)

D. God says that the Great Commission will be fulfilled (Rev. 7:9).

1. Revelation 7 says God’s ultimate purpose is to glorify Himself by redeeming a people from every people.

2. Matthew 24:14 teaches the same thing (read).

(Well, we've seen that we serve a missions-active God. He has acted to save mankind even back in Eden, through Israel, and now through the church. So where does that leave us?)

**II. Since missions is God's number one priority, it should be our highest priority as well (MI).**

A. As a church, missions should be our highest priority. There are a couple of diagrams in your bulletin to illustrate this truth (explain ingrown verses outward-reaching churches).

B. As individuals, missions should be our highest priority.

1. Perhaps God wants to use you overseas. You say, "Oh, but not me," but have you ever asked the Lord if that's where He wants you?

2. If God doesn't want to use you overseas then He wants you to contribute to the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this church by giving or missions ministry.

**Conclusion**

M.I.1. Today we've taken a brief tour through Scripture to discover that *since missions is God's number one priority, it should be our highest priority as well*.

2. Maybe you're asking, "I **hear** what you're saying. But what should I **do**?" (Explain)

3. Prayer