We Can Do This The Hard Way or The Easy Way!
The Need For Theological Reform In Contemporary Missions

A History of Post-Apostolic Missions Through The Modern Missionary Movement Reveals What Is Missing Today In Most Contemporary Mission Endeavors And What Needs To Be Recovered For Missions To Be Biblical And Thus God-Glorifying.
The Situation In Contemporary Missions

• Missions is primarily a church-based operation.

• Therefore missions will be a reflection of the church.

• As the church goes—Missions goes!
The Problem In Contemporary Missions

- Man-centered Churches Produce Man-centered Missions.

- Man-centered rather than God-centered missions results in missionary endeavors that are unbiblical and which do not glorify God.
What Happened?

• Theological Indifference
  – Not wishing to be side-tracked by doctrine
  – Believing evangelism to be the main goal

• Theological Compromise & Inclusiveness
  – Theological convictions & distinctives compromised to attract more missionary candidates and funds.
What Happened? (cont)

- **Theological Ignorance**
  - A theology of missions has not been developed and articulated.

- **Theological Contextualization**
  - Contextualization attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people’s deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.
Preaching the Gospel to a Fulbe Village 1
What Happened? (cont)

Theological/Historical Vacuum

Mission agencies, Bible colleges, and missionaries failed to see and understand missions in its theological and church history context opting to "wing it" with experience, anthropology, and pragmatism as its primary guides.
Theological/Historical Prejudice & Ignorance Re: The Reformation's Contribution To The Modern Missionary Movement Due In Part To Objections To The Doctrines of Grace.
“The Protestant theology of the Reformation was another factor that limited the vision of missionary enterprises. . . . The urgency to reach out to others was not seen as a top priority . . . and the Great Commission was all but forgotten . . . [As] Calvinists and the doctrine of election . . . made missions appear extraneous if God had already chosen those He would save.”

– Ruth Tucker, From Jerusalem To Irian Jaya
“We miss in the Reformers not only missionary action, but even the idea of missions . . . because fundamental theological views hindered them from giving their activity, and even their thoughts, a missionary direction.”

- Gustav Warneck, History of Protestant Missions [Warneck, a university professor also made the claim that Calvin believed the church had no duty to send out missionaries]
“The Reformers did not even talk of mission outreach.”

Protestant missionary efforts prior to 1792 “plugged along for over 250 years minding its own business and its own blessing like Israel of old.”

- Ralph Winter [Former Director of U.S. Center for World Missions]
“By the year 1800 it was painfully embarrassing to Protestants to hear Roman [Catholic] missionaries writing off the Protestant movement as apostate simply because it was not sending missionaries.”

- Ralph Winter
“Although early Reformers held to Scripture as their sole guide for life they believed the Great Commission, 'to make disciples of all nations' had been fulfilled by the apostles. There was thus no need for missions.”

- *The Changing Face of World Missions*
This historical prejudice against the Reformers and the doctrines of grace moved missions in another theological direction, namely that of Arminianism.

This theological shift in missions was in full force by the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century just as it was in the church itself.
This Theological Shift in Missions Resulted In A Man-centered Missionary Focus Rather Than One That Remained God-centered And Concerned With The Supremacy of God.

Today This Man-centered Missionary Focus Which Sees Evangelism Rather Than The Glory of God As Its Primary Purpose Is The Focus of The Vast Majority of Mission Agencies, Missionaries, and Churches.
This Theological Shift in Missions Was Caused By:

- Theological Indifference
- Theological Compromise & Inclusiveness
- Theological Ignorance
- Theological Contextualization
- Theological/Historical Vacuum
- Theological/Historical Prejudice & Ignorance re: The Reformers & Doctrines of Grace
What Needs To Happen?

• Missions, like the church, needs to become God-centered recognizing the supremacy of God in all things!
What Needs To Change?

- The priority of missions must be faithfulness to God and His Word—not fruitfulness.

- The primary motivation in and promotion of missions should be based primarily on God and His glory—not man's needs or desires.
“The highest of missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God . . .), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ. . . . Only one imperialism is Christian . . . and that is concern for His Imperial Majesty Jesus Christ, and for the glory of His empire.” John Stott
What Needs To Change? (cont)

• The practice of missions must be controlled by Scripture—not traditions, trends, or an improper understanding of contextualization.

• The power for missions must be Divine—not human.
What We Can Learn From The History of Post-Apostolic & Modern Missions

- Post-Apostolic Missionary Movement (AD 90-ca. 1533)

- Modern Missionary Movement (ca. AD 1533-1900)
Post-Apostolic Missions

• The Early Church

• Patrick (5th century)
Post-Apostolic Missions (cont)

- Celtic Missionary Movement (6th century)
- John Wycliffe (1328-1384)
- Martin Luther (1483-1546)
Modern Missionary Movement (1533-1900)

- John Calvin (1509-1564)
- David Brainerd (1718-1747)
Modern Missionary Movement (cont)

- Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)
- William Carey (1761-1834)
Modern Missionary Movement (cont)

- Adoniram Judson (1788-1850)
- John Paton (1824-1907)
- Hudson Taylor (1832-1905)
The Legacy of The Modern Missionary Movement

- Missions Must Be Motivated By A passion For The Glory of God.

- Missions Is An Impossibility Apart From The Power of God.

- The Power of Missions Is The Gospel, Therefore The True Gospel Must Be Proclaimed.
The Gospel Transcends Culture.

- Incarnational Missions Is Essential.

- Superficial Evangelism (Easy Believism) Is Not Consistent With Biblical Missions.
The Doctrines of Grace Are Essential To A Biblical Theology And Practice of Missions.

Church Planting Is The Primary Work of Missions.
• Prayer Is The Life-blood of Missions.

• True Missions Is Costly.
Missions is a Biblical mandate that finds its source in the Creation mandate.

In fact, the Great Commission is God’s means of fulfilling the Creation mandate.
Creation Mandate—Genesis 1:28

Reproduce

Multiply

Fill the Earth

Govern
As a result of the Fall the Earth was not filled with people who loved, served, and worshipped God but rather with people who hated God.

Did the Fall in Genesis 3 bring an end to the Creation Mandate?
Genesis 9:7

Be Fruitful

Multiply

Fill the Earth
Genesis 11—Tower of Babel

Disobedience to God’s Mandate (11:1-2)

Motivation for Their Disobedience (11:4)

God’s Response To The Disobedience (11:8-9)
The primary motivation at Shinar appeared to be people making a name for themselves. Rather than obeying God and filling the Earth for the sake of God’s Name they chose to remain in one place so as to attempt to make a name for themselves. Thus, the Tower of Babel incident was really a battle over whose name was to be established as great, glorious, powerful, and ultimately worshipped in all the Earth—man’s or God’s.
Genesis 12:1-3   The Abrahamic Covenant

Land

Great Nation

All the families of the Earth will be blessed through Abraham
The Promise Reiterated To Abraham

Genesis 18:18

Genesis 22:18
The Promise Reiterated To Isaac

Genesis 26:4
The Promise Reiterated To Jacob

Genesis 28:14

Genesis 35:10-12
• Genesis 1:28
  – Fruitful
  – Multiply
  – Fill The Earth
  – Govern

• Genesis 35:9-11
  – Fruitful
  – Multiply
  – Fill The Earth
  – Govern
The Promise Reiterated To Joseph By Jacob

Genesis 48:4

“Behold I will make you fruitful and numerous and I will make you a company of peoples, and I will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.”
Numbers 14:21

“But indeed as I live, all the Earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD.”

The promise understood correctly and within the context it is given is God’s promise to fulfill the Creation Mandate by filling the Earth with His people so as to fill the Earth with His glory.”
Psalm 22:7
Psalm 66:4
Psalm 67:7
Psalm 86:9
Isaiah 49:6
## The Great Commission

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<td><em>Make disciples of all the nations</em></td>
<td><em>Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation</em></td>
<td><em>Repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His Name to all nations.</em></td>
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Romans 15:8-12

Revelation 5:9

Revelation 7:9
Part 3 ~ The Supremacy of God In Missions

Missions Is For The Sake of The Name!

Mark 10:28-31  [We are to sacrifice for the sake of Christ and the Gospel.]

Acts 9:15-16  [Missionary hardships are for the sake of the Name.]
Acts 15:14-18 w/7  [Missions is a primary means of god in calling out people from among the gentiles for His Name.]

Acts 15:26  [It is right to risk one’s life for the sake of the Name.]

Rom. 1:5  [The salvation of the Gentiles is for the sake of the Name.]
3 John 5-8

Missionaries are to go out for the sake of the Name.

Those who do are to be supported well—those who don’t shouldn’t be!