

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your correspondence to the Al Denson Show and for tuning in every week to our program. My prayer for you is to be encouraged in your daily walk with Christ through the words of this booklet. Our hope is that in turn you will tell others of what God is doing through our ministry to youth and parents on TV. I am convinced you will not find another program on any network anywhere that deals with issues today's youth and their parents are facing, and provides answers from a Godly perspective.

In addition, we would love for you to help us by going to our web site at www.aldenson.com. Here you can write to us, order additional material like this booklet, check out all my music, have a daily bible study, and stay up to date on the ministry. You can also send us a prayer request and questions for the TV show. But more importantly, please continue to be in prayer with us as we work together to help those that are in need.

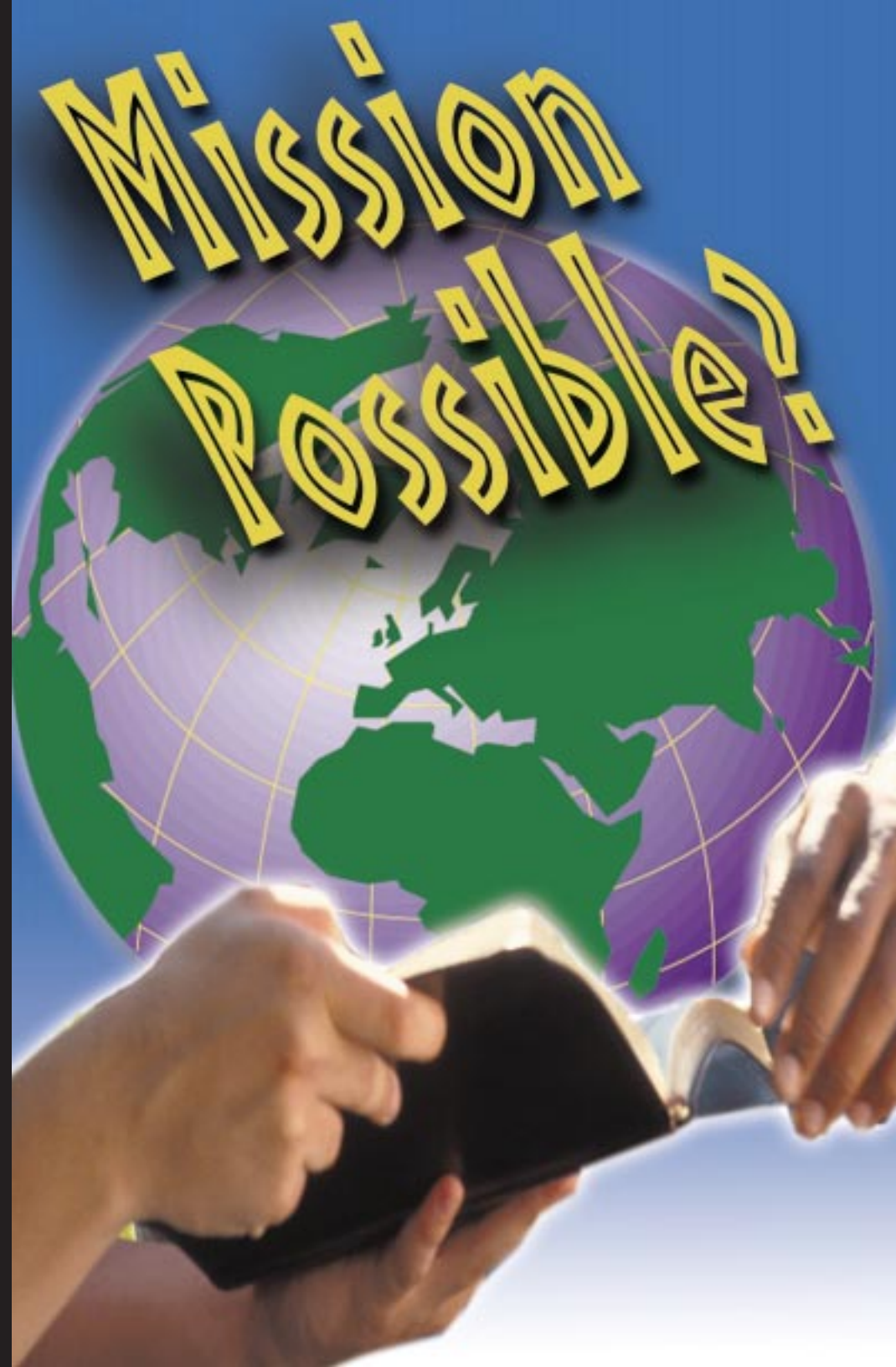
Thanks for watching and God Bless!

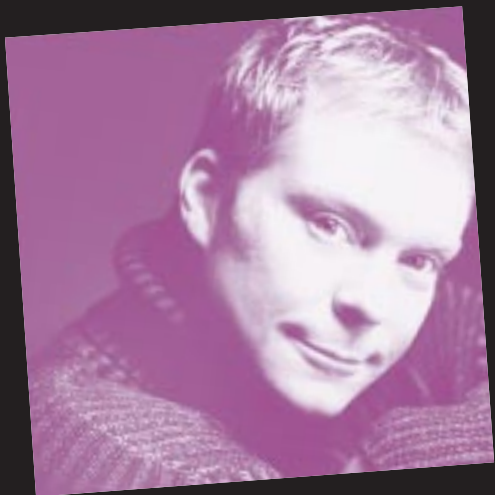
Sincerely,



An Outreach of Celebration Ministries

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Most artists create for only a brief moment in time. That phenomenon was once known as “15 minutes of fame”. Yet even in a fickle world, there still emerge a talented few that transcends time and trends. With nearly 15 years as a major label recording artist and seven hit

albums to his credit, Al Denson is that kind of artist.

But the attention and acclaim his artistry has brought him over the years are anything but the routine rewards of worldly success. Rather, they are the fruits of a life of purpose and passion, and a mission that has always reached far beyond merely making music.

The millions of young people Al has performed for, befriended, counseled, consoled and clowned around with in his career already know that. And thousands more are finding out every day.

This past year has seen Al expand his efforts to a global audience through the reach of his daily syndicated television production, “The Al Denson Show.” “You’ve got to reach out to people where they are with the most powerful means and this form of media allows you to build trust and a rapport,” says Al. “This has all been so amazing. I can’t imagine what lies in store when the Lord finally calls me home, but I don’t have to wait for heaven to receive rewards. I get them every time a kid comes up to me and says, ‘I heard what you said, and I accepted Christ.’ You can’t ask for anything more or better than that.”

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Mission Possible?

In II Corinthians 5:17-21 the Bible says, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

The Bible says that ALL of us who have been “born again” have been reconciled to (made right with) God. Now that we have been reconciled, God has given all of us the “ministry of reconciliation” and has made us Christ’s ambassadors here on this earth. The dictionary defines an ambassador as “an agent of the highest rank, a personal representative or messenger.” God has bestowed upon us the honor of being His representatives in this world.

After His resurrection, Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 28:19-20: “Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” These words of Jesus have been called the “Great Commission.” Webster defines the word

“commission” as the act of entrusting or giving authority to perform certain acts or duties.”

The message is clear: Jesus has given all of us who claim His name a commission and a mission, but is it a mission that is really possible?

The answer is “yes” because God never asks anything of us that is impossible. He does ask things which are hard, but never things which are impossible. He also never asks us to do anything He doesn’t first empower us to do. So, the Great Commission is possible or Jesus would have never given it. But, did Jesus really have us in mind when He spoke those words?

Surely, it was Franklin Graham, or Ron Luce or Al Denson Jesus was thinking about as he looked into the future that day. No, believe it or not, Jesus had all of us in mind. Throughout the Scripture, God has always used ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Down through the ages, the two things all these ordinary people have had in common was a willingness to make themselves completely available to God and a deep desire to honor Him with their lives.

This “attitude of availability” characterized the life of Christ while He was here on earth. The Bible makes it clear in Philippians 2:5-9 that we are to follow His example. It says, “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

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Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted Him and gave Him a name that is above every name...

Jesus made Himself available to His Father and as a result was able to show the world what God was really like. Our job, until He comes again, is to take over where Jesus left off. If we are truly to be Christ's representatives on this earth, we must make ourselves totally available to our Heavenly Father. He must be our all in all, and being available to Him must be the consuming fire of our lives. Christ must be our reason for living, and serving Him must be our highest joy. Nothing can be more important in our lives than knowing God and making ourselves whole-heartedly available to Him. This

will only happen when we come to grips with this fact: "You are not your own, you have been bought with a price." (I Corinthians 6:19-20) This means that when we gave Christ our hearts, we gave Him the control of our lives as well.

In order to be used of God to do extraordinary things, we must not only make ourselves completely available to God, but also be willing to honor God by living righteous, Christ-like lives. The word "righteous" means "morally right, just, virtuous, blameless." We know there is only One who is completely righteous. However, the Bible says in I Corinthians 1:30, "It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness..." The salvation experience puts us "in Christ" and we become righteous because He is righteous. As a result, we are to live Christ-like lives. However, many Christians today have a problem which keeps them from doing this. The problem is they have "conflicting values" which lie side-by-side in their lives.

These "duo-value" people are those who say they are Christians and have an interest in spiritual things. But there are areas in their lives where their actions, attitudes, and words conflict with those of Christ. Jesus said in John 14:21, "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me." In other words,

we can't say we love Jesus and live in a way that contradicts His Word. Many Christians today have decided to pick and choose which parts of the Word of God they want to obey, and then think it is acceptable to disregard the rest. These Christians believe as long as they are keeping more commandments than they are breaking, God will ignore all the times they are striking out—like God is not interested in the specifics of their obedience, only in their "spiritual batting averages."

Many Christians often want to know how much they can get away with. What they are really asking is, "How close can I get to the line between right and wrong without going out-of-bounds?" What they don't understand is that a

righteous lifestyle cannot be defined by an activity. True righteousness is not a line to cross; it is an attitude. A righteous lifestyle includes our minds and our spirits, not just our bodies. Instead of asking, "How much can we get away with as Christians?" we need to ask, "How much like Jesus can we be?" II Corinthians 5:14 says, "The love of Christ compels (motivates) us..." The great unconditional love of Christ and what He has already done for us should be enough to motivate us to live a righteous, godly life. Our lives should be lived in a consistent way where attitudes, actions, and words which are righteous line up with the Word of God and are motivated by a heart full of love for the Savior.

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Talent and ability are not what it takes to be used by God. God is simply looking for Christians who are committed to living righteous lives and are available to be used. God cares more about the condition of our hearts, than how we look, our intelligence, how much money we have, or how gifted we are. He doesn't even care about our past. One of the men God used the most in the Old Testament was David. He was the lowly Shepard boy who grew up to become King. In the course of his life, David did some incredibly great things for God. But David also committed adultery and murder along the way. Yet, in Acts 13:22, God says that David was a man after His own heart. The reason, God said, was that David could be counted on to "do everything I want him to do."

David was wholly available to God and even though his life was not always characterized by righteousness, David was a great "repenter" (See Psalm 51), and more than anything, his heart's desire was to honor God with his life. God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows our secret thoughts and feelings, and He knows our strengths and weaknesses. No background is too rebellious or sinful for God to use. God will use us in spite of ourselves and regardless of our past if we are committed to living a righteous life and are ready to make ourselves available to Him.

God will empower us to help reach our world for Christ—that is His part. But, we have a part, as well. Henry and Tom Blackaby have given us five things we can do in order to be ready to answer God's call:

1. *Set our hearts to follow God.*

This means we must make following God our number one priority. Nothing else can take first place in our lives.

2. *Yield our hearts to God.*

Yield means "to be inclined" or "to be leaning," so our first inclination in any situation must be toward God and his standards and doing things His way.

3. *Cleanse our hearts for God.*

If our hearts are going to be fully committed to God, we must be willing to give up any sin in our lives that stands in the way of our usefulness to God.

4. *Guard our hearts.*

This means we should avoid situations which would hurt our witness with other people and make ourselves accountable to others for our walk with God.

5. *Do not harden our hearts.*

When God exposes sin in our lives, we must be careful to respond properly, so we can forsake it quickly before our hearts become hard

and insensitive to the convicting of the Holy Spirit. There can be no excusing rebellion, pride, resentment, anger, or bitterness in our lives. We must always remember that our first calling is not to a mission or a ministry. We are first called to be in a right relationship with God. When this happens, He will then direct us and empower us to fulfill our part of the Great Commission. God may not be calling us all to be missionaries in a foreign land, but He does have a very specific calling for each of our lives. If we are to fulfill our part of the Great Commission, there are four things we all need to do, regardless of what God has planned for us individually.

1. *Be Aware of the Needs.*

Until all the nations of the world hear that God has made a way of salvation through Jesus Christ, the task of missions is unfinished. Millions of people living today still have never heard the Good News of Christ. One question that we are going to have to answer is this: "Do we really believe that people who don't know Christ as personal Savior are lost?" Unless we truly believe this, we will have no motivation or sense of urgency about the Great Commission.

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Unless we schedule time for

When we look at world religious affiliations (in millions), the statistics are staggering:

Muslims:	1,188
Hindus:	768
Buddhists:	811
Sikhs:	23
Jews:	14
Atheists:	150
Nonreligious:	768
Christians:	2,000

(Estimates by David Barnett published in the International Bulletin of Missionary Research)

Knowing that millions of people will spend eternity without God should make a difference in the heart and in the attitude of every born-again believer. But who are these people? Some of the world's lost live in our own country, but we know that most live in hellish environments, like searing hot deserts and frozen, barren tundra. The lost also live in environments where demonic spirits define their world, speak through the ancestors, are called through incense, and have idols in their homes. The majority of the world's lost are nonliterate. Eighty percent of them cannot read or write a word. Many of the world's lost live in areas where there is religious persecution. There are believers being martyred systematically today in over 70 different countries.

There were three billion people in the world in 1960; there were six billion in 1999. By the year 2050, if Jesus prolongs His coming, there

will be nine billion people. Of the six billion plus alive today, more than four billion are non-Christian; 1.7 billion have never heard the gospel. Today, six times more people are totally cut off from the gospel than were alive when Jesus gave the Great Commission. Seventeen million people die each year and go out into eternity without ever having heard the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Jimmy Draper said, "We must see the world and its teeming massiveness, and only God can give us eyes to see like that. When we see those people...we must see them as Jesus saw them, 'distressed and scattered, distracted, dejected, hurting people'—hurting physically, hurting emotionally, hurting spiritually. Worst of all, they are lost from the grace of God."

2. Pray for the Needs.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:14: "But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." We know that not everyone who hears the Good News of Jesus Christ will be saved. But we can do our part to ensure that every person has the opportunity to hear the gospel and decide for themselves whether to accept or reject God's offer of eternal life. The only way this will happen is when God's people are committed to pray.

If we are honest, we would have to say that most of us do not pray very much for missions around the world. The sad truth is we aren't as burdened for those who are lost and dying

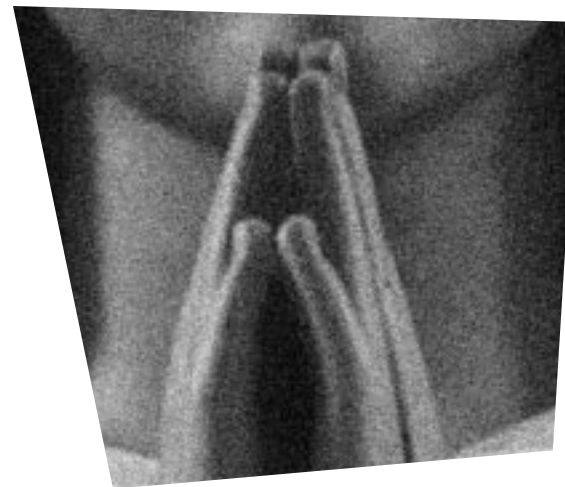
prayer, we will not pray.

without Christ as we need to be. Admitting this to God and to ourselves is where we start. Phillipians 2:13 says, "For God is at work within you, helping you WANT to obey Him, and then helping you DO what He wants." He has promised us not only the power to do what we ought to do, but the desire to do what we should. We need to make our first prayer one for ourselves and ask God to give us a burden for the lost and to help us see them through His eyes.

If we are going to be serious about prayer, we will have to make time to pray. In his book, *Quiet Talks on Prayer*, S. D. Gordon said, "The great people of earth are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer, nor those who say they believe in prayer, but I mean those people who take time and pray. They have no time. It must be taken from something

else. This something else is important—very important, and pressing, but still less important and pressing than prayer!" Unless we schedule time for prayer, we will not pray. This must be our priority or prayer will get squeezed out of our lives.

To pray effectively, we need to be specific in our prayers and not just say, "Please bless the missionaries around the world and save all the lost people everywhere." One thing that is very helpful is to get the names of some individual missionaries and find out as much as possible about their lives, their families, and where they are ministering. Find out what their needs are and pray specifically for those needs. Ask God to make the message of Christ clear to those to whom these missionaries are witnessing and to open the hearts of the lost to the Gospel.



Specific prayer is a powerful weapon in the battle for lost souls. On a Saturday afternoon in 1849, a mother was praying with friends for the salvation of her only son, Hudson Taylor. She finally left her friends so she could plead alone with God to save her son. Mrs. Taylor stayed on her knees in prayer for hours until she had a peace in her heart that her prayers had been answered. When she returned home, her son told her he had been saved. Hudson Taylor later founded the China Inland Mission. His life has inspired thousands of missionaries over these many years. His commitment to Christ and his love for the lost people of China has challenged many others to give their lives to missions. We must pray that there would be many more like Hudson Taylor who will respond to God's call to take the gospel across the street or around the world. The Bible says in Luke 10:2, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask

the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field." And lastly, we should never pray and ask God to do something in the life of someone else that we are not willing for Him to do in us.

3. Give So the Needs will be Met.

God will probably not call all of us to physically go to another part of the world to tell people about Jesus, but He does call all of us to give so that others can go. Charlotte (Lottie) Moon was a spirited young woman who accepted Christ as her Savior ten days after her eighteenth birthday. She received a marriage proposal from a young man, but she said no, because she already had her heart set on serving the Lord in a most unusual way for single women of her day—as a missionary. At age thirty-three Lottie was finally appointed to serve in China. She spent the next thirty-nine years ministering to the lost and starving people in that land. She

would often go hungry herself, so that she could give her food to the hungry people around her. Lottie died twelve days after her birthday in 1912 still serving God among His people in China. There are modern-day Lottie Moons who are ready and willing to go. They simply need someone to financially make it a reality for them.

Airfare is needed to get new missionaries to their fields of service in Taiwan. There are new believers in Malawi who need song books, and

there are classes in Mozambique that need Bible study material. There are children in Panama who need picture Bibles and little ones in Vietnam who need Bible story cassettes. There are native preachers in Africa who need literature to help start churches. A translating editor in Zimbabwe needs a salary. The E-mail costs for ministry communications in Thailand are needed. People need to give so that Christian television programs can be broadcast to sixty million Arabs in Northern Africa and the Middle East. These are only a few of the material needs worldwide.

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Missionary Mike McDaniel, arrived at a village in Zambia to baptize what he thought would be a small number of new converts that the little church there had recently won to Christ. What he found upon arrival was that the fifty members of that church had led twenty-two people to faith in Christ! They all walked a half-mile to a river and the twenty-two were gladly baptized in the knee-deep water of a river. Back at the church, Mike McDaniel preached a simple gospel message and sixteen more people asked Jesus to be their Savior that day. That trip to the village to baptize twenty-two people and see sixteen more come to Christ cost Mike about ten dollars (U.S.) in traveling expenses. How often do most of us waste ten dollars in the course of a normal day and never give it another thought?

We could give up one trip to the movies and make it possible for a missionary to show the Jesus film to a group of lost people who can't read. We could drink tap water instead of bottled water for a week and help pay the salary of a missionary couple living where they must boil water so it will be safe for their family to drink. We could car pool to school or to

work for a month and make it possible for a missionary to buy gasoline so he can drive to the villages where he is discipling new believers. Instead of buying a new book, we could check it out of the library and help a missionary provide Bibles for new Christians learning to read. Giving up meat for a week will help provide the salary a young missionary couple uses to help feed their own children. Spending ten dollars less at Christmas will help support a missionary who is telling another family the Christmas story for the first time.

No gift is too small. Little always becomes much, when we put it in the Master's hand. Lottie Moon wrote in 1887, "Where is the silver and the gold that should be in the Lord's treasury to send out those men and women who are asking to be sent to the heathen? Alas! Alas! Some are adding fields to their broad lands, some are laying up in banks, some are spending in selfish indulgences." There is an urgency to provide the resources necessary to reach the millions who need to hear about God's offer of eternal life. We can all be a part of the Great Commission when we give.

4. Respond to God's Call.


The Bible says in I Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light." Jesus said in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

There are millions and millions of people in our world who are waiting in the darkness of sin for someone who will share the light of Christ with them. Romans 10:13-14 says, "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard?..." Good question—how will they hear?

How much longer will they have to wait in the darkness? The only way the neighbor across the street, the kid in math class who sits across the aisle, the guy who works across the hall, and the native who lives across the ocean will hear is when God's ambassadors are willing to leave our comfort zones and plant our lives among the people who live in the darkness. Jesus has commanded us to go and tell. They won't hear unless we open our eyes to the needs all around us, and make ourselves available to give, pray, and respond to His call to go. Forty-seven thousand people every day die without ever having heard the Gospel. Hearing this, some

people would say that God must not be fair. But the Bible says in II Peter 3:9: "He (God) is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." Perhaps the truth is that Christians are just not obedient.

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Lottie Moon said long ago, “How many million more souls are to pass into eternity without having heard the name of Jesus?” Good question. There is an old hymn that says, “Ready to go, ready to stay, ready my place to fill. Ready for service lowly or great, ready to do His will.” Could we honestly sing that song? Webster’s dictionary defines a call as “a divine vocation or strong inner prompting to a particular course of action.” The real question for each of us today is: “Are we willing to ‘be the one’ who will respond to God’s call and carry the light of Jesus into a dark and dying world?”

Our perspective tends to be so different from God’s perspective. We focus on what is temporary; God thinks about eternity. He always has a “kingdom perspective” with eternity in mind. God’s main purpose is to reconcile a lost and dying world to Himself. On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus had us in His heart and on His mind. Jesus was praying for us and He said to His Father in John 17:18: “As You have sent Me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” We have been placed where we are at a particular time in history to make a difference in our world. The last words Jesus spoke before He ascended back into Heaven

are recorded in Acts 1:8 “...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” God gives all of us the exciting privilege of being His witnesses in our communities (Jerusalem), our states (Judea), our country (Samaria), and our world (the ends of the earth). The mission He is calling each of us to is definitely possible.

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