

## STUDY PACK 17

### THE MODERN MISSIONS MOVEMENT

“When the communists took power in 1949, there were perhaps 2 million Christians in China. At the time, not only Marxists but even American liberal church leaders dismissed these as mainly \_\_\_\_\_. Fifty years later, we have discovered that these Chinese rice Christians were so “insincere” that they endured draconian repression, during which their numbers doubled again and again – there might be as many as 100 million Christians in China today! Moreover, conversion to Christianity is concentrated not among the peasants and the poor, but among the best educated modern Chinese.” ~ Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason*, p. 235 ~

#### I. WILLIAM CAREY

William Carey was born in 1761 in an Anglican home, but at age 17 he began to attend independent churches. Shortly thereafter, he was converted to Christ, and at age 21, he undertook his own study of infant baptism. He was determined to study the subject until he was sure of the Bible’s teaching on the matter. The result was that he became convinced of believers’ baptism and presented himself to Baptist pastor John Ryland for baptism. Carey soon opened a school, and became a Baptist pastor.

Carey was known for his unusual combination of great intellectual powers and his ability to be practical. He was a master of linguistic study, theology, history, and literature, although \_\_\_\_\_. He is most remembered, however, for his missionary work.

Carey and some other Particular Baptist pastors were moved by the emphasis on missions and soul-winning that they saw among the Moravians. They began to preach on the need for missions in their local gatherings of preachers, and this preaching was met with a mixed reaction. Some vigorously opposed any attempt at missions because of their strong emphasis on predestination. Others recognized that Scripture commanded evangelism, and they were determined to be obedient. Carey emphasized that they must be willing to “\_\_\_\_\_.”

Carey and John Thomas (a Baptist medical doctor) volunteered to become the first missionaries, while Pastor Andrew Fuller accepted responsibility of handling the finances for this first Baptist missions society.

For the rest of Andrew Fuller’s life, he was viciously attacked for his efforts to raise money for missions. He became a very controversial figure among his own fellowship of Particular Baptists; however, the early missionaries testified repeatedly that without his efforts they would have been doomed to failure.

Carey and Thomas met with little visible success in the early years of their ministry in the nation of India. The Hindu people were not responsive to their message, and they were totally unfamiliar with the Scriptures. Poor health forced Thomas to England, but Carey was joined by William Ward and Joshua Marshman. They devoted their talents to translating the Bible into Bengali, a major Indian language. By 1801, they were distributing the New Testament in Bengalian. Carey

eventually had a part \_\_\_\_\_, including every major language in India. Some people have called him the greatest linguist of all time.

Joshua Marshman wrote a poem to celebrate the publication of the Bengali New Testaments:

“Hail, precious Book divine!  
Illumined by thy rays,  
We rise from death and sin,  
And tune a Saviour’s praise:  
The shades of error, dark as night,  
Vanish before thy radiant light!

Now shall the Hindus learn  
The glories of our King:  
Nor to blind gurus turn,  
Nor idol praises sing;  
Diffusing heavenly light around,  
This Book their Shastras shall confound.

Deign, gracious Saviour, deign,  
To smile upon Thy Word;  
Let millions now obtain  
Salvation from the Lord:  
Nor let its growing conquests stay,  
Till earth exult to own Thy sway.”

The Baptist mission work in India, which had seen only one baptism in its first seven years, now began to flourish. Literally thousands were converted, and over 2,000 were baptized on one Sunday! One villager, Ram Krishnapur, was given one New Testament and three years later a number of villagers presented themselves to Carey asking, “How may we obtain the fruits of Christ’s death?” Several of the villagers had already believed, and a number were soon baptized. Several Hindu priests were converted and became Baptist preachers.

Carey had to endure many great hardships while serving Christ in India. Shortly after arriving in India, his wife became mentally ill and never recovered. In 1812, a fire destroyed the mission printing equipment and destroyed years of Carey’s linguistic work. He simply did the work all over again.

After the death of Andrew Fuller, the missions society in England quit being a service agency to the missionaries and began demanding control over their activities, but Carey and his associates refused. He sent this message to the society: “We will never consent to put power over these premises and over ourselves into their hands, at a distance of a quarter of the globe’s circumference... We will carry on our work subject to no control but His (God’s) most Holy Word.”

Carey and his associates made such a positive impact on India (during a time of great difficulty for the British Empire) that they were singled out for praise in the English Parliament. Carey is often remembered as the Father of the Modern Missions Movement.

## II. ADONIRAM JUDSON AND LUTHER RICE

In 1812, Adoniram Judson, an American Congregationalist missionary, sailed to India to begin an exciting and fruitful career of Christian service. He and his wife knew that they would soon be joined by another Congregationalist missionary, Luther Rice. Judson looked forward to meeting the now famous William Carey. The new missionary began an intensive study of infant baptism so that he could defend that practice to the Baptist, Carey, but his Biblical study forced him to conclude that the Baptists were right. Luther Rice went through identical circumstances on his trip to India. Both preachers surprised Carey and his associates by presenting themselves for believers' baptism to the Baptist Church in Calcutta, India.

They informed their supporters of their change in doctrine and were immediately cut off from all financial support. The British Government of India refused to allow American missionaries in India, so it was decided that Judson would begin a mission work in Burma and \_\_\_\_\_.

The Judsons had few converts in the early years of their ministry; however, by 1823, he had translated the New Testament into the Burmese language. Other missionaries joined the Judsons, and there were many converts, baptisms, and a number of churches started. By 1832, Judson restricted himself to translation work and building a seminary for Burmese preachers. Judson and his associates underwent many physical hardships and periods of government persecution.

In the United States, Luther Rice was hard at work organizing the Baptist missions effort. His writing, preaching, and organizational ability influenced many Baptist churches to work together for the cause of missions. This led to the formation of the General Missionary Convention of Baptists. Its first president was an important Baptist leader from South Carolina, Richard Furman. Its purpose was to aid the various Baptist missionaries around the world. The Convention took responsibility for the work of Judson in Burma. They commissioned Isaac McCoy as a missionary to the American Indians, and McCoy experienced tremendous results; however, very few Baptists ever followed him into ministry among the Indians.

Judson led a Karen (a tribe that lived in the hills of Burma) man to Christ who had been a thief and murderer of over 30 men. This man, Ko-Thah-Byu, dedicated himself to learning the Scriptures and brought hundreds of Karen tribesmen into the city to hear new American Baptist missionaries, George and Sara Boardman. This led to missions among the Karen, and \_\_\_\_\_. The message spread faster than the missionaries. When the Baptist preachers first arrived at the region of Bassein, they found 5,000 converts ready to present themselves for believers' baptism! Soon, Karen and American missionaries went to the Kachin tribes of northern Burma, resulting in over a quarter of a million Kachins identifying with Christ over the next 90 years.

The people of Lahu, hill people of Burma, China, Laos, and Thailand requested that the Baptists send missionaries to them, and from 1890 until 1936 there were over 2,000 baptisms of the Lahu people every year. The most famous Baptist missionary associated with this movement was William M. Young. Southeast Asia became a strategic area for Christian missionary expansion throughout Asia.

## III. DAVID LIVINGSTONE

Perhaps the most famous missionary of the nineteenth century was David Livingstone (1813-1873) . Born into a devout but poor Scottish family, Livingstone began work in a

cotton mill when he was ten years old. Greatly desiring to receive an education, he purchased a Latin grammar book with his first wages. He eventually was able to study medicine and theology. Hearing of the success of other missionaries, Livingstone was eager to devote his life, too, as a missionary. In 1840, he went to Africa, and there joined a handful of Christians already at work.

In 1853, he began an expedition to explore the Zambezi River, God's highway into the interior, as he called it. In 1855, he became the first white man to lay eyes on the beautiful falls which he named Victoria Falls, in honor of his queen. Livingstone \_\_\_\_\_ part of them as an official missionary and part as a representative of the British government.

Livingstone believed that Africa needed three things: Christianity, \_\_\_\_\_; commerce, \_\_\_\_\_ and civilization, \_\_\_\_\_. Yet no Europeans had ever gone into the interior of the continent. Livingstone, as good at sailing and surveying as at teaching, proceeded inland. "\_\_\_\_\_, " he said, "\_\_\_\_\_." Mauled by a lion, deserted by native helpers, and separated from his family, David Livingstone persevered and, as a result, opened up a continent to the Gospel.

Livingstone's activities were followed with great interest by Englishmen and Americans. After 1866, however, as he went further into the interior of Africa, Livingstone was unable to communicate with the outside world. Some reports said that he was dead. The *New York Herald*, a major American newspaper, sent the young reporter Henry Stanley to find Livingstone. After searching for months, Stanley found Livingstone alive near Lake Tanganyika. With the now famous words, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" Stanley greeted the pioneer missionary of Africa. After a time of exploration together, Stanley departed to give the world the latest news about Livingstone.

For another two years, Livingstone continued his explorations. The years of hardship had borne heavily on him. One morning in May, 1873, Livingstone's servants found him dead; he had died while kneeling beside his bed in prayer. Though they loved Livingstone, the Africans knew that others must be told of his death. After burying his heart in a jungle clearing, they carried his body to the coast; from there it was taken to England, where Livingstone was honored in the magnificent Westminster Abbey.

A man of dedication and resolve, Livingstone succeeded in stirring the consciences of English and American Christians. As a result of his work, Africa was opened up to Christianity, \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_.

The fame of Carey, Judson, and Livingstone influenced churches all over Great Britain and the United States to devote themselves to missions. Thousands of missionaries traveled around the world.

#### IV. FAITH MISSIONS

The next wave of missions, starting in the early 1850's, was to inland areas, led by Hudson

Taylor with his China Inland Mission. Taylor was later supported by Henry Grattan Guinness who founded Cliff College for the purpose of training and equipping local and global missions.

The new wave of missions inspired by Taylor and Guinness have collectively been called “\_\_\_\_\_” and owe much to the ideas and example of Anthony Norris Groves. Taylor was a thorough-going nativist, offending the missionaries of his era by wearing Chinese clothing and speaking Chinese at home. His books, speaking and examples led to the formation of numerous inland missions, and the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM), which from 1850 to about 1950 sent nearly 10,000 missionaries to inland areas, often at great personal sacrifice. Many early SVM missionaries going to areas with endemic tropical diseases left with their belongings packed in a coffin, aware that 80% of them would die within two years.

In 1910, the Edinburgh Missionary Conference was held in Scotland. Presided over by active SVM leader (and future Nobel Peace Prize recipient) John R. Mott, an American Methodist layperson, the conference reviewed the state of evangelism, Bible translation, mobilization of church support, and the training of indigenous leadership. Looking to the future, conferees worked on strategies for worldwide evangelism and cooperation. The conference established greater cooperation in missions.

## V. THE THREE SELF FORMULA

A Christian mission has been widely defined, since the Lausanne Congress of 1974, as that which is designed “to form a visible indigenous church-planting movement.” This definition is motivated by the acts required to enhance God’s reputation (His “Glory” or “Honor” in the Christian vernacular). The motivation is said to be God’s will, plainly stated throughout the Bible, including the Old Testament.

The movement must “plant” (start) churches because the process of forming Godly disciples is necessarily social. “Church” should be understood in the widest sense, as an organization of believers. It is not a building. Many churches start by meeting in houses. Discipling is required to grow the number of believers to the largest extent, and maximize their quality and therefore the acceptability of their worship to God and non-Christians.

“Visible” means that it is self-\_\_\_\_\_, self-\_\_\_\_\_ and self-\_\_\_\_\_. This is the famous “three-self” formula invented by \_\_\_\_\_.

“Indigenous” means that fully native members of the culture have all the needed abilities and accept all the required duties. Only indigenes can fully adapt the Gospel to their culture, maximizing both natural, high-quality worship and the number of people that can be reached in that culture.

It must be a “movement,” because special organization is required for the task of planting churches. This movement naturally forms cross-cultural missions, when persons who understand and accept church-planting duties go to people outside their culture, as Christ commanded in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Thus the cycle repeats.

## VI. THE IMPACT OF THE MODERN CHRISTIAN MISSIONS MOVEMENT

All over the world, nations where Christianity had little or no impact, find themselves with an important Christian minority. This minority often has impact all out of proportion to its size. The influence of Christianity has brought civilizing influences to countries that had little semblance of civilization.

Rodney Stark, (*The Victory of Reason*, p. 235) writes:

“There are many reasons people embrace Christianity, including its capacity to sustain a deeply emotional and existentially satisfying faith. But another significant factor is its appeal to reason and the fact that it is so inseparably linked to the rise of Western Civilization. For many non-Europeans, becoming a Christian is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Thus it is quite plausible that Christianity remains an essential element in the globalization of modernity. Consider this recent statement by one of China’s leading scholars:

“One of the things we were asked to look into was what accounted for the success, in fact, the pre-eminence of the West all over the world. We studied everything we could from the historical, political, economic, and cultural perspective. At first, we thought it was because you had more powerful guns than we had. Then we thought it was because you had the best political system. Next, we focused on your economic system. But in the past twenty years, we have realized that the \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. That is why the West is so powerful.  
\_\_\_\_\_ was what  
made possible the \_\_\_\_\_ and then the  
\_\_\_\_\_. We don’t  
have any doubt about this.”

“Neither do I.”