

MISSIONS: MOTIVATIONS AND OBJECTIVES

“Here am I, send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough, the savage pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort on earth; send me even to death itself, if it be but in Thy service, and to promote Thy kingdom.”
(David Brainerd, missionary to the Americas, 1718-1747)

“Education has been given us from above for the purpose of bringing to the benighted the knowledge of the Saviour. If you knew the satisfaction of performing a duty, as well as the gratitude to God which the missionary must always feel in being chosen for so noble and sacred a calling, you would feel no hesitation in embracing it. For my own part I have never ceased to rejoice that God has appointed me to such an office. People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay?”
(David Livingstone, missionary to Africa, 1813-1873)

“If I had a thousand pounds, China should have it. If I had a thousand lives, China should have them. No, not China but Christ. Can we do too much for Him?”
(Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, 1832-1905)

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”
(Jim Elliot, missionary to the Auca Indians, 1927-1956)

WHY MISSIONS?

When I read these words, I wonder what motivated these men to go into missionary work. Why did they want to become missionaries? What reasons thrust them forward to foreign lands at a time when long distance travel was not only a hassle but also a hazard? Was it the thrill of adventure? Was it some romantic notions of living in faraway places? Was it duty? Was it to “upgrade” another society?

Any person who is called to the mission fields would have to evaluate his motives carefully. There is perhaps no other type of work where a person’s motives have so much to do with his success. Without sanctified motives, the trials of missionary work will soon exact a toll on a man’s faith and his effectiveness in his ministry.

The reason that men such as Adoniram Judson (the first missionary to Myanmar and who laboured in the same country for 40 years), Hudson Taylor (51 years in China), and David Livingstone could spend their entire lives in the mission field is that they had an overpowering sense of the divine mission. They knew they were called by God. Today, these early missionaries are criticized for westernizing the cultures of the indigenous people; for failing to respect the native customs; for being insensitive to the local ways of life. But while modern missiological training can equip a person with socially sensitive principles of doing missions and help clarify his motives, it cannot generate in one, a heart of a missionary.

TWO KEY MOTIVES

For a missionary to be effective in his ministry there must be something more fundamental, something that strikes at the heart of the person, something which struck the Apostle Paul when he wrote, “Yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (1 Cor. 9:16). As I study the lives of preachers who persevered in their ministries in spite of the trials and tribulations, there are two motives that stand out.

First, it is a realization of what Christ has done for us—He shall save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). It is coming to grips that what we have in Christ is what the world desperately needs; it is realizing that in Christ, we have a Gospel that has eternal value, and that the whole world needs to have that good news; it is knowing that Christ is not just a better way, but that He is the only way to salvation.

When a Christian has experienced the saving grace of Christ, when his own salvation has led to a transformation of his life, then he can face the unbelievers with a sense of purpose and convince them that they too can be saved and transformed by the same Christ. This is the drive and motivation that propels him into the mission field and sustains him through the most difficult and discouraging times.

The second motive for missions is that it is the mandate that Christ has given to His church. For the person who does not know Christ as Lord and Saviour, His command will have no meaning. But for the one who receives Him as Lord and Saviour, the command to go into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature is a holy duty. However, it is a duty not compelled by law but constrained by love.

ONE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Motives determine the missionary programme. If a person is moved by human suffering to go into missions, then his missionary programme would include providing relief, treating the sick, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, educating the illiterate, liberating the oppressed. These programmes in themselves do not run counter to the missionary endeavour. It is through these programmes that the transformed life of the missionary becomes evident to the people.

However, these programmes must serve to improve and pave the way for the preaching of the Gospel. All other programmes must be subordinated to and serve this primary goal. One of the greatest failures of modern missions is to deviate from the preaching of the Gospel, and to be sidetracked by the immediate and visible need to provide physical relief.

As individuals and a church, our missionary programme must include some ministries to provide physical relief because these are part of the expression of the redeemed life. But we must never deviate from the preaching of the Gospel. May God sanctify our hearts as we serve Him in the mission field, and may He grant us a clear vision of our objective.

In Christ,
Pastor Isaac

差传：动机与宗旨

“我在这里，请差遣我；差我到世界的尽头；差我到那荒野上粗蛮的族群里；差我远离这世上所有的舒适地；甚至差我走向死亡，单单只是为着服事祢、为着伸展祢的国度。”

（大卫·布莱纳，美洲传教士，1718—1747）

“教育是上帝赐予我们的，为的是让那仍活在黑暗当中的人们认识我们的救主。如果你了解执行一项任务所给予的满足感，并每位宣教士对神圣和崇高的蒙召所发出对上帝的感恩，那你将毫不犹豫地接受这任务。对我个人来说，我没有一刻停止感谢上帝所指定给我的任务。人们常提起我在非洲度过大半生所做的牺牲。但比起我们欠上帝的救恩，我这小小的偿还又能算是什么牺牲呢？”

（戴维·利文斯敦，非洲传教士，1813—1873）

“若我有一千英镑，它们应当都归属中国。若我有一千条生命，我也应当全献给中国。不，不是中国而是基督。在服事主一事上，我们不可能奉献太多。”

（哈德森·泰勒，中国传教士，1832—1905）

“放弃他所不能保有的，以获取他所不能失去的，这样的人并不愚蠢。”

（吉姆·埃利奥，差往特厄瓜多尔的印地安人传教士，1927—1956）

为什么投身差传事工？

当我阅读这些格言时，我常试着想像是什么激励了这些人投身于差传事工。他们为什么要成为传教士？当日长途跋涉不只是疲累而且是危险的，到底是什么原因推动他们毅然地走向异乡？是为着探险的刺激吗？是为着实现那居住在远方的浪漫梦想吗？是为着义务？抑或是为了要提升另一个社会的生活素质？

任何受上帝呼召做差传事工的人都要谨慎地审视自己的动机。事奉者的动机与其成功是息息相关的，差传事工更是如此。没有洁净的动机，差传事工的艰难将很快的给一个人的信心带来重大的挫折，并影响他在事工上的效率。

传教士如艾多奈拉姆·耶德逊（他是被差往缅甸的第一位传教士并在那里服事了40年）、哈德森·泰勒（51年在中国）和戴维·李文斯敦；他们甘心将一生投身于差传事工的理由是他们对神授予的事工有强烈的使命感。他们知道自己是上帝呼召的。

今天，这些早期传教士备受谴责。有的指责他们使原始部族西方化；有的认为他们不尊重当地习俗；有的批评他们对当地的生活之道没有敏感的心。但我们也需知道，尽管有规划的差传训练能让一个人学习对异族文化敏感，但它却不能给一个人一个传教士的心。

两个关键动机

一个传教士如果要在事工上有效地服事，他应该有更基本的信念。他应该打自内心有所感动，他应该感受到那如同使徒保罗所感受到的“若不传福音，我便有祸了！”（哥林多前书9：16）当我仔细研究那些尽管经历许多磨难但仍坚韧不舍的传道人的生平时，有两个动机是显然易见的。

首先，是领悟到基督为我们所做的一切——祂把祂的子民从他们的罪里救赎出来（马太福音1：21）。那是清楚了解这世界极需我们所拥有的基督。那是领悟到我们在基督里有个永恒的福音，而这世界需要这个好消息。那是知道基督不只是更好的道，而是惟一救赎的道。

当一个基督徒感受到基督的救恩，当他的得救使他的生命有更新时，那他就能够很有使命感地面对未信主的人，说服他们也能在基督里得救、更新。这就是激励他在差传事工上继续前进，并在最艰苦、最令人气

差传事工的第二个动机是它是基督给予教会的指令。对一个未认基督为救主的人来说，祂的指令没有意义。但对一个接受祂为救主的人来说，到各地去向世界上的每个人传福音的这项指令确实是神圣的。但是，这义务不是因为受律法所逼迫；而是受爱所驱使的。

一个基本宗旨

动机决定着差传活动的内容与导向。如果一个人是因着不忍世间疾苦而投身差传事工，那他的事工活动就会包括供给救济、治疗病患、喂饱贫穷饥饿者、收留无家可归者、教导目不识丁者、解救备受压迫者。这些活动与差传导向并不是背道而驰的。相反的，这些活动向人们彰显了传教士更新的生命。

话虽如此，这些活动的宗旨应该是为着更有效地传福音而铺路。所有活动应该秉持着这个目标，并为指向传扬福音这个首要目标。当代宣教事工失败的最主要原因是偏离了传福音的基本宗旨，把视线转向眼下的救济工作。

对个人和教会来说，差传活动确实是需要包括些救济工作，因为它是一个得救生命的其中一个表现。可是我们不应该因此而偏离传福音的主要目标。愿主洁净我们的心，让我们于差传事工上服事祂的同时；也让我们对差传事工的宗旨有清晰的异象。

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