

January 2005: Keeping the Vision Alive

by Aaron Greenway

God willing, I will be heading to Peru in two or three years. The reason for going is to win the hearts of the Peruvian people in an artistic fashion. Author and Pastor John Piper once said that missions is not an end unto itself, but it is the heart of God that the whole world worship His name, that God be known for who He is. The worship of the living God is paramount, not missions. Missions is the method we use to go after people so that they too will worship the one and only God. That is the way God intended it. For this reason, we use music in a form that worships God and communicates the need for Christ in the world.

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A few weeks ago, I spoke with a couple in the church. We talked about all the needs on the mission field. They assured me that God would provide all that I needed, that I must not count on the support of anyone, hoping that they catch the vision, but instead that I go on with what God has entrusted to me, trusting that He will provide what I need. The wife also mentioned that her father also had a ministry of missions in a violent and scary place in Latin America when no one supported him. But God was faithful and many souls were saved because of the faithfulness of this servant of God. After many years had passed, the ones who would not support him finally went to him repentant because they realized that they had missed the boat, seeing how God had used their friend. This man was not going to do flips in front of everyone in order to win them, but instead, he decided to trust God. Time is running out and we cannot wait any longer. We have to get out of our comfort zones and see that from the beginning God has desired to use us. For this reason, I cannot wait too much longer. I realize that lost people are dying every minute, so I am resigning to do God's will.

Last month, we devoted one week in our church to emphasizing "missions". On Sunday, I sat down in one of the pews listening to the sermon of a missionary pastor who had returned to the United States to mobilize believers. He came to "New Life" to present crucial information. And so I am giving you some of the facts that he presented because I believe that all should read it for themselves. Look at the results of the report that this dear pastor gave to us and maybe you too will see the need.

Everyone 1.75 seconds of every day, someone in the world dies. 105 people die every minute. Every hour, 6300. 4.5 million every month. 275 million die every 5 years. Every 5.3 years, a population equivalent to that of the United States disappears from the face of the earth. In every continent the church is growing except in North

America, but 35% (2.2 billion) of the world has not even heard the name of Jesus Christ.

There are 7,291 languages in the world that don't have even a small portion of the Scriptures. Some people that work in translation with Wycliffe Bible Translators have said that if we keep working at the current level of progress, it would take more than 600 years to translate the Scriptures into every language. Time is not on our side.

Here is an example of a specific need:

Of the 1.1 million Hispanics that live in Dallas/Fort Worth, 300,000 are from the Mexican state of Guanajuato, the least evangelized state of all Mexico. There are fewer evangelical Christians in Guanajuato than there are in Iraq. Just what if we evangelized and disciplined those from Guanajuato that are here and then somehow sent them back there to reach their own people?

By chance, did that report touch your heart? Because when I heard that sermon, the fire awakened again in my spirit, and the urgency that there are so many dying and going to hell. Imagine all of the tombstones of all the people that are now living in the eternal flames of Hell. I don't tell you this so that you will make a quick and flippant decision, nor just that you pretend to be excited about something you really aren't, but just that you would pray and see what it is that God would have you do. Maybe God wants you to stay where you are. But there are groups and races of people that don't know anything about God outside of the United States, and I cannot see how we can be so cold about it.

One day I realized that faith is not waiting and being idle. The direction of a car cannot be determined unless it is moving. If we are going in a particular direction, God can take us from there. But God will not move anyone that does not want to be moved. He will not bother someone who feels comfortable in his/her daily routine. I want to specify that we all are called to the mission field. One who says that he/she isn't does not understand God's heart for the world. Don't worry about the resources, nor about your future, because God will make it all very clear when it is time for you to know it. Just trust that if God has put a call within you, He alone has to be the One to realize it.

Something to ponder...

Your brother,
Aaron Greenway