

## God's Glorious Mission Part 1

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This paper is an extended version of a power point presentation that has been presented at a number of churches and conferences and at a missions camp, that answers the question, "What is your churches vision for mission?", especially concerning our work in church planting and pastor training on Mindanao Island Philippines, where we have 3 church plants, two more getting ready and work in the tribal areas across the span of the island. It is a basic introduction to developing a biblical theology, New Covenant understanding of mission. It is a work in progress and as a course for our pastors will eventually include material from Köstenberger and O'Brien's, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth* and Beale's *The Temple and The Churches Mission*. Both are published as part of the NSBT series by Apollos/Intervarsity Press. We will use other resources as well including *Let The Nations Be Glad* by John Piper and *A Vision for Missions* by Tom Wells.

[New Covenant Baptist Fellowship](#)

### A Vision for Mission is Rooted in the Attributes of God

The purpose of Scripture is: To Glorify God: Scriptures priority is

The revelation of Jesus Christ

Missions purpose is to glorify God through the revelation of Jesus Christ, by the proclamation of WORD/word of GOD, and By Christ being revealed in His people.

The message of the Gospel is rooted in the attributes of God.

We must present an accurate message or we pervert the person of God. “God is worthy to be known and proclaimed for who He is and that fact is an important part of the missionary motive and message” - Tom Wells

An important premise to understand is that God only does what He does because of who he is. The Gospel is rooted in who He is, so we need to know what the gospel is as presented in the Gospel era from the Scripture if our proclamation is to be accurate.

“The use of ‘gospel’ to refer to a particular kind of book, as in the phrase ‘the Four Gospels’, would not have been understood in the apostolic period, nor for another century. In the NT period Christians spoke of only one gospel. The first four books of the NT, nowadays called ‘gospels’, were thought of as records or of witnesses to that one gospel which Paul calls ‘the gospel of God . . . regarding his Son’ (Romans 1:1, 3). Thus the first book in our NT canon was thought of as ‘*the gospel according to Matthew*’, the second ‘*the gospel according to Mark*’, and so on.”<sup>1</sup>

So, when look to the Scripture to help us be on mission in the New Covenant era from God's perspective, and to be true to His attributes/character, in which the Gospel is rooted, we must see what the New Testament scriptures define as the gospel.

This is critical because the Romans Road, The Four Spiritual Laws and other formulaic approaches to accepting Jesus into your heart are not the gospel.

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<sup>1</sup> [D. A. Carson. “The Biblical Gospel.” Pages 75–85 in \*For Such a Time as This: Perspectives on Evangelicalism, Past, Present and Future\*. Edited by Steve Brady and Harold Rowdon. London: Evangelical Alliance, 1996.](#) Also see [The Gospel of Jesus Christ \( I Cor. 15:1-9\) D. A. Carson: The Spurgeon Fellowship Journal Feature, Spring 2008](#)

The word gospel, has some various meanings depending on the context and other words have allusion to it such as the word or the message of the cross, but in the end, it is all about Christ, His person, who he is and whatever are the results of the proclamation of the Gospel is rooted in the fact that He does what He does because of Who He is.

Mt 4:23\* Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming **the gospel** of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people

Mr 1:14\* Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching **the gospel** of God,

Lu 16:16\* “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time **the gospel** of the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

Ac 20:24\* “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of **the gospel** of the grace of God.

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Ro 1:1\* Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for **the gospel** of God,

Ro 1:9\* For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of **the gospel** of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,

Ro 15:19\* in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached **the gospel** of Christ.

Eph 1:13\* In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, **the gospel** of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

In Paul's proclamation of the gospel, God himself was making his appeal through the apostle (2 Corinthians 5:20). Tom Wells looks at this in depth in his book, *The Priority Of Jesus Christ*.

According to Scripture, for Paul, a 'different gospel' is no gospel at all (Galatians 1:6-7). Therefore, if Paul himself, or even an angel of heaven, should tamper with this gospel or announce something other than the eternal gospel, 'let him be anathema' (1:8-9). He could happily tolerate other preachers with doubtful motives, provided their content was the veritable gospel (Philippians 1:12-18). On the other hand, preachers whose aim was to make money by 'peddling' the word of God he despised (2 Corinthians 2:17); while preachers whose content was 'a different gospel' or 'a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached', instead of 'the gospel of God' (2 Corinthians 11:4, 7), he exposed as 'false apostles' (11:13; cf 1 Timothy 4; 2 Timothy 2:17).

So, in the end, whenever the gospel in any context is being preached it must ultimately point to Christ, the person of Christ the attributes/character of Christ. For example, The Gospel of the kingdom is meaningless without a king and the king is Christ.

The Gospel is rooted in the attributes/character of Christ-our God-man.

There is no God in a NC context without Christ for He is the fullest expression of the Godhead. To point people to God without identifying Christ is not the Gospel.

So, if the revelation of Christ is to glorify God, we must have some meaning of this glorifying.

Some pages in the next section in brackets are extracted from *The Glory of God* by Tom Austin in [Reformation and Revival Journal Volume 4, Number 2 • Spring 1995 Volume 4, Number 2](#) .

I have interacted with this text in a few places.

[The glory of God is not an attribute or a perfection of God to be observed and documented such as we see in systematic theologies or in the books specifically describing the attributes and names of God.

What is the glory of God? How does He glorify Himself in His being and in His acts? How is He glorified in Christ? How do His elect glorify Him or detract from His glory?

From Scripture we can easily see that His own glory is uppermost in His affections - His primary goal - His ultimate purpose. Because God's purposes are eternal and because He accomplishes His purposes after the counsel of His own will and because His ultimate purpose is to glorify Himself, He would do nothing that would detract from, deny, neglect, or nullify His glory. God's glory is best defined as God Himself. It is the very essence of His being. He is His own glory. God is glorified in Himself, in His

name, in all that He is, by the way He is, by His attributes which are all of His perfections.

God is eternally glorious. God's glory is His being/His essence/His very attributes.

The same glory is revealed whether in the context of God the Father, God the Son or God the Holy Spirit. This glorious essence of God makes the Trinity a necessity. The glory of God is the manifestation/revelation of His tripartite being. There is a circle of glorification within the Trinity itself. The Father glorifies the Son (John 8:50, 54; 13:32; 14:13; 17:1,5), and the Son glorifies the Father (John 7:18; 13:31; 17:4). The Spirit glorifies the Son (John 16:14), and therefore glorifies the Father through the Son. In this context, we learn also that Christian believers glorify Christ (John 17:10), and he gives glory to believers: "I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one" (v. 22). There is great mystery here as we gain a glimpse of the intra-Trinitarian being of God and of this mutual glorification. At least we can say that in the Trinity there is a mutual glorification, in which each person glorifies the others and that the glory of God is, ultimately expressed, by the Son, through the Son and in the Son.]

So this is what mean when we speak of God's Glorious Mission through the Revelation of Jesus Christ and why this is rooted in the attributes/character of God Himself.

*God's glory cannot decrease or increase.*

It can neither be added to nor subtracted. To imagine any change to God's glory is to propose change in God Himself, in the very essence of His being. His glory is just as immutable as He is, and is not dependent on

anything external to God. He cannot be anymore glorious than He has always been anymore than He can be anymore God than He has ever been. Therefore, whatever has transpired in creation neither detracts from nor adds to His glory as God.

*God's Name Is His Glory*

In Scripture names often have intrinsic meaning that are meant of describe the character of the person. Abraham , Isaac and Jacob are a few examples. With reference to God, we see this in a different way. I would agree with A.W.Tozer that theologically speaking, “God has attributes not character.”

I say this because character is alterable, changeable, enhanced or degraded.

So as the God-man, Christ can be viewed as possessing both. Christ grew in stature in the eyes of men and God, from birth to adulthood. Man would view Jesus as having integrity, character beyond reproach and so on. But as God He possesses all the attributes of His own Glory.

[Jonathan Edwards explains that God's *name* and His *glory* are equivalent, that is, equal in force and power or we could say reciprocal. There are many “excellencies of Christ as some would explain it, to demonstrate that He is His own glory.

I will briefly refer to three. His name, His goodness and His power. Exodus 33:18-19, God responds to Moses' request to see His glory by saying, I "will proclaim the name of the Lord before you." God's name and glory often signify the same thing in Scripture

For as the loincloth clings to the waist of a man, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, declares the

LORD, that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory, but they would not listen. (Jer. 13: 11).

As glory implies His excellence, His honor, etc., so does His name.

In Jeremiah 14:21, God's name and glory seem to be spoken as of the same, Do not spurn us, for your name's sake; do not dishonor your glorious throne; remember and do not break your covenant with us.

Bavinck has said: "God's glory indicates the splendor and brilliancy that is inseparably connected with all God's virtues and with His self-revelation. "

As glory implies His excellence, His honor, etc.,so does His goodness Jesus' response to the young ruler of Mark 10:17-22 (d. Luke 18:18-19; Matt. 19:16-17) was, "No one is good except God alone." These passages help us to glimpse the goodness of God as it reflects and identifies His glory. His goodness is, even as He is. It is not a result of His acts, in that His acts are good, therefore He is good. His acts are good because He is good, "You are good and do good; teach me your statutes" (Ps. 119:68).

It is not a result of the goodness of His other attributes, such as His love is good. Had He not done any good thing, He would still be good because He is only originally good. His goodness is eternally self-existent, as God is eternally self-existent. His goodness is infinite. It is measureless. Quoting Stephen Charnock: "A boundless goodness that knows no limits, a goodness as infinite as His essence, not only good, but best; not only good, but goodness itself, the supreme inconceivable goodness."

Stephen Charnock emphasizes that God's glory is expressed mainly in His power, saying that it is "the glory of His nature." Others have looked to His holiness as the essence of His glory.]

I would disagree on this point that and state that no single attribute is God's foremost or preeminent or most significant attribute. They are all equally reciprocal just as they are all reciprocal as the Trinity.

[The book of Psalms is filled with examples of His power and expressions of praise because of His power. All of Psalm 104 gives praise to God for His power as it is displayed in the universe. In Psalm 103, He is praised for His power over all the heavenly hosts and all earthly rulers. Some would say the principal Old Testament passage which expresses the glory of God in creation is Psalm 19:1-6, which begins: "The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." (See also 72:18-19; 93:1-2.)

Why is God able to do such things? (Actually, God tells us that such things are nothing to Him.) Why, when given such praise for His might, does He not refuse? It is because He is omnipotent. It is because He is God and deserves such praise.

The attributes of God, both individually and corporately, are His glory. They define His glory, they represent His glory, they describe His glory, and they express His glory. They also give Him glory.

Charles Spurgeon has said: "God's power is like Himself, self-existent, self-sustained. The mightiest of men cannot add so much as a shadow of increased power to the Omnipotent One .... He is Himself the great central source and Originator of all power. "

Stephen Charnock tells us that "God and power are so inseparable,(and again I would add so are love, mercy, holiness, wrath and so on) that they are reciprocated – cannot be separated in any way from one another. "

Since the Incarnation, the Glory of God is uniquely manifested in Christ Jesus.

THE GLORY OF CHRIST is the glory of the person of Christ. He calls it "that glory which is mine," which belongs to Me, unto My person (John 17:24).

The first thing we can consider in which we may behold the glory of the person of Christ, the God-man to the church, is offered by Paul in a number of Scriptures: for He is "the image of God" (II Cor. 4:4); "the brightness of the Father's glory, "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15), "for we behold "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6) and as the writer of Hebrews says, "and the express image of his person" (Heb. 1:3). There is no other way to see this aspect of His glory. This is not a demonstration of His works or His power as we have alluded to earlier.

He is the great manifestation of the nature of God and God's will to us. Without Christ, God would have been eternally hid from us, or been invisible to us and we should never have seen God at any time, now or in the hereafter.

John 1:14: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:18: No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

The apostles and others saw the attributes of God incarnate in Christ before His ascension into heaven. Others saw the same Christ, multitudes of others and all they saw was a man who was a lunatic, someone who made them uncomfortable, someone who challenged their authority or some one who needed to be removed and even be put to death.

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after

that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:20—24).]

In the New Covenant era, God established the only means of the knowledge of Himself and that is in Christ Jesus. General revelation cannot reveal the Gospel - the Christ. We should have no problem declaring that there is no God without Christ.

It was not what John and others saw Him do or what He accomplished that was the glory, although each act of His will toward men was the will of God and brought glory to the Father. It was what flowed from His person based on who He was. God only does anything because of who He is.

And that becomes a critical point in part two of this discussion when we look at the people on mission, His church, the temple of God, that is the theater of the display of His glory since His ascension and until He returns.

Christ did all He did because of who He is and John says He was the fullness of grace and truth. Even as the Father gave Peter the understanding that Jesus was the Christ, He gave those who were His, the ability to see His glory in His person and yet it is still not the fullness of His glory.

Should the Lord Jesus appear now in the fullness of His majesty and glory or had He done so at any other time to anyone, it would not be to our

benefit. In this flesh we are not able, even though we are His children by grace, to bear the immediate appearance and representation of His glory, the sum total of His attributes in one glance.

Isaiah 6: 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

The apostle John had leaned on Christ at the Last Supper and was as close to Him as anyone could be but when Christ appeared to John in His ascended glory, "he fell at his feet as dead" (Rev. 1:17). And when Christ appeared to Paul, he could only say "that he saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun" and he and all that were with him "fell to the ground" (Acts 26 :13,14).

Perhaps Stephen, at His martyrdom, is the only person to have ever experience this, while yet alive in the flesh, just before He died.

But we are to proclaim the glorious One- the kerygma of the the glorious One and the Person of the Glorious one because they, are inseparable.

Before Christ, God revealed Himself through the Law, His works-His power-His signs and the rituals of worship and the effect they had on the people and how they responded.

But Moses desired some immediate and fuller view of God's glory in this world: "Please, show me your glory." And if we as the church have a correct view of the future state of blessedness, then we will have the same desire of seeing more of His glory in this life and by degrees we will where Moses could not because,

2 Cor 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

This is the benefit of being placed in the church by God’s grace as part of the New Covenant Community. We are members of the Spirit Covenant not the Covenant which was the ministry of death. All who are members of this Spirit Covenant have life. It does not matter that our view of the glory is imperfect. What we see is no longer types and shadows. We see the fullness but imperfectly.

I Corinthians 13:12: For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

Mirrors at that time were often made of bronze. Corinthian bronze was famous for its quality, but even the best mirrors reflected images imperfectly. Yet we have this assurance,

II Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

“He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature....Heb.1:3,

and the *apaugasma*, His effulgence can only be seen in its fullest in His ascended glory.

Jesus as the God-man did what no other could.

So, the first thing by which we may behold/understand the glory of the person of Christ (God and Man), which was given Him of His Father, is in the representation of the nature of God and of the divine person of the Father, and this is given only to the Church in Him; for we behold "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6). Otherwise we don't

know it, we cannot see it, we see nothing of it; that is the way of seeing and knowing God, declared in the Scripture as our duty and blessedness. It is only His true church who can see him and know Him in this way. At present it is by faith (mention a few means of this) but one day it will be by sight. Only a member of the New Covenant body of Christ by means of the circumcision of the heart who has known forgiveness of sin and has the indwelling of Christ's Spirit can see this glory, can know this glory, can experience this glory. Only one who by being adopted as Christ's own and sealed by the Spirit until the day of full and final redemption can know this glory, can see this glory.

And we do see this glory with the eyes of faith. We see this glory every time we read the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation with the view that the purpose of Scripture is to glorify God and it's priority is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. There is a promise to the Church in Christ that is as old as the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 60:2), "For behold, darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you." This Messianic promise exceeds the boundaries of a land and an ethnic people called Israel. It extends itself to the One New people of Christ from every tribe, kindred and tongue.

We see this glory every time we see a person rejoice in the fact that they have experienced the gifts of faith and repentance and can unashamedly admit their guilt to the world and also testify that Jesus Christ is Lord, no matter what the consequence because they know that we love Him because He first loved us. We are not just witnessing a conversion to Christ, we are witnessing the birth of one who is a Christian, one who is in Christ and Christ is in them, Christ the hope of Glory.

Galatians 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

When we represent any of His attributes as less than they truly are, then we are not truly submitting to God as God in our theology or in our lives.

And when we do this, we do not give Him the glory due His name.

So, what drives us to the “mission field”

Providing for the needs of others need will not keep you on the mission field. People will rebuke you and repel you somewhere along the way.

What keeps us on mission, or what should?

I cannot tell you the number of disillusioned missionaries I have met over the years.

This is why we must remind ourselves, What is the primary purpose of God’s mission? Is it meeting needs?

Without a proper view of God and His mission you will lose optimism and heart

So the next question is:

CAN GOD’S MISSION EVER FAIL?

HAS CHRIST STOPPED BEING REVEALED, NOT NECESSARILY “ACCEPTED” BUT BEING REVEALED TO THE WORLD when we are genuinely on mission?

The obvious answer is no if we have the right view of the Mission.

So, lets briefly look at God’s Mission and Human Need

It is part of the revelation of Jesus Christ in and through the believer that allows this meeting of needs to occur

We live according to what we believe. We are never acting alone. My shortcomings do reflect on the body of Christ and may make it more

difficult for another to do even better than I if it seems that I have failed in mission in a specific place.

So, we do not meet needs just for the sake of meeting needs.

The world even in sin can do that and sometimes does better than Christians, but blessed are the merciful, for mercy they shall receive.

Over the centuries there have been all kinds of missiological definitions and curriculums that have been promoted in our bible schools and seminaries.

Many have not moved on from the colonial mindset of some early western models that produced “rice bowl Christians” by the thousands.

Conversions numbers was and is sometimes the largest indicator of “success” on the mission.

And with that mindset comes the idea that indigenous ministries are not capable of being fiscally responsible among other things.

These stereotypes include statements like, “You can't trust the nationals with handling money.” “Foreign support causes dependency. “If we send money to nationals they will be corrupted.”

So of course, there must be a western missionary in the field to oversee the work of the nationals, regardless of the inordinate amount of cost to do this.

This is another part of developing this ongoing study for another time.

Of course, this has not been the trademark of all foreign missions. One only needs to think of Hudson Taylor, Gladys Awylward, or Adnoniram Judson our first American Baptist missionary. These foreign missionaries lived among the people, as one of the people whenever they could.

Dan Utley is a dear brother and friend.

He was reared in Haiti, schooled there for most of his pre-college education and spoke the language fluently.

His father was a Conservative Baptist Missionary. When he arrived in Haiti, the staff there met him and promptly took the family to the missionary compound.

They were then instructed as to the schedule for leaving the compound to do their “word” and when they were expected to return on a daily basis, with the exception of special meetings and so on.

Dan’s father responded by telling the staff that he came to live among the people, to learn their culture and share the gospel as God gave opportunity in his daily living as God provided the means and the ways of doing it. He also told them that if this was not going to occur, he would promptly remove himself from the Conservative Baptist oversight and find other ways of doing the work that God put he and his family there to do. They reconsidered, and they began looking for a place to live in the village.

Eventually, Dan’s dad had to return to the states and Dan completed college. He began as a teacher but then became the director of Child Evangelism Fellowship of WNY, for many years. For the past few years he has been working Score International. They do pastoral training, youth work and relief work in Haiti, among other places.

The 2010 Haiti earthquake, in a sense brought Dan back home. He still speaks the language fluently. When he arrived in Haiti and was introduced to some of the pastors there, they recognized his name and asked if he

was the son of Papa Utley. Dan's dad left an indelible impression in the lives of a generation because he was one of the people.

Others have opted for the power encounter approach and mastering spiritual warfare in an attempt to make the gospel more successful and culturally relevant. I find it interesting that Jesus' disciples never asked the Lord how to teach, how to heal, how to cast out demons, how to evangelize or how to fast. They asked Him, "Lord, teach us to pray"! Prayer is not only a frontline spiritual warfare necessity... it is the necessity for Christian living. Proper prayer when realized is a reflection on the attributes of the one we look to. Jesus' model prayer, the prayers of the psalmists, and Paul's prayers all have a peculiar likeness of focus to them. When we do not know what to pray, it is in absolute trust in the promise of Christ that we believe the Holy Spirit prays for us. In both cases, prayer, is not a support activity, it is the activity that should precede all our endeavors as we go forth proclaiming the excellencies of Christ - the Gospel. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man has much power behind it, because it is energized by the One who empowers us from on high and dwells within us.

"What [true] prayer is. Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God hath promised, or according to the Word, for the good of the church, with submission, in faith, to the will of God. John Bunyan

He says in another place:

"FOR THE GOOD OF THE CHURCH. This clause reacheth in whatsoever tendeth either to the honour of God, Christ's advancement, or his people's benefit. For God, and Christ, and his people are so linked

together that if the good of the one be prayed for, to wit, the church, the glory of God, and advancement of Christ, must needs be included.

And this is the substance of Christ's own prayer in John 17. And all Paul's prayers did run that way, as one of his prayers doth eminently show.

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil 1:9-11). But a short prayer, you see, and yet full of good desires for the church, from the beginning to the end; that it may stand and go on, and that in the most excellent frame of spirit, even without blame, sincere, and without offence, until the day of Christ, let its temptations or persecutions be what they will (Eph 1:16-21; 3:14-19; Col 1:9-13).

And because, as I said, prayer doth SUBMIT TO THE WILL OF GOD, and say, Thy will be done, as Christ hath taught us (Matt 6:10); therefore the people of the Lord in humility are to lay themselves and their prayers, and all that they have, at the foot of their God, to be disposed of by him as he in his heavenly wisdom seeth best. Yet not doubting but God will answer the desire of his people that way that shall be most for their advantage and his glory." John Bunyan

History is HIS-STORY, Christ's redemptive story.

God's mission throughout human history is to bring a people to himself for His glory. It can only be done through the revelation of Jesus Christ—the Gospel, who is the priority of Scripture

1 Cor.1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Regardless of how it is viewed it is the revelation of Jesus Christ

Whether the hearing of the gospel is life changing or not, Christ is revealed according to God's Mission.

What men see as foolishness is God's wisdom and He does what He pleases.

This is why mission is not first about meeting needs but about glorifying God through the preaching of the Gospel-kingdom, the excellencies of Christ and the Word/word of the cross and all of the other expressions used to describe it.

Wisdom is an attribute of God and it is perfect regardless of what men say or understand.

But meeting needs is valid because it expresses the mercy of God

When Jesus said the poor are always with you, He did not mean neglect them. There was context for those words at the time He said it. Even under the OC, mercy, justice, caring for the poor was part of the law.

Inherent in the word righteous either as an attribute of God or the character of men is justice and mercy.

How would you reconcile years of work of meeting needs for the needy and then a "natural disaster" wipes out everything that was built to help the needy?

The Sovereignty of God and Mission

You must seek understand the Sovereignty of God in all things according to the wisdom of God as He moves redemption; His-Story to its end

And when we can't, we must live by faith

"All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?' Dan.4:35

Even the final destruction of all things by fire culminates in the revelation of Jesus Christ as a wrathful judge to the condemned and as the final and fulfilled hope for those who are Christ's by God's grace.

2 Pet3:7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

2:Pet3:13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

Both results are rooted in the attribute of God's patience.

God is patient with a world of sinners until His appointed time to save whom He will ends and He is patient with us to allow us to grow more in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

William Carey was the first to see God's mission in India, at least as far as we know and since the 18th century.

A Brahman asked him, "Why did not your God let my father's hear this message?"

William Carey responded, "At one time it pleased God to keep the Gospel from India. God has His reasons for doing so."

From a human point of view, Christians have continually failed in reaching the world with the Gospel.

From God's point of view everything is just as it should be in His-Story or He is not a Sovereign God.

It is a matter of both.

In the end, those around the throne of Grace will represent the world at large.

Our failure and human sin CANNOT ever, ultimately deter the mission of God. That is our hope in being on Mission.

We said earlier that God is worthy of being known for who He is and He is known through the revelation of JESUS CHRIST

God is faithful to His mission.

The end is in God's purpose and decree from eternity not in what we have or have not done. We are a means that God uses

He has not done His part and "now it is up to us."

Salvation is the work of God.

When all the programs and seminars and meetings have come and gone, the greatest means of compelling people to come into the kingdom of Christ will remain the churches witness to the truth and greatness of Jesus and how we are satisfied in Him.

Pray that God would give you good opportunities and power to commend Christ. And pray that he will be preparing others to be open. (Romans 10:1)

Portray Christ by the way you love others and by the humble integrity of your work. (Matthew 5:16)

Pursue those who are willing to talk and who have questions. (2 Corinthians 5:11)1

Plead with those for whom God gives you a special affection and longing. (Acts 26:29)

Remember: you are a means for God to be glorified through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

YOU are the salt of the earth. YOU are the light of the world.

Our next talk begins with that idea.