

Session 3, Missions Conference March 27, 1987 By George Miley

Miley:

You know, I don't know. I've just gotten in the habit of not liking to stand behind pulpits. And what I would really like to do this morning, rather than talk at you, is to have us talk to one another. You know, our sisters from Holland talked to us a little bit about culture, and it's amazing what culture does to us. Our American culture tells us that people learn by sitting in the chair and listening to someone talk. Is that the way people learn? Do you learn by sitting and listening to somebody talk? How many hours of your life have you already spent sitting listening to somebody talk? [audience laughing] And how much do you remember of what you've heard?

You know, the worst way on earth to learn is to sit and listen to somebody talk. That's the worst way to learn. That's not the way Jesus taught, and that's a terrible way to learn. So I would like for us this morning to learn something. I would like to learn something, I'll learn something if you'll talk to me. Will you talk to me?

Audience:

Yes.

Miley:

Okay. That's great. Now let's talk to each other. This is a nice informal setting, so it gives us a chance to talk to one another. I want to make a couple of statements this morning that may be controversial, and I don't want you to believe what I'm telling you. Do not believe what I'm

telling you this morning. I am a questionable character, so don't believe what I'm saying, but let's interact. Let me start you off with this statement: It is possible to complete the task of world evangelization. What do you think of that statement? Who's got a reaction to that? We can actually get to the point where we don't need any more missionaries, because the missionary task will have been completed. How many believe that's true? Raise your hand. We can actually finish the job. Now, you're not being graded, there are no hidden cameras, [audience laughing] there are no right and wrong answers, no electric shock is going to go through if you make the wrong-. All right, how many do not believe that's true? We'll never, ever finish the task. Far more believe that than believe we'll finish it. Why don't you think we can finish the task? One of you who raised your hand, just tell us. Why do you believe we cannot complete the task? Yes.

Audience member 1:

Because before we have a chance to finish the task, Christ will return.

Miley:

Beautiful. Isn't that tremendous? Isn't that wonderful? In other words, it's all up to God. Today, 50% of the world is without the Gospel. Is that God's will? Now, I'm not saying what my brother said is wrong, but let me tell you, we have developed in the evangelical church a subculture in which we speak a certain way and behave a certain way. The minute you come into a Christian meeting, you begin to behave in a certain way. You begin to speak in a certain way. We are enculturated to do that. And an important part of our thinking is, it's all up to the Lord. Now, in one way, it's true it's up to the Lord, but let me give you another word. Let me give you another

biblical word. And that word is this: responsibility. We have a responsibility. What is the responsibility that God has given to the church? Can you put it in one sentence? Yeah.

Audience member 2:

"Preach the gospel to every creature."

Miley:

Alright, "Preach the gospel to every creature." Where do you get that in the Bible? Mark 16:15, right? "Preach the gospel to every creature." Now, give me another verse that encapsulates- there's one thing about that verse that if we misunderstand, it will throw us off target. "Preach the gospel to every creature." Give me another verse that gives the same idea, but a better idea. This is funny, isn't it? Because how can you- yeah.

Audience member 3:

"Make disciples of all nations."

Miley:

All right, "Make disciples of all nations." What is the difference between those two verses? Every creature and all nations. What's the difference? [audience member responds inaudibly]

Alright. "Teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you." Good. One verse says, "Preach the gospel to every creature." That's important, that's right, that's the Bible, we're not trying to throw that out. But let me tell you what I want to say to you about that verse. Our

culture has formed us to think individually. We are highly individualistically oriented, and so we think individually. Now, what is the difference between Marks 16:15 and Matthew 28:19? One is talking about "Preach the gospel to every creature," the other is talking about taking the Gospel to whom? The nations. Now, what kind of concept is the concept nations, individual or group? Group. It's a group concept. It's a group concept.

Somebody else tell me, of those of you that raised your hand. Why don't you think that we'll be able to complete the task of world evangelization? And I'm not in any way not agreeing with what my brother said, because the day is going to come when the Lord is going to come back, and we may not finish the task until the Lord comes back. This is my addition to what our brother said. If the Lord comes back before we complete the task, that's the Lord's responsibility. But if I pass from this earth never having attempted to complete the task, that's my responsibility. And this has been going on now for 20 centuries. We have not taken the Gospel to all the nations. Roughly half of the nations, or even more of the biblical nations, are without the Gospel. Jesus has not come back. We have not taken the Gospel to them. And you and I need to interact with that concept this morning. Somebody else give me a reason why we can't complete the task.

[laughs] I hope I'm not being too- yeah.

Audience member 4:

The present trend of churches, as far as taking responsibility [inaudible], versus the greater population growth.

Miley:

Okay. "The present trend of churches," which is disinterest in missions, "versus the population growth." Okay, good. Now let me say something to stimulate you further. If we are going to complete the task of world evangelization, we must have the right targets. It is not enough to go into all the world and be spiritual. It is not enough to go into all the world and have personal revival. That's not enough. We have to know what it is we're actually doing. I am convinced that in order to complete the task of world evangelization, we need a whole new wave of missionaries to go out, at least tripling the number of missionaries that we've got on the field. But that new wave must be aimed in the right direction. And if we do not aim that new wave in the right direction, it is better maybe not to send them out at all.

Now let me give you another statement to build on that: We don't need many more missionaries at all to complete the Great Commission. [laughs] What do you think of that? Sounds pretty confusing, doesn't it? I don't believe we should send all of you to the mission field. I'm not here this morning to see how many of you we can get to the mission field. I don't know how many of you should go to the mission field. Have you ever heard the statement "We should close the door of the church and send everybody to the mission field?" Ever hear that? I think that would be terrible. I think it would be an unmitigated disaster. I don't think we should ever do that. It would be horrible to do that. We can complete the task of world evangelization by sending less than 1% of all evangelical Christians in the world today into cross-cultural church planting. If we send less than 1%, we can complete the task of world evangelization.

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What's your reaction to that? [audience member whoops] [audience and Miley laughing] But if we're going to do that, we have to know what we're doing, and we have to have the right targets. And more than ever before in the history of missions, today it is essential that we have the right targets. Now, it wasn't always that way. Suppose I asked you who was the father of modern missions? Who can tell me who was the father of modern missions?

Audience member 5:

William Carey.

Miley:

Okay, William Carey. When did he live? [audience responds] 18th century. What was the situation in the world in terms of evangelical Christianity when William Carey was alive?

Audience member 6:

Not very big.

Miley:

Not very big. William Carey was born in the north of England, and when he was 16 years of age, he became a shoemaker. He was apprenticed to a shoemaker. He was poor, and he spent the next twelve years of his life as a shoemaker. Halfway through that time, William Carey was called to be the pastor of a Baptist church. Now, when you think of this Baptist church, don't think of the Baptist churches that we have today, big Baptist churches. In those days in England, the Baptist movement was a peripheral movement. So it was a small little congregation, they didn't even

have the money to pay him enough to have a living wage, so he continued to make shoes while he was the pastor. While William Carey was the pastor of this little church, studying the Bible, he came to a radical conviction simply through a study of the Bible. His conviction was that God had put the church on earth for the purpose of taking the Gospel to the heathen.

Now, in those days, that was a radical thought, because in William Carey's day, the teaching in the church was that the Great Commission was for the first century. That's what everybody was saying. But William Carey said, "No, the Great Commission is not for the first century, it's for us now." And William Carey wrote a little booklet, an 87-page booklet, and the name of that booklet was "An Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen". And this little booklet began to go out over England, and it began to have an impact as people read that booklet. What was in the booklet? Well, there was a review of the biblical basis of missions. There was also a review of the history of missions, what had happened in missions up to that point. And there was an examination of the situation in the world.

In Carey's day, evangelical Christianity as we know it was confined to northern Europe, the east coast of North America, one or two other little pockets in the world, and that was it. And Carey had a meeting with some Baptist pastors, and he spoke to them. And in that meeting, he challenged them with the phrase that is now famously connected with his name. He said, "We must attempt great things for God, and we must expect great things for God." And Carey, in that meeting, challenged those Baptist pastors to do something that was radical. Now, in our day, it's not radical, but in Carey's day, it was radical. He challenged them to start a mission agency. Now in our day, we got hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of mission agencies. You know, every

day there's a new agency, it seems, coming into being. But in Carey's day, there were no agencies. And Carey was stimulated by the secular interest. He said, "Look, who are the people who are actually going out from England out to the far east? It's the commercial people. They have established businesses, and these businesses are instruments to get people out. We should establish an agency not to do commerce, but to get the Gospel out to the heathen."

And the next day, those Baptist pastors made the decision to begin to start the Baptist Missionary Society. William Carey immediately volunteered to be a missionary to India, right on the spot. He upset everybody. His church was upset. They, you know, 'What's happening? Our pastor is going to India.' His father thought he'd lost his mind. His wife refused to go with him. She had three children, pregnant with another one, here he was going off to India. But God overruled, the ship he was going on got delayed, the baby was born, his wife went with him. Now, let me ask you this question: What happens, what do human beings- how do human beings react when you want to do something new? Suppose you want to do something new for God. How do human beings react? [audience responds] What do they say? I can't hear you. [audience member responds inaudibly]

'This has never been done before. This can't be.' They've got this problem, and that problem, and the other problem. Now, here's another question: What happens when a pattern of activity has been established? What do human beings want to do? [audience responds] They want to copy it. And so when William Carey first went out to India, and the Baptist Missionary Society was formed, we have, now when historians look back on it, we have what is known as the first era of Protestant missions. Because once Carey wrote his booklet, and once the Baptist Missionary

Society was formed, and once missionaries began to go out under the Baptist Missionary Society, that concept began to be copied. And in the next 25 years, twelve other agencies were formed. [moving away from mic] Let me just leave that there for a minute. Twelve other agencies were formed. Can you give me this mic now? Thanks. [back to mic] Twelve other agencies were formed, and we have what is now seen by mission historians as the first era of Protestant missions. Hundreds and hundreds of missionaries flowed out to the regions beyond, and they followed the roots of European colonialism, and they penetrated the coastlands.

The coastlands. Missionaries penetrated the coastlands of Africa, South Pacific islands, and Asia, out to the coastlines. And we have begun the first era of Protestant mission. Now, in Carey's day, it didn't matter where you aimed the guns. You could shoot anywhere, and you'd be hitting the target. What are we talking about? We're talking about completing the task of world evangelization. And we're talking about, if we're going to do that, how vital it is that we shoot at the right target. Now, follow me on this. In the midst of this first era, in the midst of missionaries flowing out to the coastlands, another young man was born in the north of England. And this young man was from a Methodist tradition. And he came to know Christ when he was a teenager, and almost immediately, he received a vision for China. And at the age of 21 years of age, Hudson Taylor got on a ship in Liverpool, England, and six months later found himself in China. He arrived in that great port city of Shanghai. Now, what did Hudson Taylor find when he got to Shanghai?

He found Chinese, lots of them. [audience laughing] But he also found missionaries. And what did Hudson Taylor say to the missionaries? [audience responds] What did he say? What do you

think he said? [audience responds] [Miley laughs] He said, "What are we all doing here in Shanghai?" And what did the missionaries say to Hudson Taylor? They said, "Hey, you're only 21 years of age. You're not ordained. You haven't been to seminary. Just relax and be here for ten years, and you'll understand how the situation here works." Well, Hudson Taylor wasn't able to cope with that. And so within a year, Hudson Taylor was roaming around inland China. Now, was it legal for him to do that? No, it wasn't legal. At that time, there were five port cities along the coast of China that were legally open to foreigners, but foreigners weren't supposed to be going inland. But there was Hudson Taylor roaming around China. Now, what was the response of the Chinese to Hudson Taylor? They thought Hudson Taylor was just about the cutest human being they'd ever met. [audience laughing]

I mean, here was a human being with blue eyes, and with blonde hair, and with a pointed nose. They'd never seen a human being like that before. And so wherever Hudson Taylor went, they would gather around him, and want to touch him and look at him. So Hudson Taylor dyed his hair black, took a Chinese pigtail, braided it in his hair, put on Chinese clothes, and began wandering around China. And as Hudson Taylor wandered around China, he became infected. He became infected with China. He went back to England, broken in health, and began to go all over England preaching about China. The watchword that he used was, "A million a month are dying without God." C. H. Spurgeon, the great preacher, said, "China, China, China. Never have we heard of China the way Mr. Taylor tells it." And in the midst of that preaching tour, God began to speak to Hudson Taylor about doing something new. And the new thing that God was speaking to Hudson Taylor about was to start a mission agency not aimed at the coastlands, but aimed at the interior of China.

Now, how do you think Hudson Taylor responded? How do you respond when God begins to speak to you about something that's going to cost? You see, for Hudson Taylor, the honeymoon was over. He knew what China was like. He knew the heartache. He knew the cultural differences. He knew all of the responsibilities and costs that were involved in going to China. And Hudson Taylor struggled, he struggled. Just like you and I struggle. You know, if you're struggling about what God is calling you to do, that makes you normal. That makes you an authentic member of the human race. Hudson Taylor struggled with what God was speaking to him to do. And one Sunday, he was out on the beach. Now, I don't know what this great man of God was doing on the beach on Sunday, [audience laughing] but there he was on the beach in Brighton. And he wrote in his Bible- listen to what he wrote in his Bible out there on the beach. June the 25th, 1865. What was happening in this country in 1865?

Audience:

The Civil War.

Miley:

The civil war was coming to an end. Okay. June the 25th, 1865. "Unable to bear the sight of a congregation of a thousand or more Christian people rejoicing in their own security while millions perish for lack of knowledge, I wandered out on the sands alone." Now, just get- visualize that in your mind. Here's a church in England. Can you visualize it? Stained glass windows, large steeple, beautiful organ, here is this beautiful congregation of a thousand or more Christian people. What are they doing? They're rejoicing in their own security. Anything wrong

with that? Anything wrong with Christians rejoicing in their own security? Nothing wrong with that. So here's one week, they're all rejoicing in their own security. What are they doing the next week? Rejoicing in their own security. What are they doing the next week? Rejoicing in their own security. Week after week, month after month, year after year. Rejoicing in their own security. Rejoicing in their own security. Rejoicing in their own security. While meanwhile, what is happening? Millions are perishing. Millions are perishing for lack of knowledge they've never ever heard.

And when Hudson Taylor was confronted with that scene week after week, month after month, he couldn't stand it anymore. And he wrote, "I wandered out on the sands alone, and there God conquered my heart, and I surrendered myself to Him for this service." And he wrote in his Bible, "Today I prayed for 24 willing, skillful laborers for China." Why did he pray for 24? Because there were eleven provinces of China that had no witness at all. He prayed for two workers for each of those provinces, and two workers for Mongolia. One year later, he got on a ship, headed back to China, and with him were 24 workers. And through the China Inland Mission, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of laborers were launched into the harvest field. But something even more than that had happened. Once this mission was established, aimed at the inland areas, we have a whole new wave of other missions aimed at the interior, and the second era of Protestant missions had been born. And it was an era to the inlands. Other mission societies aimed at the interior- Africa Inland Mission, Sudan Interior Mission, Regions Beyond Missionary Union- 40 other agencies were born patterned on the example of the China Inland Mission. And the second era of Protestant missions had been born. Namely, the era aimed at the interior.

Now, can you see a progression here? There's a progression. During the days of William Carey, it didn't matter where you aim the cannons, you would hit the target. By the time Hudson Taylor came along less than 100 years later, you couldn't aim anywhere. Why aim at Shanghai? There were already so many missionaries in Shanghai. God was pushing the missionary force further, further, further toward the completion of the task. So we have the second era of Protestant missions. Now, while the second era of Protestant missions was going on, it was in full blast, another young man comes into the picture. And this young man was not born in England. He was born, of all places, in California. And in 1917, he got permission not to go to serve as a soldier in the First World War. And so instead, he went out as a missionary. He went as a second era missionary. Don't miss that. It's crucial that we understand that. This young man's name was Cameron Townsend, and he went to Guatemala as a good second era missionary.

And what was he doing as a good second era missionary? He was selling Spanish Bibles. And he went to Guatemala, and he was selling everybody Spanish Bibles. Now, if you get a map back at the book table, you look at Guatemala, and it's all green. See, Guatemala is green, and this country is yellow, and this country's red, and this country is orange. So if Guatemala is all green, it all must be the same thing, right? It's all green. So here's Cam Townsend. He, you know, it's all green, so everybody's got to speak Spanish, right? So he's going selling everybody a Spanish Bible, good second era missionary going to the interior, everything's the same. And one day he met a Kaqchikel Indian, and what did the Kaqchikel Indian say to him? [audience member responds inaudibly] Yeah, Cam Townsend and said, "You need this good Spanish Bible." And

the Kaqchikel Indian said, "I don't speak Spanish. Not only don't I speak Spanish, but what? I don't want to speak Spanish. In fact, I hate Spanish, because it's the language of the conquerors."

Some of you that were in the meeting yesterday, what have we got right there? We have got a barrier of acceptance, a cultural barrier of acceptance. So Cam Townsend and responded- I mean, I don't know if he did, but I'm just picturing how he would have responded as a good second era missionary- "But you got to speak Spanish. Spanish is the language of education. Spanish is the language of advancement. You must have the Spanish Bible." And the Kaqchikel Indian said something to Cam Townsend that was to change Cam Townsend's life, and was to begin, as historians look back on it, what can be seen as a new era of Protestant missions. The Kaqchikel Indian said to Cam Townsend, "If your God is so smart, why doesn't he speak my language?" So what did Cam Townsend do? He spent the next 13 years with the Kaqchikel Indians, translating the New Testament into that language. Now, once the Kaqchikels had the New Testament in their language, Cam Townsend was a member of a good second era missionary society. What do you think his missionary society wanted him to do after he had been with the Kaqchikels 13 years?

Audience member 7:

Write a book.

Miley:

Write a book. [audience laughing] Good. I don't know if they did or not, but that's a good answer. Write a book. Who else has got a thought? What do you think his mission wanted him to

do? What would you have thought if you've been on the board of a mission? Here's somebody, they've worked among a group, they've learned the language, they've learned the culture. What would you want them to do? [audience responds] Stay there. That's what his mission wanted him to do. 'Hey man, you've learned the language, you've learned the culture. You've got to stay here.'

'Why?'

'Well, there's so much more work to do.'

'Oh, what work is there to do?'

'Well, somebody has to write the church constitution, [audience laughing] and somebody has to decide what color the cushions are going to be in the pews. And somebody- oh, we have to have a Bible school. Oh, we have to have a Bible school, there's no other way. I mean, look, once they've got the New Testament, and once they've got it- got to have a Bible school.'

What did Cam Townsend say to his mission? 'Let the church do that. The Kaqchikel church can write the constitution. The Kaqchikel church can decide what color the cushions should be in the pews. The Kaqchikel church can train their leaders. What should I be doing?'

Audience member 8:

Moving.

Miley:

'Moving. What about all the other groups? What about all the other peoples that don't have anything?' And so Cam Townsend came with another brother to Arkansas, [laughs] and in 1934, they established Camp Wycliffe. And the purpose of Camp Wycliffe was to train people to go to

other peoples and give them the Bible. And what do we have here? What Cam Townsend was seeing was something greater than language. Language is the key element of it, but it's bigger than language. What was he seeing? He was seeing peoples. Peoples. And nobody knew it at the time, but missions historians now look back on this and see the third and last era of Protestant missions had been launched. Not an era to the coastlands, not an era to the interior, but the era aimed at the people groups. And if you don't get anything else out of this session this morning, get this: we are to the point in the development of missions where if we don't know what we're shooting at, we are not going to be effective. And God has brought us back to the initial target in missions.

When God made a covenant with Abraham, what did God say to Abraham? What did God say to Abraham? What's that? [audience member responds inaudibly] All right, 'I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you.' What is the purpose? What is going to come out of this blessing? That all nations on earth will be blessed. All nations. And the biblical target for missions is nations. Now, what do we mean by nations? Do we mean the United Nations? Why do we have difficulty with the concept that world evangelization is a doable task? Why do we have difficulty with that concept? One reason we have difficulty is we are shooting at the wrong target.

One target that we're shooting at is countries. We talk a lot in missions about countries. Honduras for Christ. Guatemala for Christ. India for Christ. China for Christ. Now, is that what Jesus was talking about in Matthew 28:19 when He said, "Go and make disciples of all nations"? Was He talking about countries? When did most of the countries in the world today come into being? The countries that we have the flags of, and we talk about, when did most of

them come into being? [audience responds] Since World War Two. Even what we think of as old countries. Let me give you a country, Germany. Is that an old country? Yes. When did Germany first come into being as a country?

Audience member:

1871.

Miley:

1871, somebody was in the meeting yesterday. 1871. So it's been very recently that Germany was formed into a country for the first time. What is old about Germany? The German people, the German culture, the German language. And so, when we shoot in missions at countries, we are shooting at the wrong target. We're shooting at a target that ultimately will not be helpful. So much more we can say about that. Now, what is another target that we have in missions? We think individuals. That's another target we have. And we hear that the world has now reached 5 billion. There are 5 billion people in the world. Boy, that gets depressing. And then we hear that by the turn of the century, there are going to be 6 billion people. That really gets depressing. And we think, 'The world population is just multiplying and multiplying and multiplying, and it's just hopeless. We'll never reach all these people.'

Let me tell you about one unreached people group, just to try to make this clear. The Kurdish people. How many have ever heard of the Kurdish people? Okay, a lot of people have heard of the Kurds. Where do the Kurds live? What country do the Kurds live in? [audience responds] What's that? [audience responds] All right, USSR, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria. Now do you see the

problem we have, thinking countries? Here is a people group that lives in five different countries. Well, why do they live in five different countries? They have always lived there. Are the Kurds in the Bible? It is almost certain that the biblical Medes are the same as the Kurds. Darius the Mede was a Kurd. Isn't that- isn't that fascinating? So the Kurds have lived their whole life, their whole existence, in Kurdistan. But the borders in that region were established after World War I. Do you see how superficial a concept country is? Country is not the real concept. The target is peoples.

Now, next question. Who are the best people to reach the Kurds? The Kurds. Americans are not the best people to reach the Kurds. Chinese are not the best people to reach the Kurds. The Kurds are the best people to reach the Kurds. So that should be our strategy, let the Kurds reach the Kurds. What's the problem with that? There are no Kurdish churches. So what have we got to do? We've got to target the Kurds. But what is it that we actually want to do among the Kurds? We want to plant churches. How many churches? How many? [audience responds] One. Anybody want two? [laughs] If somebody wants to. Anybody want four? I don't know how many we have to plant, but we have to plant enough congregations to do what? [audience responds] To give the Kurdish people a strong enough church that is able to reach the Kurds. So in missions, is our target individuals?

Audience member:

No.

Miley:

No. Let me tell you a story. One of my first memories of being in India was a tract day that we had in the city of Bombay. Try to picture this. Bombay is a city of teeming millions of people. And we were going to have a tract day and see how many people we could reach. So we decided to use the railways. There are two local railway lines in Bombay, Western Railway and Central Railway. And we decided to put believers, local Christians, at every single railway station. And we decided to put tracts in four or five different languages at every railway station, and we told the Christians, "All you have to do is go to any railway station, pick up the tracts, and start giving out tracts." I remember being based at Churchgate, which is the absolute end of the line, downtown Bombay, for Western Railways. There were four of us standing at the exit of Churchgate Station, people pouring out of the station. We not only had tracts, we had rubber thumbs. Because the problem in Bombay, even with four of us standing at the station, we couldn't get the tracts out of our hands fast enough. We just use a rubber thumb, just a rubber thumb, and giving out tracts all day long, as fast as we could possibly give out the tracts. People mobbing us for the tracts. Not any problem nobody taking the tracts, they're mobbing us for the tracts. And that one day in Bombay, 500,000 tracts were given out.

That was a Saturday. And I remember walking the streets of Bombay the next day on that Sunday and asking myself, "Is Bombay any different today than it was yesterday?" It didn't seem as though it was. The millions and millions and millions of people were just still swarming the streets of Bombay. Now, of course, God no doubt did great things with those tracts that went out. But you see, when we target countries, and when we target individuals, we're shooting at the wrong target.

Now, let me show you a map of the world. You're going to like this map of the world- [laughs] getting kind of tied up here, while I do that. This is to me- I've really gotten excited about this map of the world. That is a map of the world. You say, 'Hey George, where did you get your degree? From [unintelligible]? [audience laughing] [Miley laughs] That is a map of the world with the world represented not geographically- you see, we are enculturated to think geography- here is the world represented not geographically, but culturally. Now, I admit there are some geographical concepts in that map, but most of it is representing the world culturally and spiritually. Look at the pie. You can see it's divided up into different slices. You know, we could talk for a long time about that chart, but we're not going to, because we got another ten minutes, and then we're going to close at 10 o'clock. But look for a minute at the colors. The color red represents evangelical Christians. These are people who would ascribe to evangelical theology. Only the Lord knows whether they're born again, but they would believe the Bible is God's word, salvation is by grace through faith, Jesus is coming again, they would believe all that.

The white color represents people who are nominal Christians. If you ask them, 'Are you a Christian?' They would say, 'Yes.'

'Are you going to heaven?'

'Nobody can know.'

'Is the Bible God's word?'

'Well, it's got a lot of things in it that I can't believe.'

Nominal Christians. Now, the green is a color that we have difficulty with in our culture, because we don't have so many of these people. They are nonChristians. If you ask them, 'Are you a

Christian?' They would say no. But they can hear the Gospel in a way that is culturally relevant to them. They can understand the Gospel. They have the opportunity to hear the Gospel in a way they can understand. Suppose you preach the Gospel to me in Chinese. It may be the greatest message that's ever been given in Chinese, but have I been evangelized? Have I?

Audience:

No.

Miley:

No, because I don't speak Chinese. You have done a great job, but you haven't gotten through to me. Now, the people in the green can be gotten through to. They understand Chinese. That's a figure of speech. They can understand the Gospel that can be preached in their culture. But look at the blue. That's the color we want to emphasize. The blue represents people and people groups who are separated from the Gospel by cultural barriers. They cannot hear the Gospel in their own culture. If they come into contact with the culture- with the Gospel, it's a foreign thing. If we take a video recorder to the jungle somewhere and play a videotape to the people in Papua New Guinea of Jimmy Swagger preaching the Gospel, have they heard the Gospel? No. They have been confronted with something that they can't relate to. Now, that is the situation of the people in the blue. And if we ask the question, can world evangelization be completed? What we want to target on are the people in the blue. Now, what about the people in the green? Whose responsibility is it to reach the people in the green? [audience responds] What is it? [audience responds] Their own churches, the churches in their culture. Now, I'm not saying foreigners can't

help, foreigners can help. But they have churches in their own culture. They can be reached by local churches.

But what about the people in the blue? They can't be reached by local churches. They can only be reached by specific cross-cultural church planning thrusts, aimed, targeted at these people groups. Now, how many unreached people groups are there in the blue? Because if we could identify, if we could identify those groups, then we would know what the target is. We would know what we're shooting at. Now, [unintelligible] tell us that in the blue, there are 17,000 unreached people groups. Now, some say they're less. It all depends on what you identify, how you define a people group. But I am not hearing any number more than that. So the maximum number of cultural groups in the blue, the maximum number is 17,000. Now, if we could plant clusters of vigorously evangelizing churches in the blue, we would have completed the foreign missionary task. That doesn't mean we wouldn't have foreigners helping churches- you know, churches in the green asking foreigners to help, doesn't mean we wouldn't have that. But we would have fulfilled the biblical mandate to take the Gospel to the nations.

Now, the 17,000 sound [audio briefly cuts out] like so many. I think for some of you, it sounds like a lot. Now follow me on this. For every one unreached people group, there are 15,000 evangelical Christians. I want to say that again. For every one unreached people group, there are at least 15,000 evangelical Christians. Now that's not just American Christians, because there's nothing in the Bible that says the Americans have to evangelize the world alone. In fact, that wouldn't be possible if the even the Bible said it, so the Bible doesn't say it. Who is this talking about, this 15,000? It's talking about people from Holland, it's talking about people from

Singapore, it's talking about people from Africa, it's talking about people from Latin America. It's talking about the church worldwide. Right now, tribal, stone age tribal people in Irian Jaya, who 20 or 30 years ago were cannibals, have a thriving church in that culture, and are beginning to reach out to other cultures in their own area. The things that are happening in the area of missions and God thrusting the Gospel to these unreached people are far beyond anything you and I totally know.

Now, picture with me, 15,000 evangelical Christians. Suppose we could get in this gym- and of course we can't, but suppose maybe we could get it at the Long Beach Auditorium or the Anaheim Convention Center. What if we had the Anaheim Convention Center filled with 15,000 evangelical Christians? Some of them were bankers, some of them were lawyers, some of them were builders, some of them were accountants, some of them were teachers, some of them were mechanics. One or two were pastors, one or two were missionaries. But we had 15,000 in the Anaheim Convention Center, and the task that those 15,000 had was to reach one unreached people group. And by reaching it, what do we mean? Tell me again, what do we mean? [audience responds] Planting churches within that group enough to reach its own group. We're not talking about reaching every individual. Do you think those 15,000 Christians could do it? Do you think they could do it? I believe they could do it. They could do it.

You know, I've been on the foreign mission field for 20 years, and people ask me, "George, when are you going back to the field?" And I tell them, "I'm not going." Now, you know, my wife, you know what she told me when we came to the States? My wife's not from the States. My wife was born in Germany. She was Jewish, still is Jewish, and left Germany in 1939 as a

little girl of seven, with a boatload of refugees, refugee children, just before the borders of Germany closed. Their parents died in the Holocaust. She grew up in England. We met in Belgium. We were married in India. Now we're living in San Diego. She said to me when we came to the States, "George, remember when you said you wanted to spend the rest of your life in India?"

I said, "Yes."

She said, "Do you remember when you said you're going to spend the rest of your life on the ships?"

I said, "Yes."

"Do you remember when you said you're going to spend the rest of your life in Germany?"

Because we were in Germany four years, establishing an administrative base of the ships. "Do you remember you're going to spend the rest of your life in India?"

"Yes."

She said, "Now when people ask you, 'What are you going to do?' Just don't say anything."

But at least for this season, at least for this season in my life, I'm not going back to the field. And I'll tell you why. Missions is like a great mountain that God once moved. And around the foot of the mountain, there are a few Christians with a teaspoon, and they are working away at the mountain with a teaspoon, and they are trying to move the mountain with a teaspoon. And we come up to them and say, 'Brother, what are you doing with a teaspoon?' 'Well, I'm trying to move this mountain.' And of course, the obvious question is, if you want to move a mountain, why are you using a teaspoon? Why don't you bring the big earth-moving machinery in to move the mountain? That gives you at least a chance to move the mountain. Well, this brother says,

'Just want to be faithful to the Lord, you see. Want to be faithful to the Lord. I just want personal revival. That's all I want, just be faithful to the Lord.' Well, that's great, but there's a mountain there to be moved. And somehow we've got to think, 'If we actually want to move the mountain, how are we going to move it?'

And I have come full circle in my own pilgrimage, and I'll tell you what I'm convinced of. I am convinced that the answer to world evangelization is the church. And if the church doesn't move, the mountain is going to remain. We'll whittle at it a little bit, but that great mountain is not going to come tumbling down unless the church moves. And missions has got to become not peripheral, but central in the focus and the effort and the occupation of the church. And the personal purpose statement that's directing my life at the moment is this one: I want to participate in a mission renewal movement that springs from local congregations. I want to see mission renewal sweeping across the church, not only in America, but in every other place where the church is strong enough to be involved in God's global purpose. And I want to see that mission renewal movement not only springing from local congregations, but aimed in the right direction, namely, establishing clusters of vigorously evangelizing churches among unreached peoples. I believe we need to mobilize the laity of the church.

I worked for 15 years with ship crew, and I have become hopelessly infected with a respect for the laypeople. Many of you are going to find your place in the body of Christ as laypeople. Let me give you a closing plea. Please do not leave the missionary cause to the missionaries. I want to say that again. You laypeople, please do not leave the missionary cause to us missionaries, because without you, we can't do it. But together, 15,000 evangelical believers targeting on one

unreached people group, we can complete the global purpose of Christ by taking the Gospel to the peoples. May all the peoples praise you, O God. May all the peoples praise you. Let's pray together.

Lord Jesus, we just want to close this session by turning our eyes to You. And, Lord, we see You, hanging on the cross, filled with love and compassion, having been humiliated and rejected and despised and brutally murdered. And Lord, you did it for us. And you did it not just for us, but You did it for the peoples of the world. And we pray that by Your grace, we might experience in our day a mission renewal movement sweeping local congregations that will bring missions in a fresh way, central in the focus of the church, and will result in the unleashing of the resources, the energy, the giftedness, the experience, the expertise of the church to complete Your task. Thank You for this time. Thank you for this week. Take our lives. Lead us, fill us, use us, send us out, targeted in the way You want us to be targeted. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

It's just an announcement. Thanks.

[audience clapping]