



THE
BLUEPRINT SERIES
Volume 3

Building...

MISSIONS VISION

Month By Month



*Written by Paul Brannan
for the*

WORLD ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FELLOWSHIP



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Photo illustration: Jim Whitmer Photography

Created by Paul Brannan



MISSIONS COMMISSION
WORLD ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FELLOWSHIP
THE ACTS ONE:EIGHT PROJECT

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I began to write this manual, I wanted to create a tool that would be of assistance to that pastor and missions team that felt they needed something more to help them build and maintain a clear missions vision within their congregation. They were already convinced of the need, they were just searching for the right tools.

I set out to create such a manual. With forty-eight years of world missions involvement, having served as a missionary, missionary administrator, district missions director, coordinator for the Missions Awareness Team, and currently as its resource editor and having conducted hundreds of missions conventions in your churches, my life has been eternally affected by the tens of thousands of experiences during those years.

I am indebted to each person who has touched my life in a meaningful way. I am grateful to those who believed in me so many years ago, for because of them, many doors of ministry were opened to Betty and me. I am even grateful, now, for those who didn't believe in me, because they motivated me to try a little harder and, at times, I needed that.

This is a combination manual/workbook since Section 2 is designed for planning your Missions Sunday presentations for a full year. May the Lord bless its use.

They say that no man is an island. That became very obvious as I came to the latter part of this manual. I reached a point where I needed more ideas to share with you. I was looking for more ideas that would help you in teaching missions to the children and the youth. Where do you get these ideas? Where else, but from the ones who are ministering successfully to the children and the youth.

Here is where I owe a huge debt that I will never be able to repay to my life's partner, my treasured wife, Betty. She called scores of churches, pastors, children's pastors and youth pastors. She spent long hours over many days seeking ideas.

Not every idea will work in every group. That was never the intent, but by sharing ideas we expand our vision and broaden our horizon.

May we join together in praying, "Lord, send revival to our children and our youth, and give us wisdom to lead them in their commitment to reach a dying world!"

Your partner in the harvest,

Paul Brannan

INTRODUCTION

Jesus gave the Great Commission, not only to the corporate body, but also to each individual believer. His assignment was so important that all four Gospels and the book of Acts include this command. If the Holy Spirit thought Jesus' command was important enough to repeat five times, it should be important enough to get our attention.

The purpose of the church is missions. Our mandate and responsibility are to make certain that the gospel reaches every corner of this earth. Unfortunately, too many churches are not taking advantage of the tools and helps made available to assist them in building strong missions awareness within the congregation and preparing the membership to reach the world for Christ. What a tragedy!

The following five elements are absolutely necessary for building a solid base for missions in the local church:

1. An active missions team
2. An annual missions convention
3. A well planned presentation for Missions Sunday every month
4. Frequent missionary speakers
5. A regular missions' prayer emphasis

The pastor can't do it alone, nor should he. Creating a missions team will make the pastor's load lighter and create a more effective world outreach. Volume 1 of the "Blueprint Series" entitled *Building Missions Leadership in the Local Church* is available to assist you in creating an effective missions' team.

The missions convention, the cornerstone for any successful effort to establish missions in the local church, seeks to broaden vision and increase knowledge of world need. Its primary result is a personal commitment from each believer to support missions each month with their faith promise. Volume 2, *Building Missions Support with an Annual Missions Convention*, will guide you, step by step in planning and conducting a successful convention.

This, Volume 3, *Building Missions Vision Month by Month* focuses on keeping missions before the congregation through-out the year. The well planned Missions Sunday presentation helps fan the flame that was ignited when they made their monthly faith promise commitment. This manual will assist you in planning a full year of Missions Sundays at the same time, making for a more balanced approach and assuring that each presentation is well prepared. Additional ideas are shared that can be implemented throughout the year to keep missions' interest high.

Frequent missionary visits personalize missions, giving it a face. Their visits help believers see that reaching a lost world is about people, not programs. The passion for soul-winning shared by missionaries motivates many to prayer and is instrumental in leading many others into future missionary service. Volume 4,

Building Missions Partnership through the Missionary Visit, will help you get the most from each missionary's visit.

Regularly scheduled prayer for missions is critical to the success of missions, both at home and abroad. Volume 5, Building Missions Effectiveness through Prayer, contains scores of ideas used by other congregations in making their missions prayer emphasis a key part of their missions outreach.

Every worthwhile effort should include at least one goal. The steps we take to realize that goal are called strategy. So strategy is the vehicle that will hopefully lead us to our goals, both short-term and long-term.

The five necessary elements for building missions are simple and the goal is equally simple. We want to involve every believer in fulfilling the Great Commission by giving, praying and/or going.

This manual/workbook will guide you in preparing effective missions Sunday presentations, keeping missions exciting and fresh throughout the year.

Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you as you read the following pages. Let God show you the steps necessary to transform your congregation into a "Great Commission Church".

SECTION 1

Where Do We Start?

***Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with
many advisers they succeed.***

Proverbs 15:22 NIV

***Commit to the LORD whatever you do,
and your plans will succeed.***

Proverbs 16:3 NIV

PART 1

LAY THE FOUNDATION

The Importance Of A Missions Team

The primary purpose of the church is to spread the gospel. That is called missions. All else is or should be built around that central purpose. And let's face it. The pastor can't do it alone!

Many churches have a missions committee. The problem with committees is that the very word committee suggests a group seated in a circle talking, talking, and talking. But we need more than talk. We need action. That is why I like to call it a missions team. The word team suggests action or movement, cooperation, excitement and winning: Get the idea?

An active missions team will help the pastor cast vision for reaching a lost world. A missions team can involve a large part of the congregation in missions through delegation. The benefits are two-fold: Much more is accomplished and criticism is minimized because people don't criticize what they are involved in doing.

For more information on how to build a missions team and guidelines for its functions, see volume 1, *Building Missions Leadership in the Local Church*.

Keep The Team Involved Throughout The Year

The missions team is not a group that meets occasionally to rubberstamp plans already made by the pastor or board. They are a hands-on work force ready to assist the church leadership in creating opportunities for the membership to move into obedience to the Great Commission.

The team will be working throughout the year on the planning, not only of their next missions convention, but also of the conventions for two or three years in advance. They will constantly fine-tune their Missions Sunday program and coordinate their weekly or monthly prayer program for missions.

The list goes on and on, but I'm getting ahead of myself. In short, the missions team will assure that the five essential elements for building missions in the local church are in place. Let me think. What were those five elements again?

1. An active missions team
2. Annual missions convention (See volume 2, *Building Missions Support with an Annual Missions Convention*)
3. Monthly missions Sunday (See Section 2 of this manual)
4. Frequent missionary speakers (See volume 4, *Building Missions Partnership through the Missionary Visit*)
5. Regularly scheduled prayer for missions (See volume 5, *Building Missions Effectiveness through Prayer*)

Make Sure Missions Team Members Attend All District And National Missions' Activities

It is difficult to develop a world vision when you know nothing about the rest of the world. The best way to open the world to your team members is to take trips to the mission field. The next best way is to attend those meetings conducted on both the district and national levels that bring the mission field to you. Well, maybe not all of it, but enough so that you begin to get a glimpse of what it is like.

When you begin to see the need, a burden begins to form and then a vision. Why do you think Jesus said, "Look at the fields that are white, ready to harvest"? They had to see the need first before they would feel the need.

Once the team has "seen" the need, they can carry that vision back to the church and expose the congregation to a new way of seeing the world. In other words, they will begin to see the world as Jesus sees it!

An Annual Missions Convention Is A Must

Speaking frankly, it is sometimes difficult to convince a pastor to conduct a first-time missions convention in his church. But, do you know what is almost as difficult? Getting that pastor to conduct a convention the next year! He usually gives one of two reasons for not conducting a second convention. He said it was too much work meaning he and his wife tried to do it all. Or, they were just too busy. Translated that means, they waited too long and the calendar filled up with things. Not necessarily important things, just things.

I wouldn't go so far as to say that it does no good to conduct a convention if you don't continue the following year. It is obvious, however, that the major impact of that convention dissipates quickly and little fruit will remain.

When church leadership determines to bring their congregation into obedience to Christ's command, that commitment is long-term. It should be from now until Jesus comes. Not from now until finances are bad or from now until we go into a new building program. Not from now until we change pastors but from now until He breaks the clouds of glory! After all, He didn't request that we reach the world. He commanded it!

PART 2

IDENTIFY THE TOOLS AVAILABLE TO YOU

When making plans for missions Sunday it is helpful to know what tools are available to make your efforts more effective. Your missions team should be constantly searching for new ideas and creating new ways to present missions to your congregation. Check with your World Missions Department to see if they have produced any promotional or convention materials

Listed below are some of the items available to you by the World Assemblies of God Fellowship through the Missions Commission website at worldagfellowship.ag/missions/

- **The Blueprint Series**
 - Volume 1, **Building Missions Leadership in the Local Church**
 - Volume 2, **Building Missions Support with an Annual Missions Convention**
 - Volume 3, **Building Missions Vision, Month By Month**
 - Volume 4, **Building Missions Effectiveness through Prayer**
 - Volume 5, **Building Missions Partnership through the Missionary Service**

- **The Checklist Manual** – A digest of the five manuals listed above. Five PowerPoint presentations are available for teaching purposes

- **PowerPoint Presentations**

A variety of PowerPoint presentations have been prepared for the local church and are available for download in both English and Spanish. Collection #1 is for the congregation. Collection #2 is to assist and inform the missions team and Collection #3 contains illustrated sermons on missions and soul-winning.

- **Master Copies Are Available For Printing The Following Materials:**
 1. Brochure – What Is A Faith Promise?
 2. Faith Promise Cards (To be used when receiving faith promises)
 3. Commitment forms (Used by the church to make long-term monthly commitments to the missionary)
 4. Monthly Commitment Certificate (For the national missions department to send to supporting churches indicating the amount of the monthly commitment made and the missionary (with photo) to whom committed)

Note: All of the above materials are available in both English and Spanish.

SECTION 2

MISSIONS SUNDAY - WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Jesus said, “ ...open your eyes and look at the fields ready for harvest now. Already, the one who harvests is being paid and is gathering crops for eternal life. So the one who plants and the one who harvests celebrate at the same time.

John 4:35-37 NCV

PART 1

MISSIONS SUNDAY IS A KEY TO SUCCESS

An Annual Missions Convention Is Not Enough

The average pastor believes that if their church conducts an annual missions convention, the congregation is missions minded. But experience shows that within three months following the convention, monthly faith promise income will experience a sharp decline when a consistent effort is not made to keep missions before the congregation. The primary cause of decreased faith promise giving through the year is a failure to keep missions fresh and exciting. A well-planned monthly Missions Sunday will help maintain a high level of faith promise giving throughout the year, possibly even exceeding the faith promise commitments made during the convention.

A Successful Missions Sunday Doesn't Just Happen

Unfortunately most churches put little or no planning into their missions Sunday presentations. In many cases it becomes nothing more than an announcement that it is missions Sunday and your faithful giving is appreciated. But it is difficult for the congregation to maintain a high level of commitment to missions if it is not a priority to church leadership.

Missions Sunday seems to come around so often that it catches many leaders by surprise, and unfortunately, unprepared. Why not plan your missions Sunday program for a full year at one time? There are several advantages:

1. Your program will be well planned.
2. Planning a full year at a time will help you cover all the bases, giving balance to the presentations.
3. It will remove the monthly pressure for those responsible for planning missions Sunday.
4. It will educate and inspire the congregation.
5. A well planned missions Sunday will keep the people excited about supporting missions with their monthly faith promises, thus maintaining active most of the faith promises made during the annual convention.

The Monthly Presentation For Missions Sunday Should Be A Highlight For That Service

The monthly missions Sunday presentation does not require the whole service. It may vary in length from 3 to 10 minutes according to the material used. It should be given a prominent place in the worship service schedule, communicating its importance. Giving the monthly missions slot a name, such as "Window on the World" will help define its purpose.

Local circumstances and customs will influence your decision as to which Sunday of the month is preferable. Most churches have chosen the first Sunday of each month for their "Window on the World".

Missions Sunday Is Not For Giving Leftovers!

It is a focus on a lost world and it deserves our very best, not what we have to spare!

A well-planned "Window on the World" each month will help train the congregation in planned giving, making their faith promises, committed at the missions convention, a reality and not an empty pledge.

The ultimate success of the faith promises raised at the annual missions convention will be determined by how effectively the monthly missions Sunday presentations are planned!

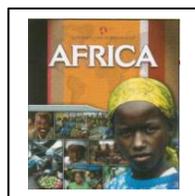
PART 2

IDEAS TO MAKE MISSIONS SUNDAY SPECIAL

It should be understood that not every church can or should adapt every idea shared on the following pages. Proven ideas, however, are just that; they work. Ideas that work elsewhere will not always work where you live, but they might trigger a new line of thought. The Holy Spirit may lead you into an area that you have never explored before. That's alright. He is good at that, when we allow Him to speak.

Pray Around The World

1. Africa
2. Asia Pacific
3. Eurasia
4. Europe
5. North America
6. Northern Asia
7. Latin American and the Caribbean



- Share a request from each region and have corporate prayer.
- Publish these requests in the bulletin on Missions Sunday.

Keep The Congregation Informed About Faith Promise Giving

- Publish the current missions giving in the bulletin each Missions Sunday.
- Share faith-building words to encourage continued support for missions.

Send A Monthly Letter With A Missions Offering Envelope

If sent the week before Missions Sunday, it will serve as a strong reminder of their faith promise and will encourage faithfulness in giving.

Send A Quarterly Receipt Of Faith Promise Giving

It is amazing how this will affect faithfulness in giving. It serves as a reminder without the sense of nagging.

Purchase Flags Representative Of The Nations Where You Support Missionaries

- Display a flag from a different nation each month for "Window on the World"
- Make that nation your prayer focus for the day.
- Flags are readily available from many suppliers and can be purchased in a variety of sizes and qualities.
- If purchasing flags is not within your budget, possibly the women's group could make them. This would save missions money and would also give the ladies extra participation in missions.



Call A Missionary Family

- Call the missionary in advance and set up the phone appointment.
- Amplify the conversation through your sound system so the congregation can hear.
- Project their photo on the screen while talking with the missionaries.
- Interview the family.
- Ask for their prayer needs and have the congregation pray for them while the missionaries are still on the line.

Include Your Youth With Music And Drama

- Use a skit with a missions theme.
- Present a human video with a missions song.
- Don't forget mime.
- The more people who get involved, the more successful your effort to build missions awareness.

Share Excerpts From Missionaries' Letters

- Share limited excerpts when the content is so exciting and so urgent that it should not be ignored.
- All missionary newsletters, except those from a sensitive area, should be posted on your "World Harvest" bulletin board.

Give Opportunities For Personal Testimonies

- Share a testimony from a member who has experienced divine blessing and provision resulting from making a "Faith Promise".
- The congregation will better identify with the pew than with the pulpit.
- Others will be inspired to faithfulness by these examples of victory.

Vary The Focus Of Your "Window On The World" From Month To Month

Some months you may wish to focus on regions of the world such as Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Eurasia and Northern Asia. Some months you may wish to spotlight departmental mission's ministries.

It Will Take Some Planning, But It Will Be Well Worth Your Effort

- Both giving and missions awareness will increase.
- You will be blessed because of your obedience to Christ's command.
- Begin your planning with confidence. God's Word assures us that our efforts are not in vain when we lead our people in generous giving as a life-style.

One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. Proverbs 11:24-25 (NIV)

Whatever We Do For The Master Deserves To Be Done The Right Way!

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)

SO, LET'S PLAN "WINDOW ON THE WORLD" AS THOUGH IT WERE A LIFE OR DEATH MATTER... IT MAY BE, YOU KNOW.

PART 3

PLAN MISSIONS SUNDAYS FOR A YEAR AT A TIME

The Advantages Of Planning Ahead

We usually get just about what we plan for. I know that's not good grammar, but it communicates a truth. Most church leadership has the best of intentions following the missions convention. They hope missions giving will be fairly stable during the year, but they really won't be surprised if it begins to drop. To be truthful, past experience leads them to expect it.

They really intend to keep enthusiasm up throughout the year with a well-planned "Window on the World" each month, but as the year rushes by, they just don't find the time. The month just goes by too quickly. It seems they hardly finished last month's missions Sunday and here it comes again!

Don't feel alone! It happens to hundreds of pastors and leaders across America. Instead of giving up or beating yourself up, let's find a way out of the dilemma.

There is a simple solution. You have a missions team so it's time to put them to work. If you don't have a team it is time to form one, now. Have the missions team do the major part of the planning for a full year of "Windows on the World" at one time. That's right. The team can create the framework or the general plans for 12 months of missions presentations at one sitting.

There are several advantages. Let's look at a few:

1. Seeing the year as a whole, they can plan a more balanced program.
2. It will give them time to include items that they might not be able to include when planning month by month.
3. It reduces the stress of preparing something at the last minute.
4. Each team member has ample time to prepare for their participation.
5. Each "Window on the World" can be a quality presentation.

When the team has done this, they can rest assured they have joined their hands with God's purpose of redeeming mankind. How? They are inspiring and motivating faithfulness on the part of the people of their congregation in their faith promise giving. That is no small thing!

And the pastor can rest assured that the time set aside for missions during each "Window on the World" is one of the best investments of time every month.

ANNUAL PLANNER

Month _____

Our missions team will meet this month on _____

Our missionary speaker(s) this month will be _____

Our feature for missions Sunday "Window on the World" this month will be

Month _____

Our missions team will meet this month on _____

Our missionary speaker(s) this month will be _____

Our feature for missions Sunday "Window on the World" this month will be

Month _____

Our missions team will meet this month on _____

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Month _____

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Our missionary speaker(s) this month will be _____

Our feature for missions Sunday "Window on the World" this month will be

Month _____

Our missions team will meet this month on _____

Our missionary speaker(s) this month will be _____

Our feature for missions Sunday "Window on the World" this month will be

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20__
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Check missionary newsletters for prayer requests

Today's Focus: *Africa*

Available Resources: *Project video clip*

Faith Promise Giving _____ PLACE THIS INFO IN THE BULLETIN

Faith Promise total for the year 6,000

Missions giving due to date..... 1,500

Missions offerings received to date... 1,800

Excess or shortfall..... 300 PTL

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

IT IS TIME TO CHECK YOUR PLANS FOR YOUR NEXT CONVENTION

Set dates for the convention

Our convention will include the dates from _____ to _____

Prepare schedule

Our convention will consist of the following:

Type of service	Date	Speaker
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
<i>Faith Promise Service</i>	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Confirm speakers:

_____ for _____
_____ for _____
_____ for _____

Be sure to order your Missions Convention materials from your World Missions Office or download available masters at actsoneeightproject@gmail.com

For step-by-step assistance in planning your convention, ask for Volume 2, Building Missions Support With an Annual Missions Convention.

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

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Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

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Month Date

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Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

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Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

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Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

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Available Resources: _____

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Missions offerings received to date... _____

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Month Date

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Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

PRESENTATION FOR MISSIONS SUNDAY, _____, 20____
Month Date

Missions News:

Missions Prayer Needs:

Today's Focus: _____

Available Resources: _____

Faith Promise Giving _____

Faith Promise total for the year _____

Missions giving due to date..... _____

Missions offerings received to date... _____

Excess or shortfall..... _____

Receive the Missions Offering

SECTION 3

What Else Can We Do To Increase Missions Vision?

Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

John 4:35 NIV

That night Paul had a vision. He saw a man from Macedonia in northern Greece, pleading with him, "Come over here and help us."

Acts 16:9 NLT

Part 1

PLAN A MID-YEAR CONVENTION

Many churches have found that conducting a mini-convention six months after the annual convention gives a big boost to the overall missions effort. These pastors say they conduct a mid-year convention for usually for one of two reasons: either their church exists in a very transient area such as military bases, etc. or the church is growing rapidly and they don't want to wait many months to expose the new converts or members to the faith promise plan. Those coming into the church a month or two following the annual convention would have to wait as long as eight to ten months before having an opportunity to make a faith promise.

There is, undoubtedly, a third benefit for every church, even those not located in transient areas nor experiencing great growth. A mid-year mini-convention will renew the missions focus for the individual believer and encourage each one to be faithful in their faith promise giving.

Some churches plan a full schedule of activities similar to their annual convention, meaning that their faith promises are set up for six month periods, but most use the concept to give a boost, continuing with the yearly faith promise challenge. In either case, those making a faith promise during the mini-convention would understand that it would be effective until their next convention.

The average mid-year convention will occupy one Sunday, usually with no banquet. This would be a great opportunity, however, to have a "Partners Banquet" for all who made a faith promise during the annual convention. It would be a smaller group but it would recognize the importance of those who carry the missions vision there in the local congregation.

One missionary speaker may be invited to receive faith promises on Sunday morning and remain to speak again on Sunday evening if the church has a Sunday evening service. Others will invite a separate speaker for the evening service or to attend house meeting, as the case may be.

There would be little additional cost involved except for speakers since you could use the same theme materials used in the annual convention just six months earlier. Another idea is to save all of the theme materials from year to year and recycle them two or three years down the road for the mini-convention.

Part 2

SCHEDULE FREQUENT MISSIONARY SPEAKERS

Of all the elements necessary for building a strong missions vision in the local church, inviting missionary speakers is by far the easiest, assuming that the national work is sufficiently developed to have missionaries available. It only requires a few phone calls and some basic provisions for the visiting missionaries.

If that is not the case, this places a far greater responsibility on the pastor to teach the congregation their responsibility to reach the world. Missionaries come out of our local churches; from the pews, or from the pulpit. So, pastor, the weight sets squarely on your shoulders. Is it fair? I don't know. It just is.

If the pastor doesn't lead the congregation into obedience to Christ's command to reach the whole world, who will? And what will happen to the pastor who fails in this responsibility? It is a fearful thought!

Schedule A Missionary At Least Quarterly

The missions convention with the faith promise challenge is the cornerstone for building missions vision within a congregation, but its results will dissipate quickly if steps are not taken to keep missions interest high. Having frequent missionary speakers in your church is one of those steps.

Scheduling a missionary (or a missionary themed service if no missionary is available) once each quarter should be a minimum, not your goal. Exposing your congregation to representatives from four different areas of the world during the year could certainly not be considered overload.

Schedule Missionaries To Speak In Different Types Of Services

Not everyone in your congregation attends all of the services. Let's assume that you have the typical Sunday morning and evening plus Wednesday evening service schedule. Some may be absent from the sanctuary every Sunday morning because they are working with the children. Others are committed to the nursery every Sunday evening. Still others work with boys and girls on Wednesdays.

If you consistently schedule your missionary speakers for Sunday evening, those who only attend on Sunday mornings plus those committed to other church ministry during that time will never hear a missionary message. That is why it is important to occasionally schedule a missionary for each type of service, thus giving exposure to all of those who are a part of your congregation.

Missionaries Are Not A Pulpit Supply

The presence of the pastor is critical when the missionary visits. The rhythm is broken when the missionary has to minister in the pastor's absence. The purpose of the missionary's visit is not only to minister to the congregation, but also to interact with the pastor concerning finances and monthly support. This is not possible when the pastor is absent.

Even when the pastor has made every arrangement for the missionary, it is still awkward. Let's face it. The pastor's absence can communicate a lack of concern.

When the missionary comes to your church, show the congregation just how important missions really is to you as pastor.

Having missionaries come throughout the year is a key to a successful missions outreach. Missionaries impart vision and burden, qualities needed by the local congregation. A missionary visit should never be considered an interruption but rather an opportunity. With foresight and planning, most churches could have a missionary visit each month. If finance is a concern, money can be budgeted from the faith promise giving to subsidize the missionaries' offerings.

When an unexpected scheduling conflict arises, rather than canceling the missionary service, make room for the missionary to give a ten-minute presentation. Utilize your missionary guests in your Sunday school classes as well. Don't forget other occasions such as men's breakfasts, house meetings and fellowship groups.

Always give your congregation the opportunity to respond to the missionary appeal with a generous offering. Both your congregation and the missionary will be blessed.

Remember, were it not for the missionary visit, you and your congregation would have no way to obey the Great Commission other than to sell everything and go yourselves to the "regions beyond"! Maybe you ought to praise God for the missionary visit!

For more information on how to get the most from the missionary visit, order volume 5, *Building Missions Partnership through the Missionary Visit.*

PART 3

COORDINATED PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES IS A KEY ELEMENT

We become partners with our missionaries when we support them either by giving monthly support or by praying for them on a regular basis. When we fail to give, the missionary feels the effects of that loss. When we fail to pray, we weaken the missionary's effectiveness. There is no question about it. Our missionaries depend on us to support them in prayer.

As leaders we have a responsibility to do more than share an urgent request that we receive in a newsletter. We must approach prayer for missionaries as their lifeline! When we look at prayer for the missionaries as the most important thing that we can do for the missionaries it will change our attitude about prayer. (For an in depth guide on this subject, order volume 4 of the Blueprint Series, *Building Missions Effectiveness through Prayer.*)

Make Prayer for Missions a Regular Part of Church Life

- Publish the names of the missionaries that you support in your bulletin on a rotating basis.
- Include missionary requests in your prayer list or in your weekly bulletin.
- Pray publicly for urgent missionary needs.
- Distribute a list of the missionaries supported by your church including the names of their children, ages and special days.
- Form missions prayer groups for each region of the world or, if the church is not large enough for several groups, focus your intercession on a different region each month.
- Place pictures of missionaries around the walls of the sanctuary with details of their location and ministry. During special prayer the people can move from one area to another, interceding for the missionaries by name and need.

Encourage Private Prayer for Missions

It's not enough to direct the congregation in corporate prayer for missions and missionaries. Church leadership must, not only encourage, but also provide church membership for effective intercessory prayer for missions in their private devotions with frequent updated prayer lists of missionary needs

PART 4

CREATE AN ATTRACTIVE MISSIONS DISPLAY

It is not difficult to determine the place that missions holds in the life of the congregation just by a casual stroll through the lobby and hallways, in an extremely large number of churches, unfortunately, there will be no evidence of missions at all. Others will have a bulletin board and/or missionary commitment certificates displayed, but with little care and in an area seen by few people.

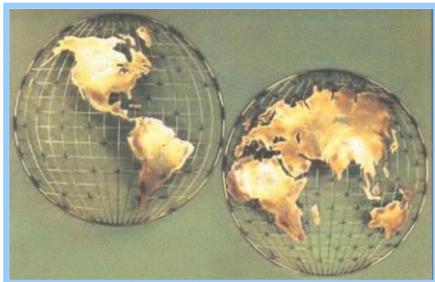
It is a delight to enter a church and see an attractive missions display prominently placed in such a way that says, "Missions is a priority here!" It doesn't require a fortune to create such a display, but it does require a real heart for missions.

WHERE SHOULD IT BE LOCATED?

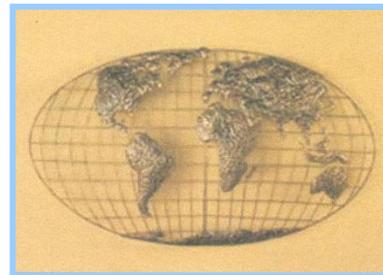
- A clean wall in a well-trafficked area in the lobby.
- It must be well lighted and attractive.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO CREATE A "WORLD HARVEST" DISPLAY?

- A bulletin board for newsletters from missionaries and other late-breaking missions news, etc.
- Assign a missions team member to update the materials at least bi-weekly.
- Surround it with the certificates of monthly support for the missionaries.
- Include a curio case for curios from missionaries and missions trips made by the church.
- Use globe wall art as the centerpiece of the display.
- Listed below is information that will assist you in securing a wall sculpture for your missions display.



Brass Hemispheres
#100269
www.cowboyindian.com
Price: \$380



New World Globe Wall
#38268
www.blair.com
Price: \$99.99

PART 5

PLAN A MISSIONS TRIP

An annual missions convention, well-planned missions Sundays and frequent missionary speakers all help bring the needs of a dying world into focus, but there is nothing that will make a more powerful and permanent impact than a trip to the mission field.

Of course not everyone can go, but for those who do, it brings a transformation. They will never be the same! In fact, once they have experienced missions, however briefly, they want to go again and again. Many will take vacation time and pay their own expenses just to feel that they are serving God during this week or ten days each year.

Upon the return of the team, give the team a Sunday evening service to share their missions' experiences. Their new enthusiasm and passion for the lost will influence many others. Missions giving should increase as a result of the clearer focus on the mission field.

Many churches will sponsor one or more trips each year, both within their own country and overseas. Maybe you can't sponsor a trip each year, but you could sponsor a smaller group every two or three years. Give it a try. If that is still not within your reach, partner with another church or go on a district or nationally sponsored trip.

It won't happen unless you make it happen. So just do it!

PART 6

KEEP THE MISSIONARIES BEFORE THE PEOPLE

Most people will not remember a missionary who spoke for 25 minutes (or maybe just 10 minutes) four or five years ago. That missionary has little hope of being remembered in prayer unless he or she is kept before the congregation. There are many creative ways of doing this. The benefits that accrue for the missionary are not just through prayer but also by being remembered on special days and receiving encouraging notes from time to time. Partnerships develop that can last a lifetime and it all started because leadership kept the names and faces of the missionaries before the congregation on a regular basis.

Missionary Directory

Many churches produce a directory containing the photographs of the missionaries that they support along with details of their family, type and place of ministry. This serves as a great prayer tool as well. Of course, printing a directory is beyond the budgetary possibilities of many smaller churches. They say, however, "Where there is a will, there is a way".

Numerous churches request a quantity of prayer cards from each of the missionaries that they support. Once collected, they punch a hole in each card and run a key chain through each set of cards. When finished they give a set of prayer cards to each church family to use in their prayer time. The cost? Almost nothing. The Impact? Immeasurable!

Missionary Calendar

It is not unusual for our churches to now print their own calendars with the date of activities for the coming year. Some smaller churches even include the birthdays of their members. If your church prints a calendar, why not include the birthdays of the missionaries supported by the church? This gives one more opportunity to be reminded that they are our partners, although far removed from us.

Keep the Missionaries before the Congregation – Literally

Many churches are now taking advantage of the time prior to the beginning of the service, while people are beginning to gather, to project the pictures of the missionaries on the screen with information concerning their field, ministry and family. These are placed on a loop and repeat until time for other announcements or the beginning of the service. Now, that is a great idea!

PART 7

OFFER CLASSES ON MISSIONS

If we truly want our people to be missions minded, then we have to make missions a priority in the agenda of our church. It is easy enough to see what part missions occupies in the church program by simply looking over an average three month schedule of church services and activities. During those three months, how often was missions represented and to what degree?

Unfortunately, in far too many churches, there will be none. How do we know? Because a recent study revealed that during a 12 month period hundreds of churches gave nothing to World Missions! In many other churches the only mention would be a passing reference to the fact that it is missions Sunday.

O.K. So the world is not perfect, but can we dream of what might be? Wouldn't it be great if, in addition to an annual missions convention and a well-planned monthly missions Sunday, we could find other opportunities to teach missions to our congregation?

New Convert's Class

The new convert's class is usually limited to, at most, two or three hours. Even if the time devoted to training new converts is of longer duration, there are many subjects that must be taught during that period to help establish the new believer in the faith.

Although time will be limited, we must include missions in the lesson plan. If not, the new believer has no way of knowing that we believe that missions is a priority! We can at least communicate two points: (1) Why we get involved in missions, and (2) How we get involved personally in missions.

Three of the PowerPoint presentations available on the Missions Commission's website would be ideal for answering these questions: (1) Why Missions?, (2) The Bible and Missions, and (3) The Four Pillars of Missions. This will help them understand the biblical reasons why. To answer how we can get involved, we need to keep it simple at this point. A brief explanation of our annual missions convention, the faith promise plan and monthly missions Sunday should help them understand the participation of the individual believer.

Membership Class

The membership class usually offers the same challenge as the new convert's class in terms of time limitations. It is absolutely essential that we share with the potential members their responsibilities in the area of missions. Simply stated, Jesus commanded the Church to evangelize the world. In becoming members of this body of believers, they are accepting their responsibility to join with the body in praying and giving in order to fulfill the mandate of Christ! That issue should not be debatable!

We need to answer the same two issues that were mentioned when discussing the new convert's class: why and how. The why could be handled exactly the same as suggested in the new convert's class above. This gives a solid biblical basis and also shows the methods used to follow those mandates. That will answer the "why".

We must be more specific in presenting how the new members will become involved. There should not be any ambiguity. Everyone needs to understand from the beginning what is expected from them in terms of missions commitment. Here is where we explain about Faith Promises. The *What Is A Faith Promise?* PowerPoint CD can be adapted to the time available to explain how millions of believers are fulfilling the Great Commission every month with their faithful giving. We must help them realize that it is not about money, it is about commitment! It is not about the amount, it is about obedience

An Elective in Sunday School or Small Study Group

Since Sunday School studies are usually based on three months or 13 lessons, it is ideal for a study on missions. The Checklist manual could be used by the leader as resource material. A variety of PowerPoint presentations are available that would be of great assistance to such an endeavor.

Senior Adult Ministries

Senior adults are a vital and growing facet of the church. Increasingly, they are becoming involved in world missions through their prayers and financial gifts. By joining their efforts to specific causes overseas, senior adults within a church, a section or a district are raising funds to expand the Kingdom and are interceding for specific needs faced by nations, national believers and individual missionaries.

PART 8

DON'T OVERLOOK THE CHILDREN

While speaking to children's pastors and leaders, many spoke with enthusiasm of their teaching, promoting and raising funds for missions. This comes as no surprise. Thank God for all the committed workers at each level of ministry.

There many ideas given. Some were general in nature. Some were mentioned repeatedly and other ideas were so obvious that they were not mentioned at all. Let's take a look first at some of the more obvious ideas and then you will find listed in some detail a few of the more exceptional examples.

Ideas, Ideas and More Ideas

- Sing missions songs and choruses
- Have missionaries speak to the children and give altar calls, or
- Have the missionary's spouse or older child speak in children's church while the missionary is speaking in the sanctuary.
- Teach about and receive Faith Promises from the children during the missions convention and then present the total to be tallied with the sanctuary total at the end of their service.
- During the kids convention have a missions banquet with hamburgers, hotdogs, pizza, etc.
- Make a monthly commitment from the children to support a missionary.
- Adopt a missionary family or the children of that family.
- Have the kids correspond with missionary kids.
- Present a missions project challenge for the children during Vacation Bible School or children's church. (One 5 year old gave up Christmas/Birthday for 2 years to plant a church in Tanzania)

Teach What It Means To Not Be Able To Hear The Gospel

Children need to understand the what, and why of missions. During a service divide the children with about half on each side of the room. Explain to them that one side of the room has never heard the gospel. Then serve kool-aid to the remainder of the kids, explaining that it represents the Gospel. Make it a point to show that the kids that were separated can't come, and we need to think of a way for them to get their drink. Teach them that the only way the other kids will get it, is by having someone take it to them. This is a great way of teaching about missions. The world has a lot people who can't come to our church to hear about the saving grace of Christ, and that we need people to go to them.

Plan A Missions Convention For Kids

Decorate the children's church as an airport where they get passports and board a plane. During the flight they can be told something about where they are going. Upon their arrival, their passports are stamped and they enter classrooms that have been decorated to resemble the country in focus. Their hosts will be in costume. They might try a typical food from that country and then have a brief class about the country and its needs. They would pray for that country and the missionaries working there before dismissal.

Conduct A Poster Contest

Ask your pastor or missions team for the theme of your upcoming missions convention. Then, two or three weeks prior to the convention, announce a poster contest depicting the current theme. All of these posters can be displayed during the convention. If you wish to give awards, it would be best to divide them into age groups so they are competing with others of their own age. The missions team could serve as judges or you could ask your missionary guests to assist.

Parades, Parades, Parades

Kids of all ages love parades. They can be as elaborate or as simple as you wish, but they are always exciting, especially if your child is marching in the line. If you have costumes and flags, great. If not, have the kids make their own flags. They don't have to be fancy. A hand colored piece of notebook paper glued to a stick held high in the air works just fine, thank you.

It's Not Just About Money

There is much that could be said about ideas for raising funds for missions. Little has been said here on that subject for two reasons: (1) Cultures vary so greatly and what might be acceptable to some could be offensive to others, and (2) If we can plant a passion for missions in the hearts of the children, the needed finances will follow in due time.

Giving is a necessary part of missions and we must show the children that there are two reasons why we do it. (1) To evangelize the world, and (2) Because Jesus told each one of us to become personally involved.

1. To evangelize the world – Simply stated, although we use many motivators, we must be able to communicate successfully that the reason we do these things is not just to win a contest, but to help a child who has never heard of Jesus!
2. Because Jesus told each one of us to become personally involved – Jesus gave the Great Commission to the Church. We are the Church, so we are responsible as individuals. Oswald J. Smith, the great missions pastor for so many years at the People's Church in Toronto, Canada built missions in that church on the principle that every person from the elder, deacon, choir member, right on down to the child had to become involved, personally. In fact, every child from 7 years and up was taught to give to missions, regularly and consistently. He said that the parents do not give for the children. They are taught to give their own money! That is stewardship at its highest level!

PART 9

KEEP THE YOUTH FOCUSED ON MISSIONS

Speed the Light is the primary focus of most youth groups that have a missions involvement. For that reason, much of the activity of our youth groups across America is focused on providing transportation and audio-visual equipment for our missionaries. That's why you will see STL appear frequently in the submissions listed below.

Ideas In Brief

- Sponsor a missionary family with a monthly commitment.
- Sponsor a well for a needy village, possibly in a country where you sponsor a missionary.
- Do Saturday visitation or clean-up and repair work for a home missions church.
- Invite a missionary (or missionary kid) to speak each quarter.
- Prepare skits and mime to promote missions in the sanctuary services.
- Give a tithe (10%) of the weekly youth offerings to missions.
- Receive faith promises from the youth and submit the total to the pastor to be included with the total of the faith promises received during the convention.
- Conduct a 1 month series (4 weeks) each year on the topic of missions.

Go On A Missions Trip Within Your Own Country Or Overseas.

One youth pastor had this to say about the preparation for their missions trips. Without a doubt, these trips are more than just a vacation for these kids. They go to represent Jesus!

“I'm personally excited about what God is going to do through our students this year. Last year we had 80 students and leaders go on three different missions trips that included the Republic of Ireland and an Indian Reservation here in our country. This year we are going on four missions trips to reach as many as possible. I really feel strong about discipleship that takes place every Thursday at WM (World Mpact). And I'm ready to GO be the Good News to the world. Whatever it takes!”

World Mpact meets every Thursday beginning the last Thursday in May from 8am to 5pm. The daily schedule includes prayer time, discipleship lessons, team building, ministry preparation, and servanthood activities.

Attendance to the Thursday meetings is required for all who wish to participate in the Summer ministry trips, but that's not all. Read the list of expectations below.

- Faithful attendance to WMpact meetings and activities
- Mandatory attendance to all church services
- Keep sermon notes of Sunday and Wednesday WMpact services
- Must sit in the first four rows of every service
- Be faithful to tithing, offerings, and missions giving to WMpact
- Choose an accountability partner and be accountable to group
- Pray and read your Bible at least 30 minutes daily
- Fast at least one meal weekly
- Live a pure and holy life – one pleasing to God
 - Use wisdom in choosing TV shows and movies (no rated “R”)
 - No secular music
 - Use wisdom in choosing things you do, where you go, and what you say
 - Don't date anyone who is a non-Christian
 - No dating during the Thursday WM and the missions trip
- Keep confidential any personal matters shared by others in the group
- Complete World Mpact discipleship
- Be on time and ready to participate
- Attend missions trip

Is It Just Another Project Or Are They Being Established In The Faith?

To paraphrase the words of Jesus, “What shall it profit a congregation, if it raises a million dollars for missions but loses its own young people?” Someone may say, “Paul, what in the world are you talking about? Have you lost your mind?” And my answer is, “No, but we are losing our sons and daughters!”

It is altogether possible for us to involve them in the externals of good works while the internal need of transformation never takes place. The busyness of these activities binds the group together and that glue holds until they graduate from high school. The group dynamic is broken and there is little that they feel in common with the rest of the congregation if they have never been born again. Unfortunately, that is not an isolated case.

So what is my primary concern? It is the spiritual welfare of these young people. Their souls are a number one priority! Not only do I think about the value of those twentysomething drop-outs, but I think of what they might have become. That young lady who might have become a missionary. That young man who might have become a strong missions pastor. Now, that young lady is just a statistic. And sadly, the young man is another. And both are lost!

Lord, help us reach our Jerusalem, even as we carry the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth!

PART 10

PASTOR, YOU ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS!

The path you choose will determine where your congregation goes. Whether they become Great Commission Christians depends on the decisions that you make. You, as pastor, are the spiritual leader of your congregation. You have the opportunity to lead those under your care into obedience to the Great Commission. If you don't do it, no one else will. They will either walk in obedience to the command of Christ to carry this gospel to the whole world, or they will ignore that command and live in disobedience.

It's not your place to drive them, and not everyone will follow you, but you must give them a choice. I've noticed that when the pastor gets excited about reaching the world, most of the congregation will, too. Let's talk about a few things that will help you help them.

Plan Sufficient Time in the Missions Sunday Schedule

There is no doubt about it. Once the missions convention is over and the Faith Promises have been raised, the monthly Missions Sunday becomes the most important activity during the year! We must keep interest and enthusiasm high if we hope to maintain missions giving at a high level throughout the year. That can only happen with a well-planned monthly Missions Sunday.

This doesn't mean that the whole service on Missions Sunday has to be dedicated to missions, but it does require more than just an announcement that it time for your missionary offering. A well-planned and very effective missions presentation could last from eight to fifteen minutes and then the missions offering could be received.

The Sunday morning schedule is always full. Could there be some things that could be shortened on Missions Sunday or shifted to other Sundays? After all, this is Missions Sunday. Is it asking too much that missions hold a place of priority for fifteen minutes each month on Missions Sunday?

Participate in the Monthly Missions Team Meetings

Every pastor has a personal preference concerning committee meetings and whether he/she will attend. This is different. First, this is not a common committee. This is a missions team. The first priority of the church is to reach the world!

Some pastors chair their missions team, while other never attend a team meeting, claiming a lack of time. It may not be possible to attend all of the team meetings, but since the first priority of the church is to reach the world with the gospel, doesn't it make since that the pastor would make it a priority to attend when possible?

On the other extreme is the pastor who has not yet learned that the team is a resource, not just a rubber stamp. Give the team members opportunity to carry

part of the load, dream dreams and see great visions of what we might yet accomplish before Christ comes again.

Schedule a Missionary Speaker, at Least Quarterly

Of all the things we can do to influence our congregation for missions, this is by far the quickest and simplest. It only takes a phone call or two, a note on the calendar and a reservation at a motel, all of which can be done in 30 minutes or less. But it is also one of those things that isn't raising a red flag and waving it in our faces, so we forget. We intended to, but....

There is no way that we can teach our people the importance of obedience to the Great Commission unless we show them, and we can't make any impression of the real importance of missions if we have fewer than four missionary speakers each year – That's just one each quarter. If we can't work that into our schedule our priorities are wrong!

In addition to having at least four missionaries each year for a full service you should also consider inviting some missionaries to stop by for a ten or fifteen minute window. This simply means that you give them a few minutes to present their ministry, receive an offering for them, and then continue with your service.

Preach Missions, Soul-winning, and Evangelism

The congregation must know that you, personally, love missions. They won't know that if you never preach about missions. Take a trip overseas. See the need first-hand. Get your spirit stirred. Then come back and stir their spirits.

Preach on soul-winning. The people of your congregation must realize the value of a soul – every soul. Many Christians are not stirred for their own unsaved family members, much less, the lost and dying of the world. We must change that.

Preach on their personal responsibility to witness to and win those around them and to make possible a witness to those they can't reach through their prayers and their faithful giving.

Set the Example in Prayer, Giving and Caring for the Lost

Some excellent sermonizers are failures as pastors because they fail to walk the walk. Other pastors are not great pulpiteers, but their lives proclaim ever so clearly the gospel of Christ Jesus. Whatever we want our people to become, let us develop those traits and values within our own lives first. Then, and only then, will we begin to see the transformation take place within the lives of those who surround us.

In the last church that we pastored, several of us had the custom of gathering early on Sunday morning in the sanctuary to intercede for the day's services and for lost souls. It was many years later that a very dear and faithful saint told me that she learned to intercede for the lost while listening to me pray. I was humbled by the thought.

It is not enough that we receive the missionary offering. They will want to know if we made a Faith Promise and if it was generous. They will observe how we

give in other appeals as well. Our actions do speak louder than our words and our best sermons are not preached in the pulpit!

PART 11

PUT MISSIONS ON THE PLATFORM, NOT IN THE BUDGET!

I know. You looked at that twice, didn't you? Missions is too important to be limited to the budget. I mean budgeted items are usually forgotten by the congregation.

That reminds me of an experience I had when I accepted the pastorate of a church which hadn't had a missions convention for 19 years. I promptly began to make plans for a convention and announced it with enthusiasm. One of the board members came to me and said, "Pastor, I hope you won't be too disappointed with the results of the Faith Promises. You see, there are several of us who feel that once we pay our tithe, we shouldn't be bothered with any further appeals." He wanted missions kept in the budget. I wanted it on the platform.

The board had been very generous in their budgeted giving to missions, but it was all out of the general fund. The congregation had no personal participation and consequently, no obedience to the Great Commission. Fortunately, the majority of the congregation was ready to respond to the voice of the Holy Spirit when missions was no longer hidden in the budget, but brought to the platform.

We doubled our missions giving after that first convention. Three years later our church was in first place in missions giving in the district. During the last year of our pastorate there, the congregation averaged \$458 per person in giving to World Missions.

Now do you understand? Missions is not an entry on a spreadsheet. Missions is heart and soul. Missions is the flesh and blood of martyrs. Missions is the sacrifice of those who have gone before. Missions is the cry of the lost. Missions is the obedience of those who are proclaiming the Word right now. Missions is Jesus saying, Go. Missions is Jesus saying, Send. Missions is me saying, "Here I am, send me."

That's missions, and it shouldn't be limited to a budget item! It belongs on the platform, and it belongs in the hearts and lives of our people! And that depends on you!