

CATCH THE VISION!

Something's happening. Something exciting. And you can be part of it!

God is doing amazing things in our world. He's sending Navajo missionaries to the Laplanders and European Gypsy believers to Madagascar. He's shaking up Christian finances for His worldwide Cause, blasting open the Iron Curtain and riddling China with a searing spiritual hunger. He's raising a movement of excited disciples ready to go anywhere and do anything.

Followers of Jesus Christ are increasing by more than 115,000 every day. Eminent world watchers have been documenting this unprecedented initiative of God.

Maybe your heart is restless to be a part of His big picture. Maybe you're restless to catch a new vision for your life.

What Are You Doing?

Think over the energy you're throwing into life now—trying to be the best you can be, trying to get ahead, to be a better Christian, a better family member, a better you. Why work so hard? Why ask so often for God's blessing on your life?

If it's to have a nicer, happier life, that's not a bad goal. Especially since that's what heaven will be—an easier, nicer existence. But if that were God's purpose for you right now, He would simply take you home to heaven, right? In the here-and-now, Biblical discipleship is never described as "nice" or "easy."

The Cause

God does want to bless you. But not to make your life easy. He'll bless you because He's got a demanding job for you—a specific task, one that lays down rails to guide your major life decisions, to keep you from spinning your wheels in Christian self-improvement.

Go ahead: break out of the false impression that to join God's family is to become part of a nice, privileged group. It's more like being born into a family business—everybody is naturally expected to take part in the Father's work. Do you know what the Father is doing these days?

How many times have you heard or given testimonies about God's wonderful plan for our lives? Just how clear is His plan to you?

An Unchanging Purpose

Get a grip on your Bible. It spells out how to break through to the crystal-clear, specific task God has for you in His historic purpose—in His "family business." He does have a wonderful plan for your life!

When you dig into the simple Bible study in the box below, you'll notice that Psalm 67 is a perfect overview of God's purpose:

*May God be gracious to us
and bless us,
and make His face shine upon us;
that Your ways may be known
on the earth,
Your salvation among all nations.
...God will bless us,
and all the ends of the earth
will fear Him.*

It's not too hard to figure out that God has blessed us for a specific purpose, right?

God has a job for you, and it has to do with reaching the remaining 10,000 unreached people groups on this planet.

Notice Jesus' summary of Scripture and His role in fulfilling messianic prophecy:

"This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47).

What you'll see over and over in the passages below about God's purpose are terms such as peoples, nations, families, languages, tribes, the Gentiles or even Greeks—all signifying the idea of "people

groups." A people group, according to Christian anthropologists and mission experts, is the largest ethnic group within which the Gospel can spread as a church planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance (such as language and culture).

Peoples Power

Survey your Bible concordance listings of people-group terms such as nation, peoples, Gentiles. And remember not to equate "nations" with our idea of political "countries." For example, the country of India has at least 3,000 distinct people groups within its borders. Irian Jaya has about 250 and Russia more than 300.

The 70 people groups formed at the Tower of Babel had splintered into about 60,000 by the time of Christ—when He commanded us to make disciples of every "nation" or people group.

Since then, these groups have merged through communication, trade and primarily the reconciling power of the Gospel, into about 24,000 distinct people groups.

Fourteen thousand people groups are currently being discipled. The other 10,000—mostly among the Muslim, Han Chinese, Hindu, Buddhist and tribal cultures—need additional prayer and labor to birth appropriate expressions of Biblical faith in growing "people movements to Christ."

There are thus 10,000 peoples who do not yet have adequate access to the Good News of Jesus in their own culture.

To learn more of God's heart for the world as revealed in Scriptures, read through the following references. (If time allows, read the context of each verse as well). They summarize God's "unchanging purpose" on earth—to bless His people, and through them, to bless every people group on earth.

Think through:

Genesis 12:1-3, 18:18,
22:17-18, 26:4,5,
28:14

2 Chronicles 6:32-33

Psalm 67, 96,105

Isaiah 49:6, 51:4, 56:6-8
Zechariah 2:11

Malachi 1:11

Matthew 28:18-20

Luke 2:30-32, 24:45-47

Acts 1:8

Romans 1:5, 10:13-15,
15:8-24, 16:25-27

Galatians 3:8,14 & 29

Ephesians 3:1-6

Revelation 5:9; 7:9

Who are the unreached people groups?

They are the Muslim Qashqa'i of Iran, the Buddhist Brao of Laos, the Tribal/Hindu Koya of India, the Muslim/Furawi of Sudan, the Folk/Religionist Manchu of China, the Buryat of Russia and about 9,994 others.

Where are they?

They live in the remote jungles of Irian Jaya, in the ethnic neighborhoods of Berlin and nearly every major metropolitan city in the world, on Native American Indian reservations in the United States, in restricted-access countries, in India, in....

Your Vision

If you have a vision to share Christ in your neighborhood, your town or even all of your country, rejoice! Reaching your Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria is critical. But keep in mind that your country—no matter how large—represents only a very small part of our planet's total population—and a very small part of God's heart for the world.

It's also important to realize that God never expected or asked that we create a perfect society. If we get it in our minds that we must totally transform and "save" our city or country before we move on to other areas, we never will move on!

A "healthy" local church or body of believers, walking in obedience to the Word of God, will be active in two major areas:

- Evangelism and discipleship in their local area.
- Assisting in the "whole Church" task of establishing a church movement in every remaining unreached people group—a church movement which can effectively do in those peoples what their church does back home.

So clothe the needy and feed the hungry, witness across the street and stand up for righteousness in your society, and do it with an expanded vision of God's whole heart for the uttermost parts of the world!

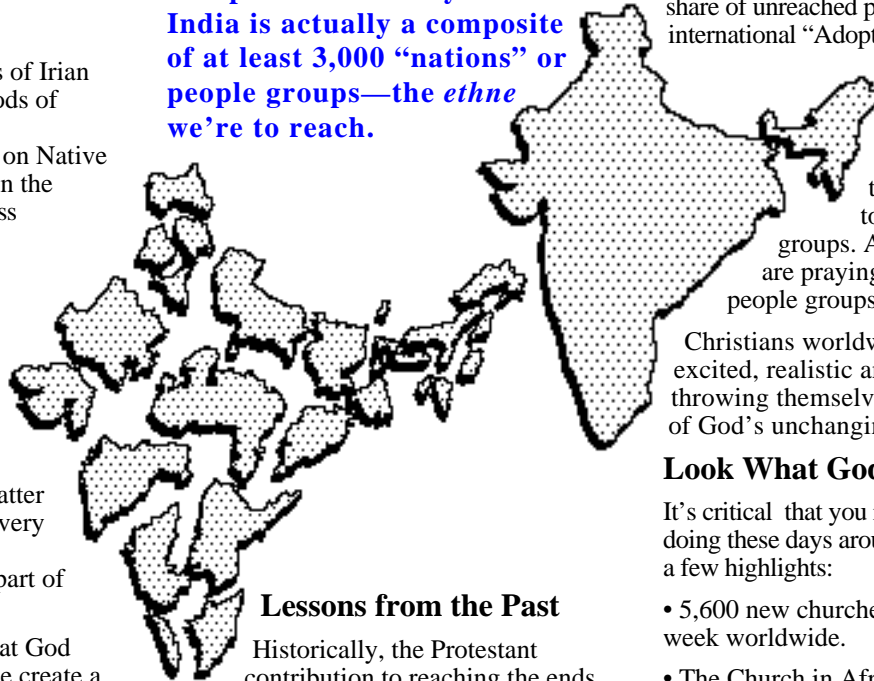
And when you win your neighbors to Christ, equip them to join the Cause of reaching every people group with the Gospel. Make sure that you and your church are a part of God's historic purpose to add to the Body of Christ those purchased with His blood "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

God is carrying out His unchanging purpose (see Hebrews 6:17 and context) through His obedient servants around the globe. And the pace of completing that

purpose is accelerating rapidly!

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The political country of India is actually a composite of at least 3,000 "nations" or people groups—the *ethne* we're to reach.



Lessons from the Past

Historically, the Protestant contribution to reaching the ends of the earth with God's blessing has occurred in three waves. The first era, championed by William Carey in the late 1700s, penetrated the coastlands of the globe's continents.

The second, spearheaded by Hudson Taylor around 1865, penetrated the inland regions of many countries.

The third wave, responding to Cameron Townsend and Donald McGavran's call to go to all the remaining "hidden" or "unreached peoples," is nearing completion.

Each wave has been characterized by student activism, revival and prayer movements. This last wave is no different.

We're living at a very interesting point in the history of the world, in the unfolding of God's unchanging purpose.

With unprecedented technological breakthroughs in cultural studies, communication and travel, we are better equipped than ever before to reach the whole world!

Associations of mission agencies in various countries (and even whole continents!) have set goals to target and reach their share of unreached peoples through the international "Adopt-A-People" campaign.

For example, Latin American churches and mission agencies are working toward sending teams to 3,000 unreached groups. Australian churches are praying to help reach 2,000 people groups.

Christians worldwide are getting excited, realistic and specific about throwing themselves into the final era of God's unchanging purpose.

Look What God Is Doing!

It's critical that you realize what God is doing these days around the globe. Here are a few highlights:

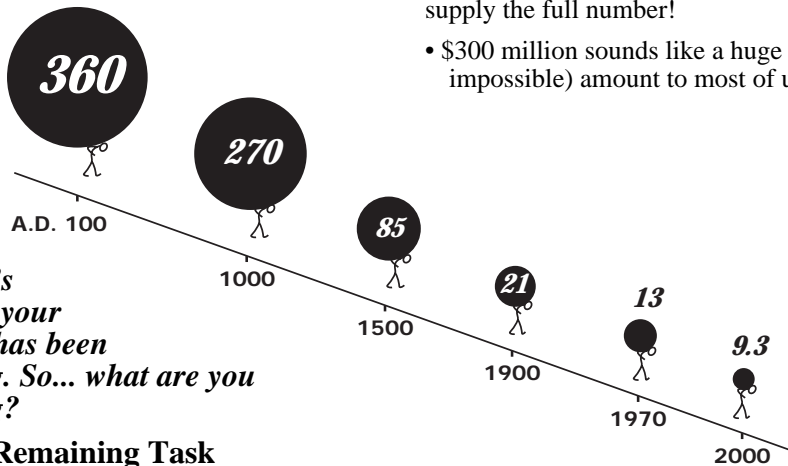
- 5,600 new churches are opening every week worldwide.
- The Church in Africa is increasing by 20,000 per day on the average; the southern part of that continent was 3% Christian in 1900 and is nearly 60% Christian today.
- Worldwide, Christianity is growing at the rate of 115,000 new believers every day.
- More Muslims in Iran have come to Christ since 1980 than in the previous 1,000 years combined.
- In 1900, Korea had no Protestant church; it was deemed "impossible to penetrate." Today Korea is 35% Christian with 7,000 churches in the city of Seoul alone.
- In Islamic (Muslim) Indonesia, the percentage of Christians is so high the government won't print the statistic—which is probably nearing 15% of the population.

• God is creatively sending Chinese believers to reach Tibetans, Hondurans to reach North African Muslims, and Navajos to reach Laplanders. There are currently more than 60,000 non-Western missionaries from over 1,000 non-Western mission agencies. Many of these are serving in places which are hostile to Western missionaries.

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groups on this planet.**

Where the church has been planted, it's growing like wildfire. The Good News is breaking loose worldwide. Take a look at the charts on this page:

- In AD 100, only one in every 360 people was an active believer. Today one in every 9.3 persons includes an active believer. (See first chart below.)
- In AD 100 there were 12 unreached people groups per congregation of believers. Today, with 6.5 million churches worldwide, there are 650 congregations for each of the 10,000 remaining unreached people groups! (See chart on bottom of this page.)



That's what your God has been doing. So... what are you doing?

The Remaining Task

While we're working so hard to improve our lives, to deepen our fellowships, to seek God's healing for our families and our land, let's simply face the fact: we haven't yet finished the missionary assignment that Jesus gave us. But is it possible to finish it?

Some missiologists are saying that it's possible to send church-planting teams into each of these 10,000 unreached groups within two years. To do it, we will need at least:

- 20,000 additional missionaries
- \$300,000,000 for support of the new missionaries
- More prayer—at least a collective hour per day for each new missionary

Can we do it? It seems like an intimidating task. But God will accomplish His purpose. The gates of hell that lock in the unreached peoples of the world can't stand against His church. At the end of time Christ will be exalted with the song: "...you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Revelation 5:9).

So the question isn't "Can we do it?" but rather "Will we do it?"

The fact is, the "Lord of the harvest" has showered His Church with more than enough resources to complete the task:

- 20,000 new missionaries seems like a lot—but it would take only one new missionary from every 320 churches to supply the full number!
- \$300 million sounds like a huge (and impossible) amount to most of us...

—but if every believer would simply give an additional 50 cents per year, or every congregation would give an additional \$50 more per year, it would fully supply what is needed!

- According to survey results, the prayer necessary would take only 2% of the time we evangelical Christians spend daily watching TV and shopping.

So you see, our Lord didn't just give us an impossible assignment and then step back to watch us fail. He has supplied everything we need in abundance! We

may choose a path of disobedience, but there's absolutely no good reason we can give for not finishing the assignment He gave us!

Countdown

We're 4,000 years into God's promise to Abraham that all the people groups would be blessed—and the "children of Abraham" (see Gal. 3:29) are making some incredible advances toward fulfilling that mandate! Hundreds of mission groups worldwide are working towards penetrating each remaining people group with a church-planting

movement, so that every person may have access to the Gospel in his or her own culture.

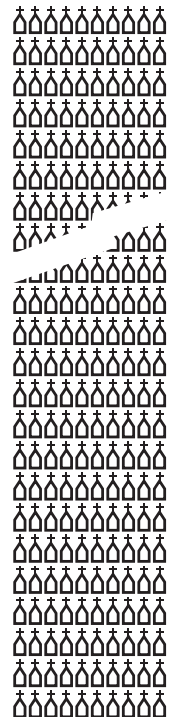
Jesus said in Matthew 24:14,

"And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations (or peoples) and then the end will come."

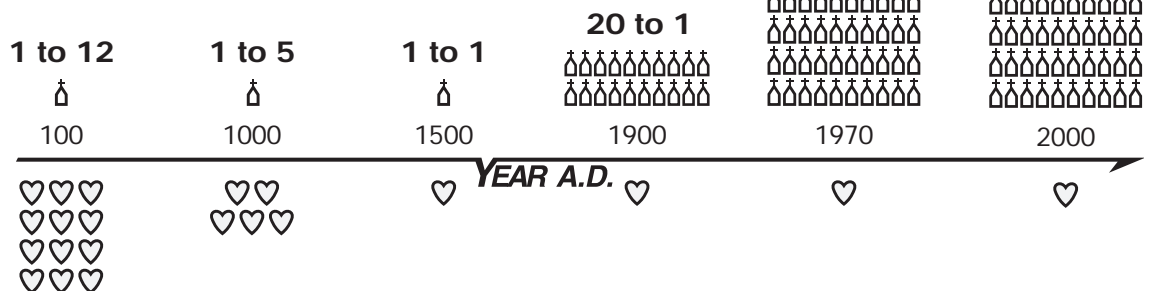
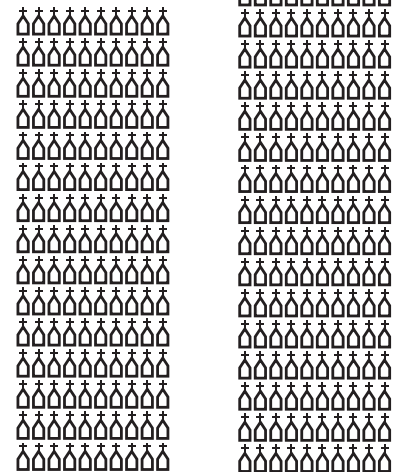
Why wait? Every single day 48,000 members of unreached people groups die without hearing of their opportunity to embrace the Good News of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ.

Matthew 25:31-46 plus John chapter 3 together give clear information as to the destiny of

650 to 1



150 to 1





those who die without Christ.

“Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son” (John 3:18)

Study these passages. Then ask yourself, “Why wait?”

God has made it possible for us, His children, to make the Good News available to everyone in his or her own language and culture. And you can be a part of this urgent, historic, big-picture priority.

The Catch

There’s always a catch, you know. If the Biblical mandate is so clear, if the big picture of what God is doing in our world is so exciting, if the 10,000 remaining groups can be reached in a few years, if millions are perishing without any knowledge of Christ, why isn’t all Christendom buzzing with the news that we can finish the task? One reason is that there’s a cost involved.

Obedience costs. Real discipleship costs. The price is giving up agendas that detract from God’s global cause. The cost is to forsake claims of ownership to affluence and security. The requirement for ministries is to selflessly cooperate rather than needlessly duplicate efforts.

Obedience means shifting our expectations to being a blessing as well as being blessed. We must realize that with the blessing in our lives comes the obligation to share with others what we have been given to pass on to them.

Another reason missions is not popular is

that active participation in the big picture of God’s plan is dangerous. It’s the danger of signing on in wartime as a soldier who doesn’t “entangle himself in the affairs of every day life” (2 Timothy 2:4).

Battling the “powers and world forces” (Ephesians 6:12) that have bound 10,000 groups for thousands of years means spiritual warfare. And warfare means casualties, body counts, blood, sweat and tears.

God’s big purpose on this planet is not a game. It’s not a spiritual health spa regimen to make you feel better. It’s war. And war is never nice. In fact, ultimately the price of being a part of God’s global purpose can mean losing your life.

But maybe too many of us have been led to believe that the Christian life is supposed to be nice, respectable, predictable and smooth—that Christianity means blessings and lots of meetings, not war.

Or, maybe we have counted the cost of real discipleship in God’s big plan, and then—God help us—we knowingly refused to obey.

Think about it.

Is there any good reason you and your church do not take seriously your part in God’s unchanging purpose to disciple the nations? Have you—will you—allow Christ and His perfect plan to be at the very center of your life?

What will you do?

What will you do with your restlessness to be a part of God’s exciting, dangerous plan?

I’ll obey. I affirm my commitment to be part of God’s work to disciple the “nations,” the people groups of the world (Matthew 28:19). I’ll obey whether that means staying on the home front and serving as a “sender” or serving here or abroad as a missionary.

I’ll pray specifically for His will to be done on earth—that every people group may hear and that laborers will be thrust forth into the harvest (Matthew 9:37-38).

I’ll live according to God’s purpose. I’ll evaluate my priorities and begin to adjust my lifestyle according to God’s purpose (Matthew 6:24-33; 10:37-39). I’ll give to efforts to reach the unreached peoples.

I’ll study. I’ll learn everything I can about the big picture of God’s purpose in Scripture (see Luke 24:45-47), current mission efforts, global events, and research on unreached people groups.

I’ll link up. I’ll become accountable to other believers to pray, study, give, mobilize, send or go in my part of God’s plan (Hebrews 10:24-25).

I’ll share this vision. Right here in my region I’ll help spread the news of what God is doing worldwide.

I’ll give my time. I’ll devote 5 or 10 hours every week helping my church or student fellowship reach out to the unreached peoples of the world.

Finally...

If you checked any of the above boxes, and are serious about exploring further how you can get involved, there are excellent resources available to guide you in each step of commitment listed above. Also available are guidelines for your church or student fellowship to “adopt” one of the remaining unreached peoples.

For further information call or write:

**U.S. Adopt-A-People Campaign
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