

Feb 14, 11 A.M

THE MISSIONS CALL

John 4:32-36

INTRODUCTION

The disciples must have been very much astonished. As the disciples witnessed when they ~~xxx~~ left and went to a nearby city to buy food, they discovered that he had been at work again. And he imparts to them some laws of spiritual work and mission work. And spiritual work is very refreshing to the soul as well as the body.

It is refreshed today that we begin what we call "Focus Week" in our church. Woman's Missionary Union has been an active organization in the on-going of the Kingdom of God for many years, and we are honored today to have this group seated together at the hour of worship, and the other various activities of the week which will give focus to their program of work.

It is very interesting to go back into the history of Woman's Missionary Society even in the South Norfolk Baptist Church. I checked back into some old records, and the first page recorded the activities of the meeting, November, xsecond Tuesday, 1916. They held their monthly meeting, opening it with the singing of a hymn and then the 23rd Psalm was repeated in concert. They had the minutes of the last meeting read

and the roll was called, and 14 members were present. And they collected \$5.15 in dues. At that meeting, the Woman's Missionary Society endorsed the action of paying a sum of money to the Campostella Baptist Church which was in its early mission beginnings. The society also carried a motion to give a lecture for the benefit of the orphans. They reported on a missions study class in which 12 members attended. They closed their meeting by the singing, "The Morning Light is Breaking". Mrs. Z. R. Jernigan was the president, and Mrs. O. J. McGinley secretary.

Now the minutes were most interesting, and of course, in the various meetings that followed, they were reminded of cards from the sick, and appeals were made for certain needed projects in the church and in the community. And some of the meetings lasted (all day). They would have dinner in the basement. And of course the Sunbeam activities and refreshments for the G.A.'s was reported on in some of these early meetings. I note that even in the early (1930's) during the depression, ~~that~~ that quite often the women had 101 or 110 present ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ their meetings. Now, I would like to point out two or three things this morning, and I will come back to this matter of our link to the past, and I want us to look a way ahead, but

but I would like now to discuss with you something about the motives and aims of this great organization.

In recent years there have been some changes of emphases in the motives that have prompted women to engage in missionary enterprise.

It is recognized mission work, must be prosecuted amid changing conditions. The people of Europe and America have a knowledge of Asia and Africa that in the past they did not have. Books and magazine articles and extensive travel have helped us to understand people of other nations. The radio and the newspapers enable us to discover every morning what occurred yesterday or in the last few minutes in Tokyo, Jerusalem, Rome. Nevertheless, the white men do not look down upon the men of another race as he did a century ago. He recognizes more clearly the good qualities which some of the non-Christian people possess. He hears more about their industrial development. He has seen their military efficiency. He has learned that they possess financial industry and professional talent equal perhaps to some in our own country. There is an awakening on the national scene.

An illusion has been dispelled. The transition from the first century of Protestant missions to the second ~~is~~ was attended by no more

significant change than the transition which has developed in our age.

People at home are not under illusions as to what non-Christians are. And they in turn are not under illusions as to what we are. The romance of missions in the popular mind has largely been destroyed. The missionary is no longer a hero to the average Christian but he is just a person with a message.

The essential place of Christ in the change and political and economic life in the world - these do not change the primary missionary motives of putting Christ at the center. No changes that have taken place or that can possibly take place can set aside the great central fact that Jesus Christ is the simple, eternal salvation of men, and it is the duty of those who know Him to tell others about Him.

Through all the tumult of the world's strife, the one figure who stands out is the Son of God. No matter how much Christians may differ as to other things, the preaching of Christ is the central thing.

First, the primary motive in missions.

First, the soul's (experience in Christ). This is what W.M.S.

has been trying to communicate to others. The propagation in the law of spiritual life. This cannot really be done. Ruskin said once: "Without a man feeling in himself the power and the will to communicate it."

This is the product of a normal Christian experience which led Andrew after he met Jesus to get his own brother Simon and say to him, "We have found the Messiah," and to bring him to Jesus. No external authority, no ~~command~~ command can take the place of this internal motive which Christian women have.

People who assert that they do not believe in missions are usually quite unconscious of the indictments which they bring against their own spiritual experience. The man who has no religion of his own does not see the value of being interested in others.

Second, the world's need of Christ is the great desire of women's program. With Paul, they will say, "I am debtor." And it makes no difference who the people might be and how much inconvenience or expense may be incurred in reaching them. The fact is that help can be given and that is the reason why the missionary impulse is alive. In none other is there salvation. This is a worthy reason to be concerned for the ~~xx~~ salvation of the men next to us as well as the person five thousand miles away.

Anyone can love ~~the~~ families, but it takes a high soul to love all people. He who has that which the world needs should communicate it to the world. The true disciples will feel this. The question whether

non-Christian people really need Christ may be answered by this counter-question: "Do we need Him?" Now the intensity of our own desire and need then has bound us to tell about Christ.

We do not hear as much today as our fathers heard about the salvation of the ~~heathen~~ heathen. Our age prefers to talk about the pleasing *terms*. We need to come back to discuss some of the consequences of unbelief for without Christ, we are dead. Reason as well as revelation tells us that man has sinned and ~~xx~~ that the wages of sin is death.

Third the command of Christ is another motive which has moved women forward as the expression on the first morning of the Ressurrection: "He has risen from the tomb."

The disciples went forth with his great authority for he had charged them "Ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." And Jesus lifted up his hands and blessed them as a cloud received Him out of sight.

Now the circumstances and the command is the motive for missionary work and this cannot be done by (mechanical) performance. It is the bugle call which the true soldier never loses ~~xx~~ its thrilling response-compelling power. It is (not) just a request, not a suggestion, it leaves nothing to our

choice, it is an order, it is an imperative.

(Evangelization) of the world was the supreme thought of Christ. He sought not merely the rich, the influential, but when the beggar was carried out to Him, he helped him: "Go thy way. They faith hath made thee whole." He had compassion on them because they were like a sheep with a shepherd.

Since the saving of man is Christ's supreme thought, it should be ours. How is it possible for one who professes to follow Christ ~~in~~ not to believe in missions, when missions are simply the organized efforts to carry out the will of the Master. Men talk about all sorts of heresy and they deny these statements, and they fail to carry them out.

Christians with the Bible in their hands, the command of Christ in their ears, the condition of a lost world before their eyes, cannot manifest a lack of interest in the efforts to save the world.

It is difficult to understand how those who profess to serve Christ can be indifferent to the most important work which Christ has committed to ~~xxxxxxx~~ his followers. Go and preach, go and teach.

When a young clergyman asked the Duke of Wellington whether he deemed it useless to attempt to convert India, the great general ~~xxxxxxx~~

firmly replied: "What are your marching orders, sir?"

This is the thing the W.M.U. has been doing. Remember the ~~waxid~~ word "Apostle" is derived from the Greek word which means "One sent forth" and that the word "missionary" is the Latin equivalent of the Greek word "apostle". Therefore, the modern apostle is a missionary, and while men at home may dispute over who is the real apostles, the missionaries are going out and doing the task. Going away from home to preach and teach the gospel to all the nations of the earth.

Remember that handful of humble followers who combined their efforts to their own country, and then to proclaim their teachings to the whole world? No exceptions were made. Christ ~~did not~~ say "Teach all nations save those that you deem beneath you", nor "Preach to all nations except Hindu", or "to those who have a religion all their own." He made the command ~~wherever~~ universal. "It is the purpose of God," said Paul, "to reconcile all ~~nations~~ things to Himself." We should never lose sight of this concept. Christianity is not a life-boat thrown out to a sinking ship to rescue a few passengers and let the rest go to the bottom. It will save all the passengers unless they refuse to be saved.

In the fourth place, men have secondary motives sometimes. They say that missions will be good for civilization. And of course, in the highest sense, ~~wherever~~ wherever the missions program has gone, it has helped to cover nakedness, build homes, heal diseases, and train people. Or they say it will be good for the economy of the country.

2 - There are some who want to see what their money accomplishes. They want to see the investment returns some tangible return. They look at the missionary reports and they count up the number of converts. And they see how many people were taught and how many patients were treated and they talk about the successes by the way this has transpired as to whether they will increase their giving or not. If there is an unproductive field, then they question it quickly. Churches sometimes are ~~great~~ eager and impatient for results as in many lands they may sow and plant for years.

*Base Estimate on No people Baptized -
Dr. Harnum "God called us to play the game Not Keep Score"*

Missions in recent years have been changed somewhat to the commercial and people have been talking about it in a practical manner or a practical age in which we are more impressed with these temporal things than we are the spiritual ideas.

3 - The idea of saving men for the present world appeals more strongly to some people than the idea of saving them for the next world. It is legitimate that Christians seek the temporal welfare of their fellow men,

to relieve suffering, and to purity society. But the achievements through the years may not stand if we judge them primarily on that basis. Some of the best qualities in which we put mission money may not yield immediate results. Christ's life was a failure from the point of view of his own generation. Some of those who followed him such as Paul, Peter, and ~~Stephen~~ Stephen, saw greater fruitage, more people won, than his missionary toils. But the missionary knows that he ~~is working with God~~ is working with God.

II
 Second, the great aim of missions - everyone understands in a general way, that it ~~is supposed~~ is supposed to convert the ~~heathens~~ heathens. But beyond that, more who support the work and even some who apply for appointment appear to have only vague ideas. The mission movement has a definite aim.

First, to present Christ intelligently so that men will accept Him as their personal Saviour. It is not enough for a missionary to go to a community and proclaim Christ for a few days and then pass on into belief that he has discharged his responsibility. Many people do not grasp a new idea so quickly.

Kerry in India and Morrison in China toiled seven years before

their hearts were gladdened with a single convert. Tyler in South Africa saw 15 hard years pass before the first person accepted Christ. While Gilmour preached for 20 years in Mongolia before visible results appeared. So mission work at first may be slow, painful, but the church needs to support him in his years of ministry in a given field.

Second, missions (takes the form of many activities) Following the example of Christ, there must be healing, we must translate and publish the Bible, distribute literature, teach the young and furnish leadership.

Third, to plant a (self-propogating church.) It is to organize the converts in the churches so that each new generation will be able to carry on ~~it~~ this work. This is (slow) but this is the great path. God in his providences of leadership has been leading us for these many many years, and the participation of the Woman's Missionary Union has brought great reinforcement to the task of missions both at home and throughout the world.

They have been committed to the task, and they recognize the urgent task there needs to be met today. Half of the world's population is made up of young people 21 years and younger, and they feel trapped

by the situation .

Mature thinkers view the escalation of the world's population and the lagging food resources with a coming famine. Fears of what might take place through pollution. In the background of everything, there hangs the terrible threat of the nuclear bomb. Amid all these conditions, the average person has to find his way, bear his load, and his heart cries out for light which only comes from divine truth. The need for sharing the gospel of Christ is more urgent.

The task is far from complete. In the Middle East, Africa, and China some day the doors will be open where one-fourth of the world's population is in need of hearing the ~~wor~~ word of life.

The opportunities for evangelism are opening up all around the world, and the existence of these open doors is a mandate for sharing the gospel.

God has set before us in the midst of a generation unparalleled needs. Newspapers, ~~xx~~ radio, television, all of these can become instruments of God. The cry of the needy world is for a better way of life.

III: We are workers in unity. Jesus said "One soweth and another reapeth." We labor and enter into the labor where one person has been sowing.

And that is the law everywhere around the world. How little one individual of mankind has been able to find out beyond what the world has known before.

Sometimes we persuade ourselves that we are the most intelligent generation of mankind that ever lived, that we are past all comparison. That no other race, no other century, has had such wonderful things to boast of.

How much of it, do we owe to the men of the past? Every practical invention of today has been a product of and made ~~xxx~~ possible by the past. The attainments of others in past centuries, men who have been patient, who ~~xxx~~ have investigated, and some have long passed away and been forgotten. We stand upon the ^{shoulders} ~~hands~~ of the past, and we rejoice ^{well} in the possession of this. I believe that W.M.U. recognizes this. The illustration of the father who picked up his boy, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ supporting his arms, standing him on his shoulders, the little boy clapping his hands in childish glee. "I am taller than Daddy!" Now that's his conclusion. We stand upon the shoulders of the past. The higher work of mankind, and we ought to be grateful to the past, and mindful of our duty to the future. For the time will come when men will look back upon our inventions, our way of travel, and so on.

When you undertake to do some good in a great city like this,
 you might sit down and say, "What can I do with all this mass of vice
and sin?" But you do not have to work alone. You associate yourselves
~~xxx~~ with other workers in the church, in an organization, and you can
 feel that you are a part of a might force of workers. Wide ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
across this land over the world are un-numbered millions of workers in
the army to which you belong. Think how this is linked up with the inter-
 national Sunday School lesson. Millions of people study ~~xxx~~ from the Bible
 the same message the same day that you do.

All the good that all the devout women who have been zealous in the
past ages and have been doing has come down to us, opening the way for us to
 do good. We are linked with the ladies of the past and the future. They
may hear our name or they may hear them not. We may perish from all the
memory of mankind, but our work will not perish, for he that doeth the will
of God abideth forever.

A pastor seldom gathers half the fruit from the seed of his own
sowing as he gathers from the seed that others have sown. There will come
some man who will gather seeds from the sowing of the pastor. Perhaps it
may be years before the harvest is gathered. We all work together. We

seek our work in the one great common cause. We plant the seeds and sow for God, and we leave it to God to bless.

Christianity is individual. Every man must give an account of himself to God. That wonderful woman Priscilla, was devout, and in fact she stood before the delighted assembly in Corinth and spoke to them the perfect way of God. And how often does the Sunday School teacher, the woman's missionary ~~xxx~~ union labor long in this world and it becomes some great power in the future for good because their lives have been planted in the perfect ways of God. Do you realize the great power of Christian women?

(Christian women) have always been a help to the pastor. And to the church.

Two or three practical ways they have ~~xx~~ helped in the drawing of a congregation This is an important part in bringing the people together a place where good is sought.

I remember a story in White Sulphur Springs, Virginia. When Robert E. Lee, an Episcopalian attended a preaching service in a ball room which was held by a Presbyterian minister, Gen. Lee came in a little late. And some of his friends thought ~~xx~~ it strange. He was

always prompt. They learned afterwards that Gen. Lee had waited until all the people who were likely to attend the service had entered the room. Then he walked quietly around the corridors and the parlors, outside under the trees. Whenever he saw a man, or two or three standing, he would go up and gently say, "We are going to have divine services this morning in the ball room. Won't you come?" And they all went. And it's very touching that that grand old man whose name has been known all over the world quietly went around and assisted the pastor of another ~~denomination~~ denomination, and persuaded men to go and hear the message. Should we not take means to help our pastor draw the congregation? When he begins to preach, should not we help him preach? This is effective when we offer our sympathy as a good listener to his sermons. When the soul is in harmony with what is being preached.

2 Another practical way that women have helped is that they have (talked about the ~~sermons~~ sermons.) Not talked about the performance and the performer, but they have turned away from the worship hour. The sermons ~~they~~ they have listened to that have been (intended for good) and they have talked about the thoughts that have been given, and they have repeated them sometimes to someone who has not had an opportunity to hear them. This

multiplies the good thoughts the preacher may be able to present.

I was impressed about this point as I read about a widow woman and her conversation. She said that she ~~always~~ always was impressed by her husband. When he heard a sermon preached, he talked about the good things in that sermon and the application of it. She said that he talked often in the family about the thing he ~~had~~ heard preachers say. He repeated them to the children, and she said that it made an impression upon her boys, and he repeated the sayings and the message of the sermon. And to think that the words of a sermon are repeated even to strangers. This be- comes the truth. God's truth for the world.

3 - In the third place, quite often women (furnish illustrations) and I would encourage you that when you read something that is wonderful and good, (write) it down, give it to the preacher. He may find an opportunity to use it to fit into some illustration. Quite often we hear testimonies of people that will refresh and add power to a message which the preacher is giving. On last Wednesday evening, we had testimonies of experiences that people have had, and one in particular concerning the prayer breakfast of the President in (Washington, D.C.) Yes, W.M.U. has a link with the church and with today.

In the fourth place, Rom. 4, (the way ahead.) There is much that could be said as we look into the future.

First, the call for ~~xxxxxx~~ missionaries. This needs to be set in the foreground as our women annointed by the Lord with spiritual power and equipped with excellent training and experience can give themselves the work of developing churches and missions at home and ~~xxxxxx~~ abroad. We face this vast call that we might have an effective ministry with the youth and with the student population. The sight of students taking their places at studies and all types of work - we need to witness to these young people.

We must ~~xxxx~~ make every effort (that the call be clear) for them to follow Christ and then to crusade in this land and in other nations.

We look forward to the day when we shall all gather around the throne and sing praises to the Lamb of God.

In the next place, there is (a call for larger participation) on the part of people in our church. And throughout our convention. The task to which we are called is to personally share with the many ministries. Many others have participated in special efforts, but this is something that is sustained in the development of the work of the kingdom. There is

much value in direct participation.

There (must be more missionaries.) We thank God for the objective of 5,000 missionaries, and of course we know the timing, that is with the Lord. We need to remember that our Master instructed us to pray.

We need greater (financial reinforcements.)

We need greater spiritual strength - The Lord of the harvest is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think -
God is able - He works through our prayers.
 Let us keep ourselves united around
 The great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.