



Ferguson Report



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“Go ye unto all the world”

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MISSIONS: POSSIBLE

One of the latest attempts of Hollywood to get movie-watchers to buy tickets at the theaters is *Mission: Impossible III*, a retake of the popular 1960's and early '70's TV program of secret government agents assigned to do the “impossible.” There is another mission that otherwise would be impossible with men (John 15:5; 2 Cor. 3:5), but God said it was possible if He was involved in it: the mission of taking the gospel to the world. The following is an acrostic of the word “MISSIONS” that may help us to understand a little more about what is involved.

Message – The first order of importance with God's mission is the message. The message to be taken to all nations is the gospel of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:15-16). Without the gospel, there is no point to the mission (cf. Acts 4:12).

Interest – The gospel goes into the world by the motivation of God's people to love and reach the lost. Paul wrote of Timothy, “*For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state*” (Phil. 2:20). This same kind of love and interest in the souls of men must become characteristic of God's people if we are ever to win them to Christ.

Sacrifice – Jesus paid the price we could not pay, but we must imitate the pattern of sacrifice He left us by surrendering our bodies as “*living sacrifices*” in God's service (Romans 12:1-2). That which costs nothing is not worth much (cf. 2 Sam. 24:24). But those who have received the investment of our time, tears, and talents become dear to us.

Stability – In a world of uncertainty God's people must demonstrate before others the “*peace of God, that passeth all understanding*” (Phil. 4:7). Our citizenship is in God's unshakable kingdom (Phil. 3:20; Heb. 12:28), where there is no reason to despair as others who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13). Outward circumstances of change should not shake our faith.

Intelligence – The children of God should refrain from irresponsible words and actions. We should use wisdom in judgment and handle crises with a “cool head.” Paul said, “*Let your moderation be known to all men*” (Phil. 4:5). In addition, it is important both to be a student of the Word and an observer of the behaviors of mankind.

Opportunity – The missionary of God should always be looking for open doors of evangelism (cf. 1 Cor. 16:9). Flexibility – not with the message but with the method – must become factored into his approach to yield the greatest harvest (cf. 1 Cor. 9:19-23).

Never ending – Missions is a lifelong pursuit. Until either the Lord calls the missionary home (2 Tim. 4:6-8), or the Lord's longsuffering finally comes to an end, God desires one more soul to hear and obey (2 Pet. 3:9-10). Other than those two events, the work of the missionary cannot afford to cease.

Salvation – The final result of missions effectively and wisely administered is saved souls. This is also the reward of tireless mission efforts where the fruit of the missionary – converts - is tested. If the “*building*” is precious and pure, the joy of saved souls is the reward (1 Cor. 3:9-14).

Whether we like it or not, all Christians are missionaries. We have been given God's mission to tell the world of the gospel of God's grace and the conditions of obedience whereupon one receives it. When we take the message of Christ to the world because of an interest in souls that is so genuine that we are willing to sacrifice whatever it takes, when we display a stability of faith and abiding joy in our heavenly calling undistracted by the cares of this world, and when we intelligently reach out for every opportunity in a never ending pursuit of just one more soul, then we will reap a heavenly harvest with the sheaves of saved souls bound for God's immortal home. Impossible, you say? Go back and re-read God's missions manual.

Howell

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Preparing for Tanzania

While I type this article I am constantly aware of the fact that it is only a week from departure date (May 20th) and I haven't even begun to pack my bags yet. Even though this is my fourth journey to Tanzania since our residency in that country, it is never routine trying to get prepared. Among the “stuff” that I'll be carrying with me will be a copying machine, class text books, and donated books for the Chimala Bible College library. And as most of you already know, I'll also be taking Mary with me (not in the luggage of course). Denton Landon will meet us in Detroit where we will continue the flights together.

The airline industry's new international maximum weight of 50 lbs per each piece of check-in luggage does limit the amount of things we can bring. But between the three of us we are still able to transport 300 lbs besides what we can take in our carry-on luggage. This strongly suggests a check-list.

From my traveling experiences I have developed such a list that is now included in the “teacher's booklet” which is given to each CBC short course teacher. It has also become invaluable to me when I begin the packing process. However, the most important thing to pack is the Bible and plenty of

prayers asking for God's blessings on our trip and for the purpose of our travels – to teach and train the Tanzanians.
Howell

“The best remedy for a
sick church is to put it on
a missionary diet.”

David Livingstone
(1813 – 1873)
