

Let the Nations Be Glad Group Study

with an Explanation of the Resource
and an Introduction for Leaders

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Introduction

To say with John Piper that “Missions exists because worship doesn't” is not to weaken the call to missions, but to place at its center the ultimate goal of glorifying God. Emphasizing the central role and ultimate goal of the worship of God is also meant to fuel the cause of missions. When passion for the supremacy of God's glory burns the hottest, zeal that all the peoples of the world might find their satisfaction in God and pay everlasting homage to him is the strongest. Therefore, setting up worship of our infinitely glorious God at the blazing center of all missionary effort—indeed, of everything that exists and everything we undertake to do—is the best way to orient and fuel an army of world Christians to reach all the unreached peoples of the world with the message of the supremacy of God in Christ.

Since we at Desiring God want to stir up churches and individuals for this great missionary task, we have developed study resources to use in conjunction with *Let the Nations Be Glad*. Our hope is that churches will use the book and its study resources to foster group study of Scripture and encourage group reflection on a God-centered vision of missions, and that through this discussion God would ignite a passion to reach even the hardest places and peoples of the world with the gospel. This could happen in a number of ways, whether these resources are used at leadership retreats or gatherings, in small group studies, in personal study, or in some other fresh, creative, and Christ-exalting way stirred by the Spirit of God.

We want you to see from Scripture that God is pursuing worshipers from every tongue and tribe and people and nation. We want you to know the role of prayer and the necessity of suffering in this greatest mission in all the world. We long for you to affirm the horror of hell as an echo of God's glory, the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation, the consequent need to reach all the unreached peoples of the world with the message about Jesus, and the perfect harmony between compassion for the lost and passion for God's supremacy. And we pray that you discover the experience of being satisfied in God as the defining heart of missions and the implications this has on the missionary task. May God bless churches and communities such that they discover gifts and callings, dream new dreams to reach the nations, and envelop every member in the missionary task, whether in the role of going or of sending.

Explanation of the Study Guide

In an effort to encourage discussion and deeper engagement with *Let the Nations Be Glad*, we have developed a six-week, seven-session group study of the book. Each week consists of reading a chapter of the book, meditation upon concepts and Scriptures, and answering/discussing correlating study questions found in the study guide. The study guide is divided into the two main sections explained below.

Note: We feel that these study resources would work best in a group setting. Not only do we believe in the biblical principle that iron sharpens iron, we also long to see church communities strengthened together in the foundations of the gospel. Nevertheless, we hope that these study resources can also be of benefit for individual study and reflection. We would strongly encourage any individuals who choose to use these resources for their own study to find other believers with whom to discuss the themes and Scriptures encountered in the material.

- **Reading and Reflection**

Each week the reader will work through a chapter of *Let the Nations Be Glad* (ranging from 30 to 50 pages; week 6 covers two chapters). Ten core study questions are provided in the study guide to stimulate the learner to interact with *Let the Nations Be Glad* and with Scripture. The focus of these questions ranges from comprehension of the reading, to personal examination, to group discussion. It may be most convenient to break these questions down into five daily portions of two questions each (with a sixth day devoted to review, reflection, and prayer). These questions are intended to help the reader locate key concepts within the text of *Let the Nations Be Glad*, and to challenge the reader to dig further into Scripture. For this reason, we have included the page number(s), usually in parentheses, where the ideas these questions cover can be found in *Let the Nations Be Glad* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003). When possible, the questions are listed in

order of appearance within *Let the Nations Be Glad*. Readers should feel free to answer these questions as they read, but if it is preferred, these questions could be answered after reading the chapter(s). If used in this way, the questions would serve as a good way to review the reading. We recommend obtaining a separate notepad to write out answers as well as other thoughts, reflections, points of prayer, and resolutions that may develop during reading and study. Group participants are expected to bring both the study guide (with their answers) and *Let the Nations Be Glad* (if owned) to the group meetings.

There will be seven group meetings to discuss the themes, Scriptures, and activities found in the study. Group participants should familiarize themselves with the questions and activities found in the study guide prior to the group meeting each week (group leaders, see “For Leaders” below for more details). Participants should also be mindful during their personal study of any questions that would stir meaningful discussion, noting them in the guide and bringing them up in the group discussion. Such questions may be felt to be particularly suited to the group’s context, or they may be questions which the participant is wrestling with and struggling to answer.

Throughout the study guide the learner will repeatedly be challenged to utilize their biblical knowledge by thinking of or locating relevant Scriptures. These may either add support to the concepts discussed or seem to conflict with them, and should be discussed with the group. Learners should, therefore, always have a Bible when working through the reading and study guide (a concordance would also be quite helpful). Regardless of how deep one considers their biblical understanding, everyone should bring what they know to bear on their study and discussion and strive to discover more of Scripture in the process.

- **Becoming World Christians**

Tom Steller writes in the Afterword of *Let the Nations Be Glad*, “There are only two ways for us to respond to the truth we have been considering about the supremacy of God in missions. We must either go out for the sake of his name, or we must send and support such people who do, and do so in a manner worthy of God” (p. 235). For the Christian, there is no third option of non-involvement in God’s pursuit of worshipers from all the peoples of the world. All of us can and must play a part in the missionary task.

Our hope is that these study resources may be a catalyst for the members of your group to discover the ways in which they might join in the worldwide effort. We would be thrilled if this study plays a small part in helping goers realize their callings, discover their giftings, and lay a rich theological foundation for missions. Similarly, we’d love to see senders rooted deeply in the truth of Scripture, passionately pursuing their satisfaction in God, and discovering the wonderful reality that support of missionaries isn’t just about giving them money. Furthermore, whether we are going or sending, we are all called to be world Christians.

With this in mind, we have included at the end of every lesson a section entitled, “Becoming World Christians.” This section is devoted to helping your group understand the global nature of the Christian hope, discover those areas of the world in which God is doing unusual and remarkable works, and highlight unreached peoples and places which the missionary task aims most directly at. A new activity is suggested for each week (learn about an unreached people group, read about a missionary, support a missionary sent by your church, etc.) with these aims in mind. One of these activities, supporting a missionary family sent out by your church, will involve your entire group for the entire six weeks of the study (group leaders, see below for more information). Since most of the activities are things that can be worked on throughout the week, *we recommend that you read this section at the beginning of your study for the week.*

For Leaders

As the group facilitator, you are expected to familiarize yourself with the layout of the study guide and have an idea of how to structure group discussions from the outset of the study. Read thoroughly the

“Explanation of the Study Guide” above, as well as the rest of this section before the first meeting. Also, skim each week’s study, with an eye to key themes being introduced or further developed in each week’s reading and study. Before class each week you will want to review the chapter and each of the corresponding study questions.

At every stage of preparation immerse yourself in prayer for your own soul and for your group. Only by the Spirit’s power and guidance will the concepts covered, the biblical texts discussed, and the resolutions made prove to be of lasting value in each other’s lives.

Finally, you should develop a basic blueprint of the seven group meetings. A suggested blueprint for a one-hour meeting (Meeting 1 and Meetings 2-7) is below, which includes advice for how to conduct each portion of the meeting. This blueprint can and should be adapted to your particular group’s needs and context. *Plan to set aside at least two hours for preparation each week.*

Meeting 1

- **Group Introduction (10 min)**

Most importantly for the first meeting, you will want to introduce the members of the group to one another and think of creative ways to help the class become comfortable with one another and in the group environment. This may be as simple as having each person introduce themselves, what they do, and how long they have been a part of the church community. If the members of the group already know one another, it may be appropriate to have each person share why they have chosen to be a part of the group.

- **Introduction to the Book and Study (10 min)**

Use the next portion of your time to introduce the book and the study guide. Be sure to inform the class of the approximate number of pages to read each week (ranging from 30 to 50) and how the study questions relate to the reading. If your church is able to purchase books for the group, hand them out at this time. Also, hand out copies of the study guide (or direct the group members to where it may be found on the Desiring God website, www.desiringGod.org).

Encourage the class to use the study questions as launching points for their own study of Scripture. It may also be helpful to talk about strategies for reading and working through the study guide during the week. For example, they may find it works best to read only a few pages and answer two study questions a day, using the sixth day for review and further reflection.

- **Adopting a Missionary Family (30 min)**

As a group you will choose one or two missionary families sent by your church to “adopt,” and will function as a support team for them during the seven weeks. A support team is intended to function as a means of meeting key physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of missionaries.

When choosing a missionary family to support, you will also select various weekly activities for your missionary family (e.g., Week 1—writing a letter to them; Week 2—volunteering to do yard work at the missionaries’ home while they are away; Week 3—sending a care package; etc.). The group members will be directed to the article “Practical Ideas for Caring for Missionaries” (available at <http://c4.atomicplaypen.com/sites/BBC/resources/images/1987.pdf>) in the “Becoming World Christians” section of the first week’s study. It may be worthwhile to review this as a group during this first meeting as you are brainstorming the ways in which the group will offer support and encouragement to your adopted missionaries. These activities will probably be done during the course of the week before the next meeting; the meeting, then, will be used to share what has been learned about your adopted missionary family and about the ministry of sending, and also for praying for your adopted missionaries.

As the group leader, you will be responsible for spearheading this endeavor. During this meeting, write out a weekly schedule of activities and prayer points for the group and make copies for everyone to refer to. It may be appropriate to periodically remind the group of the ways in which

you have planned to support your missionaries and to encourage them to continue thinking of new ways to do so.

- **Prayer (10 min)**
Spend the final moments of your time together praying for your adopted missionaries and for God's blessing on the group study in the weeks to come.

Meetings 2-7

- **Introduction (10 min)**
Open each class with prayer to set the tone of the meeting as one of humble expectation for the Spirit's movement in minds and hearts, and to direct everyone to God as the supreme treasure of our pursuit. You might introduce the group discussion by introducing the main themes of the chapter(s), by asking which themes or concepts were especially challenging or noteworthy to the group, or by launching directly into discussion questions (drawn either from the guide or thought up in advance by yourself or the group members).
- **Discussion (40 min)**
Group participants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with all the study questions before the group meeting, making note of those questions which may be particularly suitable for group discussion. In your own study, you also should note questions that are particularly suited to your group's context and would stir meaningful discussion during the group meeting. During the Discussion portion of the group gathering, open the floor for the questions narrowed in on during the previous week's study.

Additionally, we encourage you to develop your own questions for discussion. Questions tailor-made for a group's context, situation, level of understanding, etc., are often the most helpful and have the deepest impact. Our hope is that the study guide will be a resource that gets you started and that launches other creative and worthwhile efforts to deepen knowledge, faith, and love.

You may facilitate group discussion by introducing questions (from the study guide or from your own preparation) and encouraging members to respond. How did they answer the questions in the study guide? What new concepts did they encounter? What new understandings of Scripture were they introduced to and which Scriptures did they study and meditate upon? What new insights on God's glory and missions did they discover and how might those insights impact our involvement in the missionary task? What, if anything, did they disagree with and why? What confused them?

It is OK if there is initial silence after a question is raised. As the discussion advances and as the weeks go by, the group participants will become more comfortable with sharing their answers and expressing their thoughts. Try to curb the temptation to always break silence with "the answer," and throughout the study beware of dominating the discussion. Also, seek to affirm each individual's input as much as possible to encourage them to continue contributing to the discussions. When you need to address false ideas, do so with love and gentleness.

Do not be afraid to linger on a particular question or topic if the Spirit seems to be moving in a special way during discussion, however as the leader you must also be sensitive to whether the discussion needs to move forward. Also, you should try to include all members in the discussion, being mindful of those who may have something to contribute to the discussion but remain silent. Pray for Spirit-led sensitivity to the needs and flow of your time together both before and during the meeting.

It might be beneficial to use the final five or ten minutes of the discussion time to address any practical effects the themes considered have on our daily lives. In particular, review the activities and points of reflection and prayer encountered in the "Becoming World Christians" section of the study guide. Ask what things were learned about the global cause of Christ, what passions and

potential callings were discovered, and what resolutions were made or new dreams for the nations were conceived by the members of the group during the past week.

- **Prayer (10 min)**

We also want to encourage extended times of group prayer during your meetings. We suggest using at least the final ten minutes of the group time for prayer. You may choose to pray as a large group, or to break into smaller groups. You could break into small groups that change from week to week, or maintain the same smaller prayer groups throughout the study. Whatever you may choose, we hope that prayer for one another and for the nations will be an integral part of your time together, both during the group meetings and throughout the week as you progress through this study.

The weekly activities encountered in the “Becoming World Christians” portion of the study guide will provide natural items of prayer during this time of the meeting. Be sure to pray as a group for your adopted missionaries (see “Becoming World Christians above). Also, pray for discernment for each group member as they seek to identify giftings, passions, and the particular ways God might be calling them to play their part in pursuing the supremacy of Christ among all the nations.

Chapter 1 – The Supremacy of God in Missions through Worship

Reading and Reflection

1. Explain the phrase, “Missions exists because worship doesn’t” (p. 17). Why is worship considered ultimate?
2. Explain how worship is both the goal of missions and the fuel of missions (pp. 17-18).
3. What is “Albert Einstein’s Indictment” against the church? How should this indictment affect the way we pursue worship, and the way we pursue mission? (pp. 18-20)
4. What is the ultimate foundation for saying that worship is the fuel and goal of missions? Why might this hit most people, as the author says, “like a truck laden with unknown fruit” (p. 21)?
5. Is it stunning to you that “The most passionate heart for the glorification of God is God’s heart,” or that “God’s ultimate goal is to uphold and display the glory of his name” (p. 22)? Why or why not?
6. Reflect on the Scriptures listed on pages 22-27. Are there other goals besides glorifying God that you had previously assumed were behind God’s activities? If so, could such perceived goals be compatible with God’s goal of glorifying himself through Jesus? Why or why not?
7. In what two ways can we reconcile God’s passion to exalt himself and Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 13:5 (pp. 29-36)?
8. How do God’s pursuit of his glory and his mercy and grace relate? What does it mean that God’s mercy as the “apex” of his glory, and why should we view his mercy as such (pp. 33-36)? What biblical texts can you think of which would support this conclusion?
9. What are two more ways God’s passion to exalt himself, that is, his goal of inspiring worship of him in humans, motivates world missions (pp. 36-38)?
10. Describe the relationship between compassion for the lost and passion to see God glorified as they relate to motivation for world mission (pp. 41-43).

Becoming World Christians

- The aim of *Let the Nations Be Glad*, and of this study, is to encourage you to take your part in the global cause of Christ. No Christian and no church remains neutral. We all are to partake in either “going” or “sending.” Read the Afterword, “The Supremacy of God in Going and Sending,” written by Tom Steller (pp. 235-238), for a clarion call to align yourself with God’s global mission.
- You as a church do not just “have” missionaries; you actively *send* and support missionaries. This week spend time learning about the missionaries sent by your church. Learn their names, their ministries, and the areas of the world in which they are laboring for Christ.
- Bethlehem Baptist Church has produced a short article entitled, “Practical Ideas for Caring for Missionaries” (available at <http://c4.atomicplaypen.com/sites/BBC/resources/images/1987.pdf>). Read this article and think of ways you might minister to the missionaries of your church (it may be most manageable to select one or two missionary families to “adopt,” as you have already done as a group during your first meeting). Write out a plan for the following six weeks to provide support for your missionaries on a weekly basis; perhaps writing to a new missionary each week, sending birthday greetings or care packages, taking care of their home while they are away, etc. Be sure to pray for your missionaries on a regular basis.

Chapter 2 – The Supremacy of God in Missions through Prayer

Reading and Reflection

1. Explain, in your own words, what the author means when he says that prayer is a “wartime walkie-talkie.” Why does he use this metaphor? What is meant by “wartime”? How is prayer a “walkie-talkie”? (pp. 45-49)
2. What kind of war does the author assert that we are in? What other passages of Scripture would support this depiction of life? What sorts of changes should the wartime setting we are all in bring to our attitudes and lifestyles? (pp. 45-49)
3. Do you believe that we are in the war the author describes, and that it is more serious than WWII or the war in Iraq? Why or why not?
4. What are some reasons why “millions of Christians . . . have stopped believing that we are in a war” (p. 49)?
5. What, according to the author, is “the crying need of the hour” (p. 51)? How would a recovery of this affect our view of, attitude toward, and practice of prayer?
6. What was “the power of the Puritan hope” (pp. 52-53)? Why does confidence in God’s absolutely sovereign election of individuals unto salvation provide hope and motivation for missions rather than make missions unnecessary (p. 55)?
7. How does the church’s (and God’s) ultimate goal, described in chap. 1, relate to prayer? How does prayer advance that goal? (pp. 57-63)
8. Reflect on your prayer life. How is God glorified in your prayers? Make a list of the things you commonly pray for. Now compare it with the things listed on pages 59-63 which the early church prayed for. What are the similarities and the differences you see?
9. How can the prayers of Scripture help guide and direct your prayer life in the cause of missions and for the glory of God? Be specific.
10. Why is the author hesitant to call prayer “*the* work of missions”? What does he suggest is “*the* work of missions”? How is prayer related to this work? (pp. 63-67)

Becoming World Christians

- The breadth and richness of the diversity of cultures and peoples in the world is breathtaking. And, as you will discover later in your readings, this diversity is intended for the glory of God. This week, take time to learn about an area of the world of interest to you—perhaps the area of the world that your adopted missionary is in, or another area that you are particularly interested in. Learn about the peoples and cultures represented in that area. What are the statistics on believers and unbelievers? What is the dominant religion, and what are some of its characteristics? What is the history of the Christian church in that area of the world, or of Christian missions to that area? Government websites like that of the Department of State (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>), or Christians missions agencies like the US Center for World Missions (<http://uscwm.org/>), are good places to start looking for information about different areas of the world. It’s also a good idea to ask your local librarian to direct you to further resources.
- Look for missions agencies that are at work in that area of the world, and learn about the ministries they are involved in and the strategies they are utilizing to spread the gospel to these places. The US Center for World Missions (<http://uscwm.org/>) would be a good place to start.
- Pray for your adopted missionaries and the area of the world which you learned about this week.

Chapter 3 – The Supremacy of God in Missions through Suffering

Reading and Reflection

1. Why does the author open this chapter by telling us of the life and suffering of Henry Martyn? How do stories of missionary suffering align with God's ultimate purpose in missions? (p. 71)
2. In your own words, explain what it means to deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus (Mark 8:34). Explain why it is so crucial to have a right understanding of the call to be a Christian when reflecting on the task of missions. (pp. 74-77)
3. What does the author mean when he speaks of "the domestication of cross-bearing" (p. 74)? Why do you think cross-bearing has been watered-down and domesticated so often in the contemporary church? What reasons does the author suggest (pp. 74-76)?
4. What is the relationship between Christ's suffering and death and our own suffering and death in world missions? Why does Christ's suffering and death not exempt us from suffering and death? How is Christ's suffering and death both substitution and pattern for our own, and why is the order (substitution *before* pattern) so crucial? (pp. 76-78)
5. According to 2 Peter 4:1, what "thought" are we to arm ourselves with (pp. 78-79)? How might we "arm ourselves" with this thought? What practical implications might this have on our daily lives?
6. Reflect on the biblical texts mentioned on pages 83-85. What causes the author to say God appoints (not simply allows) suffering? What other biblical texts suggest this to be so, or seem to conflict with this? List them out, examine them, and discuss them with others.
7. Write out the six reasons why God appoints suffering for his servants (pp. 82-102). How does each one encourage and embolden one in world missions? Which ones were surprising to you and why? Which ones were particularly encouraging or inspiring to you and why?
8. What is a "wartime lifestyle"? Why is one needed? What is wrong with "simplicity for simplicity's sake," and what distinguishes it from a wartime lifestyle? (pp. 102-103)
9. In your own words, what is "the American dream" and how does the concept of retirement fit into it? Respond to the following statement: The worldview in which the modern-day notion of retirement is a fitting conclusion distorts and/or contradicts the biblical worldview. What in the present chapter and Scripture supports such a statement? What are some winsome, Christ-like ways to challenge the pursuit of the American dream in our churches?
10. Why can there be "no talk of ultimate self-denial" in all our talk about the role of suffering in the exaltation of Christ's supremacy in world missions (p. 107)?

Becoming World Christians

- "Loss and suffering, joyfully accepted for the kingdom of God, show the supremacy of God's worth more clearly in the world than all worship and prayer" (p. 71). The history of Christian missions is full of inspiring illustrations of this truth. This week, do some reading in the history of Christian missions, paying particular attention to the presence and role of suffering in the lives of missionaries. Biographical messages of missionaries like David Brainerd, John G. Paton, Adoniram Judson, and Andrew Fuller are available at <http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Biographies/>, or you may want to read a biography of another missionary. General works on the history of Christian missions, such as Stephen Neill's *A History of Christian Missions* or Ruth Tucker's *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*, are another great way to discover the challenges and triumphs experienced in the spread of the gospel in the world.

- Pray for your adopted missionaries, particularly for the hardships they may be facing as a result of their ministry for Christ's glory, and for missionaries across the globe who face persecution, loss, and hardship in their labor for the sake of the nations and Christ's fame.

Chapter 4 – The Supremacy of Christ as the Conscious Focus of All Saving Faith

Reading and Reflection

1. What is the main question posed by this chapter, what three questions are contained in it, and why are the answers to these questions so significant for the cause of missions? What is the chief way in which the author proposes to answer these questions? Why is this the most appropriate starting point for the Christian? Should philosophical argumentation, emotional appeal, or other means be used in the discussion as well, and if so, what role should such devices play? (pp. 111-116)
2. With your own Bible, review all the biblical texts cited on pages 116-122 describing the wrath of God in hell. Write down each description of hell you come across: what it will look like, how long it will last, who will be there, etc. Why is hell described in such vividly awful and horrendous ways? What does the horror of hell echo?
3. What is meant by the phrase “the universality of the work of Christ”? How do texts like Romans 3:9-20 show that it was necessary for the work of Christ to be universal? How does the universality of Christ’s work form the foundation for the work of missions? (pp. 122-125)
4. Based on the context of Acts 4:12, and the wider biblical concept of the name of Christ/God, What does it mean to be saved “by the *name* of Christ” (cf. pp. 124-125, 138-140)?
5. What is “the mystery of Christ,” according to texts like Ephesians 3:4-10 and Romans 16:25-27? How was it a “mystery” in Old Testament times? How has it now been revealed with the coming of Christ, and what tremendous implications does this have on the cause of missions? (pp. 126-128)
6. What are “the times of ignorance,” and in what way did God “overlook” them? Why might God have ordered history in such a seemingly odd way? Cite Scripture in your answer. (pp. 129-132)
7. How does the author suggest saints in the Old Testament attained salvation (cf. pp. 133, 147, 152)? Why is it inappropriate to suggest that because these individuals were saved without knowing the full gospel of Jesus Christ therefore individuals today who have never heard the gospel may be saved by trusting in the revelation available to them?
8. What is the “profound theological reason why salvation did not spread to the nations before the incarnation of the Son of God” (p. 127-128)? Describe the “tremendous significance” that the New Testament places upon “the historical turning point of the incarnation” (p. 133-134).
9. How does Romans 10:14-15, when understood in its context, rule out arguments that people can be saved without hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ (pp. 142-147)?
10. Imagine that you are talking with someone about the possibility of salvation for those who never hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. Reflecting upon what you read in this chapter, and searching through Scripture for yourself, write out a loving and gentle response that would affirm the justice and holiness of God, his love and compassion for the lost, and the supremacy and necessity of Jesus as the only way of salvation.

Becoming World Christians

- This week seek out international peoples who live and work near you, and make an effort to interact with and befriend someone from a different part of the world. Often thinking in the abstract about the destiny of eternal conscious torment for those who never hear the gospel and for the areas of the world where there is no established church witness does little to stir up deep compassion for those lost peoples. They seem so foreign, and so distant. But many of the nations are literally in our backyards—e.g., international students at universities, refugees, immigrant workers, ethnic neighborhoods. Opportunities to learn more about these peoples and to establish relationships with them firsthand are some of the best ways to stir up a greater passion to reach those areas of the world and peoples of the world who have not yet heard the gospel.

- Consider involvement in things like an international student ministry, tutoring english or other subjects, or volunteering at a ministry for refugees. Ask your pastor(s) about other ways to interact with internationals. Perhaps one of the most strategic ways to reach the nations is by making an impact on one of these peoples' lives.
- Pray for your adopted missionaries, for the internationals you met in the past week, and for the areas of the world from which they came.

Chapter 5 – The Supremacy of God among “All the Nations”

Reading and Reflection

1. What does the author mean by suggesting that love may demand missions but it cannot define missions? What must define missions? (pp. 155-157)
2. Was the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) given only to the apostles with Jesus in Galilee, or is it given to the whole church in all places and at all times? How do we know? (p. 160)
3. What is shown by the survey of the uses of the term *ethnos* and the phrase *panta ta ethne* in the New Testament (pp. 161-167)? How should this survey affect our view of missions?
4. Numerous Old Testament texts are cited on pages 167-175 which provide the background for the missionary vision of the New Testament. God was never concerned only with the blessing of Israel, but was always concerned about blessing all the nations. What are the four categories of Old Testament texts (especially in Psalms and Isaiah) which express hope for the nations? What other Old Testament texts besides those mentioned by the author can you think of which show this same concern of God for the nations outside of Israel?
5. According to Psalm 67:1-2, why does God bless Israel (p. 174)? Is this principle true only for ancient Israel? Why or why not? What practical implications might this have on your lifestyle and purposes?
6. What does Paul mean when he says in Romans 15:18-21 that “from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum [he has] fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ” and that he no longer has any more room to work in these regions? How does this text help sharpen our understanding of the missionary task? (pp. 179-181)
7. Based upon what you have read so far, describe what a “people group” is. What reasons does the author give for why there may not be a precise definition of people group (pp. 188-191)?
8. If the missionary task is to reach all the people groups of the world, what determines whether or not a people group is “reached” or “unreached” (pp. 192-195)? In a few sentences, describe some of the complexities involved in answering this question. What practical, strategic, and biblical reasons might make it worthwhile to provide provisional definitions of reached and unreached people groups? Describe in your own words the difference between missions and evangelism and why there is no clear dividing line between the two (pp. 194-195).
9. In your own words, explain what Paul-type and Timothy-type missionaries are (p. 195) and give a biblically supported defense of the necessity for each. This book is primarily about Paul-type missions. Reflect upon your life and the life of your church and evaluate the ways in which you are advancing the Paul-type missionary task of reaching all the unreached peoples. In what ways are you involved in this task (recruiting, equipping, going, sending, supporting, etc.)? Write down other avenues in which you could deepen your involvement in the missionary calling.
10. This book is about seeing and pursuing the supremacy of God in missions. In what ways does the missionary task of gathering diverse peoples, reaching “all the peoples of the world” with the gospel of Jesus Christ, display the supremacy and glory of God? (pp. 196-200)

Becoming World Christians

- Paul was gripped to penetrate unreached people groups with the message about Jesus Christ. Many people groups today remain unreached. Spend time this week learning about how many people groups missiologists suggest are still unreached. Select unreached people groups to study this week—perhaps you might want to learn about a new unreached people group every day, or maybe you will want to spend time each day learning different aspects about one people group in particular.

- Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk's *Operation World* is a great resource for learning about the peoples of the world, offering data about unreached peoples, and prayer points (the Operation World website is also very useful: <http://operationworld.org/>). Similarly, *Global Prayer Digest* is a monthly periodical which provides daily stories of missionary activity around the world and things to pray for (their website, <http://www.global-prayer-digest.org/>, provides further information, and you can also sign up for an RSS feed highlighting a different people group to pray for each day). Also, check out the US Center for World Mission (<http://uscwm.org/>).
- Pray for your adopted missionaries, the unreached people groups you learned about this week, and the still unfinished task of reaching all the unreached peoples of the world.

Chapter 6 – A Passion for God’s Supremacy and Compassion for Man’s Soul
Chapter 7 – The Inner Simplicity and Outer Freedom of Worldwide Worship

Reading and Reflection

1. Why does the author say that *worship* is the ultimate goal of the church rather than *the glory of God*? What is the relationship between worship and the glory of God? (pp. 203-207)
2. From a biblical perspective, what is the essence of worship (pp. 206-207)? What are some biblical texts which demonstrate this (try to think of others besides those mentioned by the author)?
3. Why does love for the glory of God necessarily include love for missions (pp. 207-208)?
4. In as many ways as you can think of, describe why the motive of passion for the glory of God and the motive of compassion for people might seem to be in tension. How are these two motives united in the cause of missions? (pp. 208-213)
5. In chapter 7, the author argues that the New Testament displays “a stunning degree of indifference” to the outward forms of worship. Why is this assertion significant for the cause of missions and the aim of this book? (pp. 215-216)
6. Imagine you are having a conversation with a close friend who considers worship as simply singing or something that happens on Sunday morning during the church service. Using the biblical texts mentioned on pages 216-221, or other passages that you can think of, write out an explanation of the meaning of true worship as internal and pervasive rather than outward and localized.
7. Reflect on the quote by John Calvin on pages 221-222, especially the final two sentences: “I admit that we ought not to charge into innovation rashly, suddenly, for insufficient cause. But love will best judge what may hurt or edify; and if we let love be our guide, all will be safe.” Try to describe why it might such counsel be wise, even though the New Testament speaks of worship as a radically inward experience which may have very diverse outward expressions.
8. What might constitute a sufficient cause to cultivate new expressions and forms of worship, as opposed to an “insufficient cause” which Calvin speaks of? How does love function as our guide in knowing the forms worship might take in a particular context? (pp. 221-222)
9. Describe the line of reasoning which leads the author to say that the essence, the defining heart, of worship is “the experience of *being satisfied with God in Christ*” (pp. 223-227). How does this understanding of worship show us that worship must pervade all of life rather than be limited to some particular outward and localized expression (such as singing or church services)?
10. In a few sentences, write out your own description (and supporting biblical texts) for why all of life is to be an expression of worship, and how this relates to the cause of mission and the pursuit of God’s supremacy among all the peoples of the world.

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- Read conclusion as a distillation of the themes and Scriptures you have encountered in this study of God’s purposes and the church’s task in missions. Spend time reviewing the book and the questions you’ve answered through the course of this study. Note any questions you still have about anything that has been covered, and write down any personal reflections that you have about what you’ve learned. Be prepared to share these with the group when you meet.
- Pray for your adopted missionaries, the places and people groups you’ve learned about, and the cause of missions worldwide. Spend extra time this week prayerfully reflecting on the ways in which God might be directing you to your place in the missionary task. What gifts might you have which could be utilized in the roles of going or sending? What particular and unique passions have

been stirred in your heart for an area of the world, a people group, or ministry/missionary? Consider ways in which your church might become more deeply committed to the missionary task.