

WORLD MISSIONS IN ACTS

- 1. Missionaries must constantly rely on the Holy Spirit (Ac 1:8; 2:4).**
 - a. The Spirit enables missions (Ac 2:4; 9:31). As we do God's work, we must be filled with the Spirit (Ac 2:4; 7:55; 9:17). As we have discussed in class, missions is primarily about God and His plan. It is a divine endeavor of which we are a part, not a human endeavor. The church is a divine institution, not a human one. The church develops in a divine way, not a human way. That is why reliance on the Spirit is so important for all those involved in missions.

- 2. The missionary's goal is to be a witness of Jesus to the ends of the earth (Ac 1:8).**
 - a. The apostles witnessed Christ's resurrection (Ac 2:32), and as missionaries we pass on their testimony. The missionary's message must focus on Jesus, for God has made Him both Lord and Christ (Ac 2:36; 8:35; 9:22). Just like Paul, we must boldly proclaim Jesus as the Son of God (Ac 9:20).

- 3. Missionaries must strive to share the gospel in the people's native language (Ac 2:11).**
 - a. This is why language acquisition and Bible translation is so important. The importance of the work of groups like Wycliffe Bible Translators should not be underestimated. In my attempts to share the gospel with my friend from Afghanistan, I have seen from personal experience that the gospel shared in one's own native language is extremely powerful (Ac 2:37-41).

- 4. We must not skip missionary activity among the Jewish people (Ac 2:5; 9:15).**
 - a. For centuries, evangelism to the Jewish people was almost unheard of. Fortunately that has changed since World War II, and many Jews around the world have trusted in Jesus as Messiah. While we continue the effort to reach unreached Gentiles, we should still make concerted efforts to proclaim the gospel to Jewish unbelievers.

- 5. Where people are believing in Jesus, a local church must be established (Ac 2:42-47).**
 - a. The local church must focus on apostolic teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (Ac 2:42). Missionaries must not get sidetracked from the basics, which are Bible teaching and prayer (Ac 6:2; 4).

- 6. God may use miraculous signs to confirm the gospel message and encourage believers (Ac 2:43; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6; 9:32-35).**
 - a. Personally, I have struggled whether God still uses miraculous signs as he did in Acts. Of course God is able to use a miraculous sign anytime he wants to. I am open to the idea God still uses miraculous signs to confirm the gospel, especially in areas where the gospel is being preached for the first time.

- 7. Missionaries must preach the death and resurrection of Jesus (Ac 2:14-36; 5:30-31; 10:36-43).**

- a. As we contextualize the gospel, there are certain truths that absolutely must be taught. The death and resurrection of Christ was consistently proclaimed by the apostles to both Jews and Gentiles, which provides a pattern for missionaries today.
- 8. Missionaries must be absolutely convinced salvation is found in no one but Jesus (Ac 4:12).**
 - a. Missionaries must be completely certain of the exclusivity of the gospel they are preaching, otherwise they should not be missionaries (Ac 4:13). In the postmodern culture we live in, there are many would-be missionaries that need to deal seriously with this subject.
- 9. Where the gospel succeeds, opposition will quickly surface (Ac 5:17-18; 8:3; 9:29).**
 - a. Missionaries must expect opposition and not be afraid of it. In face of opposition, missionaries must be bold (Ac 5:20; 9:27-28). Indeed, they must be willing to suffer or even die for the gospel (Ac 7:60; 9:16).
- 10. If commanded by government authorities not to preach the gospel, a missionary may safely disregard that command (Ac 5:29, 40-42).**
 - a. Of course a missionary is not required to draw unnecessary attention to him or herself. A missionary may be strategic as to when and where to proclaim the gospel. But overall, a missionary should err on the side of proclaiming the gospel rather than not.
- 11. Missionaries must proclaim the gospel everywhere to everyone at all times (Ac 5:42; 8:25; 40).**
 - a. The pattern in Acts is for an apostle to go from city to city sharing the gospel to all who will listen. In essence, this is what the missionary endeavor is all about. A missionary's basic job is evangelism, discipleship and church planting.
- 12. Missionaries must expect and be prepared to deal with conflict in local churches (Ac 6:1).**
 - a. Many conflicts will arise due to the existence of differing cultures and ethnic groups within the church. These conflicts must be resolved with wisdom (6:2-5). It is best if missionaries have experience dealing with conflict.
- 13. Scripture is absolutely essential for the missionary task.**
 - a. In Acts, the spread of God's word is synonymous with the spread of the gospel itself (Ac 6:7; 8:4; 25). Bibles and biblical teaching must accompany the proclamation of the gospel. The first thing missionaries must teach new believers is how to study and apply Scripture for themselves.
- 14. The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church (Ac 7:54-8:4).**
 - a. In the church's first three centuries, the gospel spread despite of and even because of persecution.
- 15. Water baptism is an important tool on the mission field (Ac 8:12-13; 10; 38).**

- a. A person is not justified by being baptized, but water baptism is one of two church ordinances that should be practiced on the mission field. Water baptism is a wonderful picture of the believer's new life in Christ. It is also a way to publicly identify a new believer as one who has joined the body of Christ.

16. A missionary must remember the Spirit is already at work in people's lives.

- a. By his sovereignty God is already preparing the hearts of those who will hear the gospel through the missionary (Ac 8:27-31; 10:1-2). It is the Spirit who convinces regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn 16:8-11). These truths take the pressure off the missionary. The missionary's job is to proclaim the gospel. God does the rest.

17. A missionary's life sometimes includes high drama (Ac 9:23-25).

- a. Missionary work is not for the feint of heart. There will be times a missionary will have to rely on God and God alone.

18. Sometimes a missionary may need to relocate due to persecution (Ac 9:30).

- a. Sometimes a missionary will need to stay and fight for the gospel. Other times, a missionary will need to move to a new location. Wisdom and prayer are needed when these types of decisions are being made.

19. When it comes to the gospel, no man is common or unclean (Ac 10:15; 28; 34-35).

- a. The gospel is for Gentiles, kings and the people of Israel (Ac 9:15). Missionaries must be careful not to have a judgmental attitude toward the culture they are living in. They must possess a genuine love for people of all backgrounds.

20. Missionaries must preach and defend the gospel of grace (Ac 10:43).

- a. The gospel is under attack everywhere because justification by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone is an affront to every culture. People have difficulty accepting that justification is God's free gift to be accepted by faith. A missionary must help pastors and church leaders understand the immensity of God's grace.