

LORD OF THE HARVEST: LIFE ON MISSION

October 15, 2017 | Pastor Ted Vail

On the world map below, you will see the red dots where people are leaving countries and blue dots where people are moving to.

Ted also showed a world Map that identified the "Red Zone". This zone is where many unreached people groups live and covers North Africa and much of the middle east. There is no access to the gospel in many of these places. It is estimated there are 6,000 people groups, 3.1 billion people, which accounts for 40% of the world's population!

There was another area identified on the map called the "Green Zone". The Foursquare family is partnering together with many from several different countries to reach into the red zone. The Foursquare Church along, with our partner's, already have "boots on the ground". This is a time to develop strategy, begin to walk the territory, praying and confronting strongholds that would hinder God's people and message from penetrating the darkness

Blue represents the receiving nations; like the U.S. This of course is where we continue to send people from, but an interesting thing is also occurring, in the area of immigration movement. Because of many terrible things happening in the "Red Zone" nations, people are fleeing.

We know that God loves us and all the people in the world. Many live in an area where they don't even have access to the gospel. It is not even a question of rejecting his offer of salvation, they have never heard it. God loves them so much that he will move them to a place where they can be exposed to the gospel. Some are being sent to where we live. Are our curtains, doors and hearts open to receive them as God brings the nations to us?

The Foursquare Church currently has over 1800 churches in the U.S. We also have churches in over 150 nations, with a strong relationship with the Global Church.

On the map below, we see the immigration movement recorded between 2010 thru 2015, you'll notice a large red dot in the middle east. That red dot is the nation of Syria, a war torn nation with political unrest.



Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:45-49)

When we think of the "Great Commission" we usually default to Matthew 28. But here Luke gives us a great look at what God's heart is for all people.

- o Christ Suffered...for all
- o Christ rose from the dead...for all.
- o To all Nations...everyone, everywhere!

This same Luke would continue this thought in Acts 1:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

"Jerusalem"; is where they were.

"Judea"; was a close, neighboring location with familiar people.

"Samaria"; was close geographically, but distant in every other way. Jesus disciples and the Samaritan people were divided on so many levels.

Jesus is trying to show them; this is where the harvest is. You (the Church) are "Plan A" and there is no "Plan B". It will help us to remember that although Jesus is the "Light of the World", he also identifies us as lights for a dark, lost world.

"It's time for the Whole Church to take the Whole Gospel to the Whole World"

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Matthew 9:35-38)

The "lord" in this context translates best as "Boss". He is looking for those who will labor in the harvest and he will direct resources to where he wants them. How do we know who the "Samaritans" in our lives, they are "those people"? Let's stay with the concept of the Samaritan and see what we can learn from Jesus parable.

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:25)

We are not told why the "Priest" and the "Levite" went on the other side and bypassed the injured man.

- o Maybe because they were busy, they had to be somewhere and couldn't have their schedules interrupted.
- o But more than likely, they knew this was a dying man and touching him would defile and make them unclean. They would not be able to participate in their religious practices.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 tells us "For Christ's love compels us..." that we are called to be "missional" as a servant, not as a boss. We can break down these walls that have been in place for a long time, by serving.

Okay let's get down to some practical applications:

Action points:

- 1 Pray-Fervently; there are unseen forces that need to be addressed, so people can hear the gospel.
- 2 Give-Sacrificially
- 3 Go-Courageously; if he calls you, go, he will give you the tools.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When you heard about the "Red Zone", where there are an estimated 6,000 people groups, totaling 3.1 billion people, (40% of the world's population) that have never heard the gospel, what were your thoughts?
2. Ted talked to us about the "immigration movement", where those who have never been exposed to the gospel are being displaced and moving to a place where they can hear the good news. Do you see God's hand in this? Does this change your perspective on your world view?
3. As we consider our Luke 24 passage, along with Acts 1, what challenged you? Also what is your "Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria"?
4. When we read the parable of the "Good Samaritan", do you see your own life in this story? Don't feel condemned if you have played the role of the Priest or Levite. Why do you think these two passed by, but the Samaritan stopped?
5. Lastly, where are you with God's commission to us? Are you in the "Pray, Give or Go" category? Or all three?