

**To the End of the Earth**  
***The Mission Without Borders***

**Introduction:** The theme of “To the Ends of the Earth” continues.

2 weeks ago—*The Mission in Which we Must not Fail*

Last week—*Challenged by Dick Brogden*

We return to Acts Chapter 1

- After the resurrection and prior to the ascension
- Jesus with the disciples, told them to stay in Jerusalem until they received the Father’s promise
- V.6 they asked Jesus when He would restore the Kingdom

John Calvin—*“there are as many errors in in this question as there are words.”*

**Then Jesus re-directs them:**

***“And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:7-8 NKJV***

**NOTE:** The first thing Jesus said was—It is not going to happen now (at this time)

- Not just an event
- It is a process of getting the Gospel to the ends of the earth
- Matthew 24:14 (and this Gospel)
- **WE MUST NOT FAIL**

1. We will fail if we expect no battle (they wanted the Kingdom/triumph w/o battle)
2. We will fail if we are not willing to sacrifice (martyrdom)
3. We will fail unless we are empowered by the Holy Spirit

The second error—“when will you restore the Kingdom to Israel?”

- They thought it was only for Israel
- Jesus would correct this thinking (unto the ends of the earth)

It is a Mission without Borders

- You will be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth
- The Gospel would bring restoration to Israel (from Roman tyranny) but would not stop there
- It would start in Jerusalem and to the Jews but it would not remain there

### Mission of the Apostle Paul

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” Romans 1:16 NKJV*

- Every city he went to he would go first to the synagogue
- When kicked out of there he would go to the Gentiles

### **I. In order for the Church to embrace its mission without borders it requires first a level of discomfort.**

#### A. It began in Jerusalem

*“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.” Acts 2:1-5 NKJV*

#### 1. The Day of Pentecost and Peter preached

*“So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?” Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.” But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.’” Acts 2:12-21 NKJV*

## 2. Great response to his sermon

*“Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:38-47 NKJV*

## 3. Church in Jerusalem continued to grow

- a. Healing in Acts 3
- b. Apostles arrested and beaten
- c. Told not to talk about Jesus
- d. Grew to 5,000
- e. Word and disciples multiplied in chapter 6
- f. Deacon controversy
- g. Stephen the deacon is stoned (chapter 7,8)

*“When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, “Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” Acts 7:54-60 NKJV*

## B. The church left Jerusalem

*“Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.” Acts 8:1; 4-5 NKJV*

1. Gospel made its way throughout all of Judea and Samaria

*“Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.” Acts 9:31 NKJV*

2. Spread even further

*“Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.” Acts 11:19 NKJV*

C. When the Holy Spirit caused discomfort, the church spread even further

*“Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant.” Acts 13:1-5 NKJV*

D. Discomfort came in at least two forms

1. Persecution
2. Unease directed by the Holy Spirit

E. Church in America today is under a level of persecution

1. The NT church did not spend their time fighting the persecution but instead used their energy to spread the Gospel
2. Are we spending more time fighting the persecution than spreading the truth
3. Is there a level of unease being caused in GT?
4. In your spirit?
5. We have a mission without borders—that unease needs to get in our spirit and stir us to action.

(ILL)

Gary Haugen, president and CEO of International Justice Mission, a Christian organization dedicated to fighting sex trafficking, writes:

*After we have poured into our children all the good food and shelter and clothing, after we have provided them with great education, discipline, structure and love, after we have worked so hard to provide every good thing, they turn to us and ask, "Why have you given all of this to me." And the honest answer from me is, "So you'll be safe." And my kid looks up at me and says, "Really? That's it? You want me to be safe? Your grand ambition for my life is that nothing bad happens?" And I think something inside them dies. They either go away to perish in safety, or they go away looking for adventure in the wrong places. Jesus, on the other hand, affirms their sense of adventure and their yearning for larger glory."*

- Are we willing to let the unease and the suffering stir us out of our comfort zones
- What if God calls you? Your child to a place where there is no safety but that the Gospel is trouncing down borders?

## **II. In order for the church to embrace its mission without borders it requires a shift in its comfortable paradigm.**

### **A. Throughout the Old Testament the nations were brought IN to the people of God.**

1. God's people in the Old Covenant did not have a call of missions to "go out!"
2. They lived separate from the nations, distinct and holy and as such, they were a light of attraction, which brought people from the outside in.
3. They often blessed the people they were with or around
  - Promise of Genesis 12 (bless those who bless you and curse you who curse)
  - By you all the families of the earth will be blessed
  - Joseph blessed Potiphar and then Pharaoh later
  - When they left Egypt (many went with them—a mixed multitude)

*"Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, "Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me, for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth. Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." Exodus 9:13-16 NKJV*

- Melchizedek, Jethro, Balaam, Rahab and Ruth all joined the people of God
- Prophecy of Isaiah

*“Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people. Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, And nations who do not know you shall run to you, Because of the LORD your God, And the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified you.” Isaiah 55:3-5 NKJV*

—Micah’s prophecy

*“Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” Micah 4:2 NKJV*

B. In the New Testament there was a call to go to them

### 1. Parable of Jesus and the Wedding Banquet

*Jesus also told them other parables. He said, 2 “The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son. 3 When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited. But they all refused to come! 4 “So he sent other servants to tell them, ‘The feast has been prepared. The bulls and fattened cattle have been killed, and everything is ready. Come to the banquet!’ 5 But the guests he had invited ignored them and went their own way, one to his farm, another to his business. 6 Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them. 7 “The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. 8 And he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren’t worthy of the honor. 9 Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see.’ 10 So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests. Matthew 20:1-10*

### 2. The Great Commission

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV*

### 3. The teaching of Paul

*“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:14-15 NKJV*

- C. **The church today must change its paradigm** (we cannot wait on them to come—we must go)
1. It's why we support missionaries
  2. It's why we take offerings
  3. It's why we ask for pledges

According to the Gospel Project

- Over 40% of the world's people groups and population are unreached
- Another 17% of world's people groups and 10% of world's population are either minimally or superficially reached
- All told, 50% of the world's people groups and population are inadequately reached with the Gospel
- Almost 4 billion people inadequately reached with the Gospel

D. If its worldwide or locally—we must change our paradigm and GO!

(ILL)

This letter was written by Southern Baptist Missionary to Iraq, Karen Watson, prior to leaving for the Middle East. The letter was dated March 7, 2003. Karen was killed, along with four other missionaries, on March 15, 2004.

*Dear Pastor Phil and Pastor Roger:*

*You should only be opening this letter in the event of my death. When God calls there are no regrets. I tried to share my heart with you as much as possible, my heart for the nations. I wasn't called to a place. I was called to him. To obey was my objective, to suffer was expected, his glory my reward, his glory my reward. One of the most important things to remember right now is to preserve the work....I am writing this as if I am still working with my people group. I thank you all so much for your prayers and support. Surely your reward in heaven will be great. Thank you for investing in my life and spiritual well-being. Keep sending missionaries out. Keep raising up fine young pastors. In regards to any service, keep it small and simple. Yes, simply, just preach the gospel....Be bold and preach the life-saving, life-changing, forever-eternal gospel. Give glory and honor to our Father.*

*The Missionary Heart:*

*Care more than some think is wise.*

*Risk more than some think is safe.*

*Dream more than some think is practical.*

*Expect more than some think is possible.*

*I was called not to comfort or success but to obedience....There is no joy outside of knowing Jesus and serving him. I love you two and my church family.*

*In his care, Karen*

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### III. In order for the church to embrace its mission without borders we must pursue God's vision for His church, not ours.

A. Christ came to establish an international family—He calls us to be witnesses to ALL people, not just “our kind of people.”

1. This was hard for the early church to understand
2. Peter and his vision for Cornelius (Acts 10)
3. Even after that

*“Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.” Galatians 2:11-13 NKJV*

B. But ultimately this is God's vision

*“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Revelation 7:9-10 NKJV*

*“Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” Revelation 5:8-10 NKJV*

C. This is difficult for us because we instinctively think the Gospel is for people like us

1. You CAN be patriotic and faithful to the Gospel at the same time
2. But you cannot be nationalistic as seen in some extreme forms today and be faithful to the Gospel
3. You cannot be racist and be faithful to the Gospel
4. You cannot exclude or look down on any type of person without contradicting the Gospel and in fact discrediting it altogether

**Conclusion:** Our Mission: To the Ends of the Earth—a mission without borders

- —When will you restore the Kingdom to Israel?  
—It isn't just Israel—it's a church without walls, without borders

**(ILL)**

During the nineteenth century a group of missionaries in what is now Surinam in South America, wanted to reach the inhabitants of a nearby island with the gospel. Most of these islanders were slaves on the large plantations that covered the island. The plantation owners feared the gospel and its results, and would not even allow the missionaries to talk with the slaves. They would allow only other slaves to talk with slaves.

So the missionaries sold themselves into slavery in order to take the gospel to the islanders. Working in bondage in the harsh conditions of a tropical climate, they reached many of them with the good news.

*“For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world, to the educated and uneducated alike. So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach the Good News. For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile.”*  
**Romans 1:14-16 NLT**