

From Where I Sit . . .

“Looking Ahead: A Work To Be Done”

Nearly 2000 years after Christ gave the Great Commission, Christianity remains a minority religion in the world. I've heard missionaries – especially in the Far-East, in cities of millions of people – tell of seeing giant Coca-Cola signs, yet many have never heard of Jesus of Nazareth in these same cities. The Beatles were more correct than we cared to admit back in the 60's when they claimed to be more popular than Jesus Christ.

Friends, we have a Twenty-First Century world to be won!!! The task before us is enormous! In 1992 the **World Almanac** placed the world population at **5.384 Billion** people for the previous year, 1991. Population web sites now estimate the count to be **6.5 Billion** plus. The world **gained nearly 1.2+ billion** people in the past 14 years.

The death rate in the U.S. is 2,162,000 per year; that's one every 15 seconds!! Hundreds are dying every second around the world!!! According to the 2003 edition of **Churches of Christ in the United States**, there are **1,276,533 members** of the Lord's church in the US in some **13,000+ congregations**. A 1991 report on World Missions published by Abilene Christian University indicated that there were **2,235,013 members in 36,942 congregations** of the church in 224 countries world wide. There are approximately 1.8 billion who call themselves Christians of all varieties, and approximately 1.04 billion Muslims. If we don't win these people, who will?

I sometimes wonder what the Lord must think of us. Here we are in the land of freedom, with every convenience at our disposal. We say we are dedicated to the propagation of simple, nondenominational New Testament Christianity, and yet we do not seem willing to put forth a fraction of the effort in teaching the simple truth of Christ that these other groups are willing to devote in teaching error.

Jesus parted with the urgent words of **Matt. 28:19-20**, “*Go...Teach....Baptizing....Teach them to continue....*” These words set in motion a plan that, if diligently followed, could assure that His coming, His work, His death, burial and resurrection would not be in vain, but every man would know His grace, and mercy, and have opportunity to obey Him and serve Him. **He's counting on us!**

The church of Christ is not just a saved fraternity---We have a reason for being the church of our Lord. Our existence is for a mission just as Christ's life had a mission:– “*As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world*” (**John 17:18**). We have a mission, a sending into our times with a message to make known “*the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (**Eph. 3:10**). Here is the beginning and the end of why the church came into being at God's command, certainly not just to be a saved fraternity, but to carry out the “*ministry of reconciliation*” (**2 Cor. 5:18-21**).

A church that is not “mission- minded” has lost sight of her reason for existing. Let there be no mistake about it, **IF THE CHURCH FAILS IN HER MISSION, THE WORLD DIES LOST!! IF THIS GENERATION IS BROUGHT TO CHRIST, THIS GENERATION MUST BRING THEM!**

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